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## Editor's Introduction for Volume 4 Issue 1

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# Editor's Introduction

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Welcome to the first issue of The Journal of Balanced Literacy Research and Instruction. Although not an entirely new journal publication, the journal is now being published under a more contemporary name and is also being brought into the digital age by having it managed and hosted using a web-based platform. These changes have been slow and work towards releasing the first issue have been even slower. Change, and drastic change are not easy, but we have finally come to this point.

## Change in Title and Focus

In addition to going 100% digital, we have also brought the title of the journal into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Given the significant shift from “reading” to “literacy” that the International Literacy Association has made, we also felt it would be a good time to revise the scope of the journal. It was also decided that we should expand the focus from just instruction to research and instruction. We feel that this shift will not only attract more readers, but will also increase the types of manuscripts submitted for consideration.

## Inside this Issue

This issue contains four articles that address various topics in the area of literacy and represent very current issues for both teachers and scholars. The first article, “What Counts as Common Core Aligned?: An Examination of a Reading Program’s Agreement with the Common Core State Standards” by Skinner, Tate, France, and Stocks (2018) takes a careful look at what it means for a commercial reading program to be aligned to the Common Core State Standards. This research article not only provides results of a particular program’s actual alignment, it also makes the process transparent so that teachers can apply the same evaluation and make informed decisions about what they use to carry out instruction in their classrooms.

The second article, “The Response Strategies of Proficient Readers When Correcting and Attempting to Correct Miscues on a Complex Scientific Text” by Kucer (2018), examines fourth grade proficient reader’s strategies used after the occurrence of a miscue. Findings from this study suggest that as readers develop and progress through the grades and as texts become more difficult, teachers will need to either continue, or in some cases, begin to provide additional strategies for students to employ.

“The Power of Pictures: Drawing on Visual Sign-Systems to Teach Inference in Gerstein’s *The Man Between Two Towers*” by Howrey (2018) is the third article shifts attention to the value of illustrations and focuses on making connections to prior knowledge. Howrey draws upon dual coding theory and visual characteristics related to literacy to demonstrate how interpretation can be taught in the classroom.

The fourth article, “The Literacy Cannon: Virtue, Vice, or Both” by Bintz (2018) targets the middle and high school English/Language Arts audience and dares to answer a question posed during a professional development workshop, “To teach or not to teach the literary cannon?” Bintz’s response starts with a review of the background and then provides a text set that causes both teachers and those in teacher education to reconsider the role of the literary cannon with respect to research and reading curriculum.

This issue closes with a Young Adult Book Review of *Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card* by author Sara Saedi (2018). In Butcher’s (2018) review, she provides a thorough summary of the contemporary undocumented immigrant experience and also represents the Irani culture through relatable experiences and juxtaposition of typical teenage problems here in America.

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