

SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

February 2023

Hello, Secondary ELA Colleagues!

The Sundance Film Festival recently wrapped up, and I was lucky to see two documentaries, one being a film about the life of author Judy Blume. Watching the film reminded me of so many books by her that I read as a teen that had such a profound impact on me. I know we all hope that students discover books that resonate with them. I also hope that the film gets picked up for wider release, so you have the opportunity to see it.

Naomi

I'M CURRENTLY ENJOYING:

- [Firekeeper's Daughter](#) by Angeline Boulley
- [Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie](#) (will be coming out on Apple + TV)
- [Tree Note](#) from KUER



PRESIDENTS' DAY | FEBRUARY 20

- [An article about the disagreement on how to punctuate President's/Presidents' Day & who/what this federal holiday commemorates](#)
- [Looking for Lincoln Through His Words: Lesson Plan](#) from PBS Learning
- [Lincoln's Grave Robbers](#) by Steven Sheinkin
- [Lesson plans from Mt. Vernon](#)
- [Washington's Farewell Address Lesson Plan](#) from The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Highlighting diversity in authors and characters is something that needs to happen all year long

- [National African American Read In](#)
- [Classroom Resources from PBS](#)
- [Resources from UEN](#)
- [Black American Poets from The Poetry Foundation](#)
- [Remember the Ladies: African-American Women and the Fight for Rights](#) from Library of Congress

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

February 2023

Educator Spotlight

Mandy Jones
Minersville Middle School
Beaver School District



In her 8th year teaching -- also teaches art, health, and P.E.



Enjoys traveling with her family, writing, and spending time outdoors and camping with her dogs



Favorite Book: The Little House on the Prairie series by Laura Ingalls Wilder

WHO INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A TEACHER?

I would say my 6th-grade teacher Mrs. Houle inspired me to be a teacher. She helped me when I struggled and I wanted to be able to help others like her.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST REWARDING PART OF TEACHING?

All of it is important. Really though, I would say using novels/short stories to explore the real world. Yes, I understand that basic reading skills (like finding the main idea and textual evidence) and writing are important skills (never have to explain why English is important to my students), however, if we don't have compassion or understanding of the human condition, what's the whole point? I love it when students open up about themselves and ask questions that have real-world connections. I revel in those moments when students make those connections and understand a little bit better in how to make the world a better place. All of that happens because they opened a book, read it, and synthesized it.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT TEACHING ELA TO KIDS?

The most rewarding part of teaching is seeing all aspects of my students; I get to see their quirky personalities. I teach English but because I work at a small school, I also teach other 7th-grade courses. Therefore, not only do I get to see my students learn in English, but I also get to see their growth in Art, Health, and PE. It is such a joy to see them excel in other subjects and watch their personalities shine.



SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

February 2023

GREAT SALT LAKE COLLABORATIVE

The Great Salt Lake is one of the dominant topics of discussion at the 2023 Legislature because the lake has shrunk to the lowest levels ever recorded — which affects our air quality, snowpack and ecosystem.

Here are potential ways you can incorporate what is happening to the lake — and what policy makers are doing about it — in your classrooms.

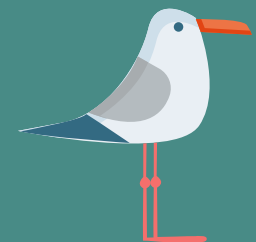
This website —greatsaltlakenews.org— collects all of the latest news about Great Salt Lake. There are no paywalls or advertisements. It is run by the Great Salt Lake Collaborative, which combines the resources and reach of Utah's top newsrooms that have put aside traditional competition to work together to cover Great Salt Lake.

The site includes 250 and counting articles about the lake, covering topics including agriculture, air quality, bird migration and water conservation. You can find:

- A time lapse of the lake shrinking
- A video library of lake experts talking about what is happening at the lake and potential solutions
- A handy Q/A section
- A project called "Lake Effect" that collects audio stories about the lake.

The Collaborative also has a YouTube channel with recordings of panel discussions with experts and advocates about the lake.

For more information, contact Project Manager Heather May at info@greatsaltlakenews.org



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February 2023

SECONDARY LITERACY DIRECTOR MEETINGS

- March 21, 1-3pm | virtual message brenda.mcmurtrey@schools.utah.gov for an invite



Utah Rural Schools Association

2023 CONFERENCE JULY 12-14 IN PRICE

Registration Will Open March 1, 2023

The conference provides hands on and break-out sessions that will focus on insights and interventions with strategies to close any learning loss associated with the effects of COVID-19. There will be sessions focused on strengthening mental and behavioral health supports, social and emotional supports, grading practices, literacy best practices, strengthened the guaranteed curriculum at each school, and developing a culture of investment.

EVIDENCE-BASED SECONDARY LITERACY PRACTICES or "THE SCIENCE OF READING FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS"

These 3 reports from the What Works Clearinghouse outline and detail recommendations based on empirical evidence, so yes, we do have a "Science of Reading" in the secondary space:

- [Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom & Intervention Practices](#)
- [Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4-9](#)
- [Teaching Secondary Students to Write Effectively](#)



Read [The Stories We Were Told](#). From Part 1 in the series: "Over the past month or so, the podcast *Sold a Story* by Emily Hanford via American Public Media has had quite an impact, permeating conversations amongst scholars, parents, and teachers on social media and the real world alike. For those of us, like my colleagues and I, who spend our days immersed in the work of literacy instruction, we've fielded questions from family, friends, and former colleagues asking what we think, if the reporting is accurate, or if we agree. As we compared notes, watched the varied and often heated responses unfold, and reflected on our own experiences, we realized: we too were sold stories, and in turn we sold them."

SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

February 2023

ARTSRAGEOUS ONLINE

ARTrageous Online! supports core curriculum learning for 7-12th grade students by introducing students to passionate and accomplished "thought leaders" in our community. They are artists, scientists, authors, activists, mathematicians, engineers, teachers, and creatives who have ideas and experience worth sharing. Vibrant video presentations, activities, and lesson plans support arts integration in English, Science, and Social Studies.



NEW NCTE POSITION STATEMENTS

- [Position Statement on Writing Instruction in School](#)
- [Position Statement on the Role of Nonfiction Literature \(K-12\)](#)

MISCELLANEOUS

- [How Does Writing Fit Into the Science of Reading from Education Week](#)
- [Civic Learning Week, March 6-10](#)

**Please note: LEAs have the duty to select instructional materials that best correlate to the core standards for Utah public schools and graduation requirements. (UCA 53G-4-402(1(a))). Posting of these resources by USBE staff curriculum content specialists does not imply the resources have received official endorsement of the State Board. Educators are responsible to ensure use of these materials complies with LEA policies and directives.

myShakespeare™
Love to learn it.

myShakespeare provides media-rich, full-text editions of Shakespeare's plays for free. Some key features:

- Interviews with the characters illuminate themes and ignite discussion
- Performances of key scenes bring Shakespeare's language to life
- Animated videos explore the plays and their contexts
- Complete audio recordings emphasize clarity and comprehension.

SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

February 2023



The Book Love Foundation seeks teachers who demonstrate a passion for promoting a hunger for books. These teachers recognize the diversity of every class of readers, and they challenge each student to build an independent reading life of increasing depth and joy. Teachers who apply for a Book Love Foundation grant must demonstrate that they are already committed to the support of readers through current classroom practices such as maintaining access to a range of books, conferring regularly and purposefully to understand and support students' changing needs, and sharing their own contagious passion for reading inside and outside of their classroom.

Read about the [requirements](#) for a grant, and then apply for either a classroom library or book clubs.



[NPR's Student Podcast Challenge](#) is back – for a fifth year! Beginning in January and running through April, NPR will once again be hearing from thousands of student podcasters, all competing for their grand prizes and a chance to hear their stories on NPR.

This year's Student Podcast Challenge will **open for entries on January 6, 2023 and close on April 28**. As in past years, the NPR judges will choose winners in two categories: grades five through eight and grades nine through 12. Entries must be submitted by an educator or a student leader who's 18 years old or older.



SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

February 2023

THE NEWS LITERACY PROJECT RESOURCES

The [News Literacy Project](#), a nonpartisan national education nonprofit, provides programs and resources to help people of all ages become smart, active information consumers and equal and engaged participants in a democracy. The misinformation crisis requires a bold response, and NLP is meeting the moment by transforming its mission into a national movement to advance news literacy. Founded in 2008, NLP is the leading provider of news literacy education through its signature free e-learning platform [Checkology](#)® virtual classroom and other resources. NLP works with thousands of educators in all 50 states and more than 100 other countries.

[Checkology](#), NLP's industry leading, browser-based platform, includes nearly 20 lessons plus dozens of additional exercises and challenges that help students learn how to navigate today's challenging information landscape. NLP's [Checkology](#) lessons are aligned to Common Core literacy standards, social studies standards, NGSS, ISTE student standards and the C3 Framework. They gain the skills to identify credible information, seek out reliable sources, recognize misinformation and help stop its spread. The middle and high school cross-curricular lessons also provide an understanding of the role of the free press and the first Amendment in our democracy. [Checkology](#) features a directory of vetted journalists in the Newsroom to Classroom program who can speak with students, virtually or in-person. And its Check Center allows students to detect and debunk misinformation as they encounter it.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS IN WRITING & PROMISING YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS

Prompts are now available for the 2023 [Achievement Awards in Writing](#) and [Promising Young Writers](#) contests! NCTE encourages educators and administrators to share information on these school-based writing awards across the middle and secondary levels.

Here are key dates for the 2023 contests:

- November 2022: contest opens for submissions.
- **February 15, 2023: submission window closes.**
- May 2023: winners are announced.



SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

February 2023



ABOUT

StoryMaker is a free learning platform powered by PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs. It's your one-stop shop for projects, tutorials, and lesson plans connected to media making, digital journalism, and public broadcasting. Features include:

- a personalized dashboard to save your favorite resources,
- an educator directory to connect to like-minded educators and mentors, and
- a robust library chock full of activities, videos, and worksheets.

Our standards-based curriculum develops communication skills, critical thinking, and teamwork, and provides a strong foundation of storytelling skills to help students discover their place in the world.

BEGIN YOUR STORYTELLING JOURNEY

Youth media empowers students to use their voice, engage with people outside of school walls, discover new ideas and tell important stories. StoryMaker provides not only the resources, but pathways to do through a variety of tracks:

- Teach Media Literacy Skills
- Increase Civic Engagement
- Explore Science Journalism + STEM
- Experiment with Storytelling Formats
- Activate + Amplify Student Voice
- Motivate with Culturally Responsive Projects
- Start a Broadcast Curriculum

For more info visit: <https://story-maker.org/getting-started>

2022-23 PROMPTS, LESSONS, PROJECTS & CHALLENGES

SRL releases new projects, prompts, lessons and rapid responses as current events unfold. Check StoryMaker regularly as additional prompts will be published, including connections to Ken Burns' U.S. + The Holocaust and Making Black America. For more info visit: <https://story-maker.org/library>

