



Remote Learning! The norm?

The Chicago Area Reading Association

Supporting literacy learning since 1957

COVID-19 Edition

Message from the President



Dear CARA Members,

Thank you for checking in with the Chicago Area Reading Association. We have opted to increase the frequency of our newsletter in order to provide our membership with additional resources and ideas for online learning. We would love to know what is working for you as well as any challenges you may be facing. We look forward to hearing from you as we

continue our quarantine, and we can't wait to see you when we can do so safely.

Check in with [CARA on Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) or consider writing an article for the next CARA newsletter. We would love to hear your voice.

Check out new and updated information at [Chicago Literacy Alliance](#).

Finally, thank you again to the CARA volunteer board for all you do to make us an invaluable resource for Chicago.

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CARA President

2019-2020
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Chicago Area Reading Association Newsletter

CARA Delivers Books to Schools During Quarantine

It is the good fortune of CARA to have a number of books on hand that we typically distribute at fairs or as prizes at our events. In fact, as the quarantine began, we found ourselves with a number of boxes of books for children of all ages. At our most recent board meeting via Zoom, we decided to distribute these books to select schools, to be shared with families as they pick up meals. Last week, I delivered a box of books to Nash Elementary in Chicago's Austin neighborhood. It was nice to get out of the house for a bit and even nicer to know that many Nash students would have a new book to enjoy. Next week we hope to share more books with a few more schools.



Online Learning Resource:

I attended an online literacy discussion last week to learn more of the challenges we face as a community. I heard a lot about the inequity in online devices and access to WiFi. We must consider the demands placed on those families who *can* participate in online learning (many cannot) as they struggle with gaps in broadband availability, data shortages, and overage fees in attempting to participate in synchronous lessons. With that in mind, I would urge us to consider relying less on synchronous activities and relying more heavily on asynchronous activities as we acquaint ourselves with these new processes.

As a glimpse into what my company is doing, I invite you to check out [Play In A Book Online Learning](#). These are simple literacy lessons, laid out in easy to follow steps, and leveled for grades K-5. The asynchronous lessons mirror Play In A Book's classroom experience of using drama to support literacy, particularly oral reading fluency. Each lesson contains a meditation, movement work, listening to a story aloud, and then reflecting upon and acting out the story through leveled scripts. There is a teacher resource page which contains corresponding workbooks for furthering story discussion or for providing additional worksheet based assignments.



[Play In A Book Online Learning](#)



For additional arts based learning online resources, you can also check out <https://artlookmap.com/library>



Building an E-Learning Community

Our current quarantine situation brings many academic challenges for our students. Students may struggle with self-motivation, time-management, computer literacy, and adapting to working with fewer supports. Another related challenge is maintaining a community with teachers and classmates. ZOOM has been supportive for many teachers to maintain relationships. What follows are two asynchronous community building resources for teachers.

Padlet [Detailed Tutorial](#)

Padlet is an online post-it board where teachers and students can organize and collaborate on anything. It's compatible with all devices and allows anonymous or identified posts to include texts, pictures, YouTube videos, upload a file, include a link, add a location, or draw something. Before E-Learning, I've used Padlet for group presentations, brainstorming, question bank, and exit slips.

When building community during E-Learning, teachers can use Padlet in the following ways:

1. **Something funny:** Each student has a joke/riddle posted to start ZOOM meetings.
2. **This or that:** Teachers post a "This or That" question and students respond in the comments or during ZOOM. (Ex pancakes of waffles, cookies or cake, Scooby Doo or Tom & Jerry)
3. **Peer feedback:** Students share an assignment as a post and others provide feedback as a comment.
4. **Team Notes:** Just like Google docs are collaborative, Padlets are more visual and allow for more creativity.
5. **Hallway Conversations:** This is an attempt at a deliberate social event. Here students can chat about non school related topics like current events, TV shows, movies, activities, sports, etc.
6. **Shout outs:** These can be compliments to peers and teachers.

Flipgrid [Teacher Tutorial](#)

Flipgrid is another user friendly resource for teachers and students. After teachers create a grid, or a meeting place, students will use a teacher provided code to access the grid and add video responses to a topic. In the past, I've used flipgrid for book talks or a space for shy students to "present" their speech.

When building community during E-Learning, teachers can use FlipGrid in the following ways:

1. **Introductions (or re-introductions):** Questionnaires are for more personal questions meant only for the student and teacher but a flipgrid introduction can be more public.
2. **Presentations:** Students can present their assignment and comment on others.
3. **Class Discussion/Question of the Week:** Teacher can pose a question, students can respond to the question and build on others' responses.
4. [More ideas from a 3rd Grade teacher.](#)



Not a Member?

Don't miss out on CARA News and Events! Join CARA and Illinois Reading Council today to ensure that you have access to all the wonderful professional learning opportunities!

- Discounted registration fees to all CARA and IRC events, including conferences!
- FREE members-only access to IRC's Wired Wednesday Webinars – great PD, and you can participate in your PJs at home!
- AND you can earn free clock hours!
- FREE members-only access to IRC's Book Clubs – great online book discussions with other teachers about some of the seminal professional books in literacy, and another PJ PD opportunity! AND free clock hours!
- Information about upcoming events from professional organizations throughout the state



Here are some good resources to support remote learning from the Illinois Reading Council.

Great ideas from trusted authors, teachers, and companies:

[IRC Resources for Remote Learning](#)



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