

SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

September 2025

Hello, ELA Colleagues!

After a rejuvenating summer, I hope you're all feeling recharged and that your school year is off to a great start. I'm looking forward to sharing new resources and ideas with you throughout the year, including some exciting professional learning opportunities that are coming soon. Stay tuned!

Naomi Watkins
USBE Secondary ELA Specialist
naomi.watkins@schools.utah.gov

I'M CURRENTLY ENJOYING:

- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou



P-12 ELA STANDARDS RESOURCES

[Link](#) to resource folder which includes:

- [Secondary ELA Webinars from 2023-24 and 2024-25](#)
- [Best Practices in Secondary ELA](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Reading Strand Standards Breakdown](#)
- [Speech Progression Chart](#)
- [Slides from summer 2023 professional learning](#)
- [Resources shared by other districts \(e.g., vertical alignment\)](#)
- [ACT Crosswalk](#)
- [Grades 6 - 12 Core Guides](#)
- [Formative Assessment Process Toolkit](#)
- [Bringing Grammar and Language to Life Through Evidence-Based Practices](#) (USBE guidance document written by Dr. Deborah Dean)
- [Disciplinary Literacy in Utah Schools](#) - USBE Guidance
- [USBE Dyslexia Handbook](#) - updated and revised
- **NEW!!!** [Clarifying Foundational, Content Area, and Disciplinary Literacies in ELA](#)

**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.



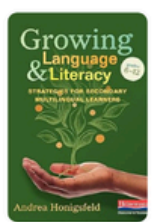
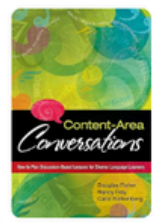
Transforming Instruction for Multilingual Learners IN SECONDARY ELA

Select one of five books to enhance your secondary ELA instruction, focusing on evidence-based practices to improve outcomes for MLLs. Learn alongside your PLC, department, or a chosen colleague in an asynchronous book study!
Earn 0.5 USBE credit | Free digital book copy



CONTENT-AREA CONVERSATIONS: How to Plan Discussion-Based Lessons for Diverse Language Learners by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, Carol Rothenberg

Summary

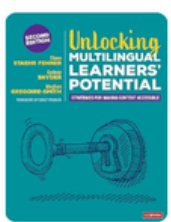
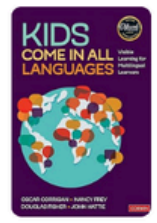


GROWING LANGUAGE & LITERACY: Strategies for Secondary Multilingual Learners by Andrea Hongisfeld

Summary

KIDS COME IN ALL LANGUAGES: Visible Learning for Multilingual Learners by Oscar Corrigan, Nancy Frey, Douglas Fisher, John Hattie

Summary

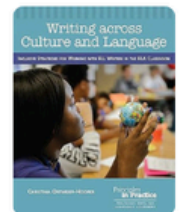


UNLOCKING MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS' POTENTIAL: Strategies for Making Content Accessible by Diane Staehr Fenner, Sydney Snyder, Meghan Gregoire-Smith

Summary

WRITING ACROSS CULTURE & LANGUAGE: Inclusive Strategies for Working with ELL Writers in the ELA Classroom by Christina Ortmeier-Hooper

Summary



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Looking for Professional Learning on Writing Instruction?

2024-25 SECONDARY ELA PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WEBINARS

Topics	Presenters
Writer's Craft	Dr. Deborah Dean
Effective Writing Assignments	Dr. Amber Jensen & ELA educator
AI in Secondary ELA	Matt Winters
Explicit Writing Instruction	Dr. Naomi Watkins
Effective Writing Assessments	Dr. Amber Jensen & Megan Wight
Morphology	Katie Wilburn, Univ. of Virginia
Playful Poetry	Jason Stephenson, Red Dirt Poetry
Reflection Writing	Dr. Amber Jensen & ELA educator

If you are interested in receiving 0.5 USBE credits for your participation in the 2024-25 Secondary ELA Professional Learning Webinars, you will need to enroll in the Canvas course to complete the following tasks:

- Attend or view 7 webinars
- Complete reflections for the 7 webinars you attend or view
- Provide evidence of implementation of at least one instructional practice with students or working with educators

There were a total of 8 webinars. You select the 7 webinars that are most of interest or applicable to you. More information about what these tasks entail and how to submit this work will be provided within the Canvas course. You will have until December 31, 2025 to complete all of the required work to receive credit.



REGISTER NOW

Join us for the

LOVE OF READING CONFERENCE

EXPLORE EVIDENCE-BASED SESSIONS ON:

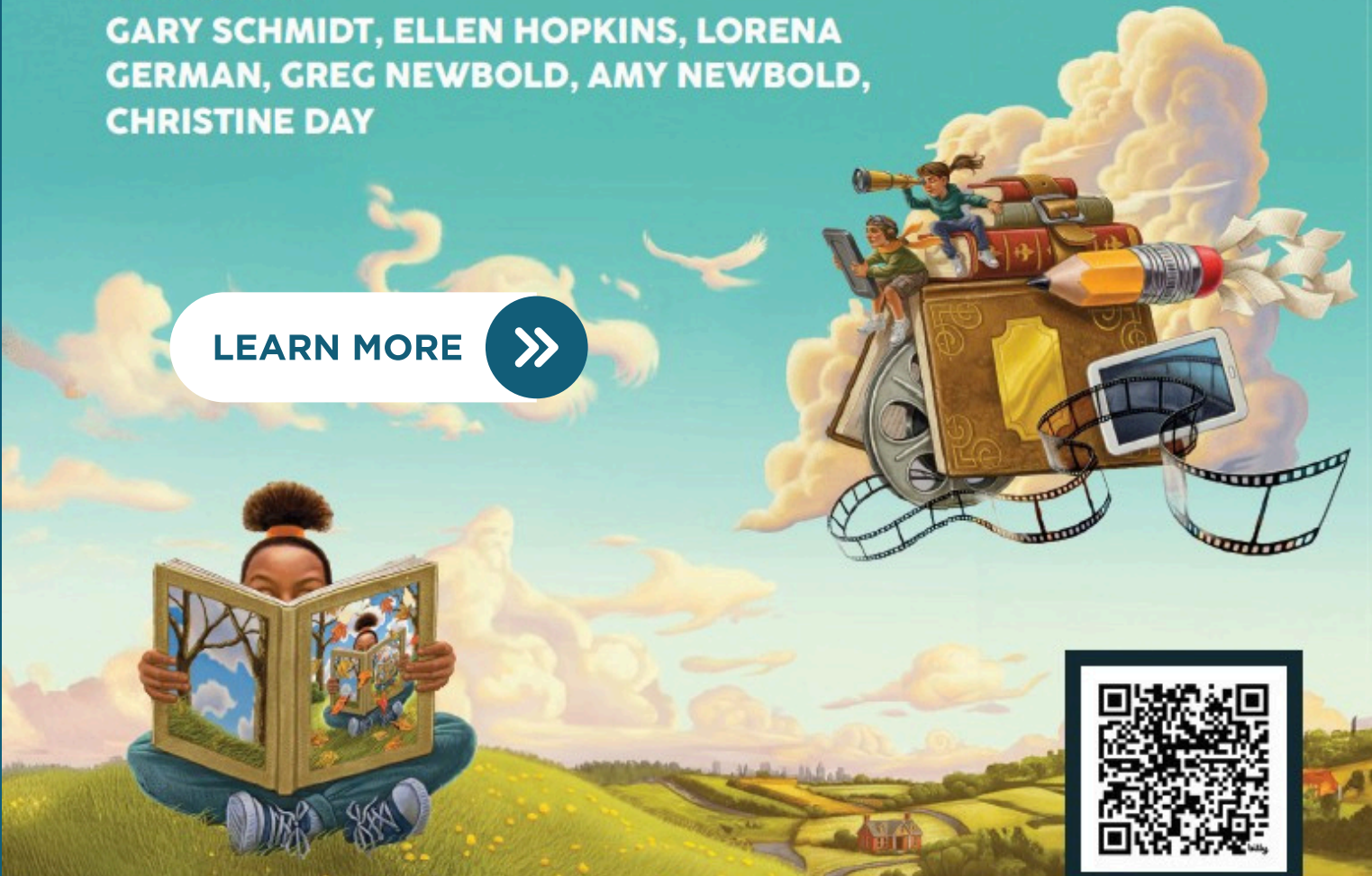
- Interventions for struggling readers
- Applying the science of reading
- Meaningful teacher read-aloud experiences
- Reigniting the love of chapter books
- The use of AI in ELA instruction
- Fueling reader engagement
- Guiding children through challenges with literature

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THE BEST IN BOOKS AND TEACHING. LET'S CHANGE LIVES THROUGH LITERACY TOGETHER!

KEYNOTES:

GARY SCHMIDT, ELLEN HOPKINS, LORENA GERMAN, GREG NEWBOLD, AMY NEWBOLD, CHRISTINE DAY

LEARN MORE



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POETRY OUT LOUD

Utah Arts & Museums is thrilled to announce the return of the Poetry Out Loud competition for Utah 9–12th graders this coming school year. This annual, nationwide poetry reciting competition offers students the chance to dig deep into great works of poetry while competing for cash prizes and the chance to represent our state at the national finals in Washington, D.C. next spring. Poetry Ourselves, our writing competition for original high school poetry, will be returning as well. Registration for both competitions will begin this fall.

[LEARN MORE](#)

**DO
THE
WRITE
THING**


HELP STOP THE VIOLENCE

The USBE Prevention Team is once again hosting and managing the 2025–2026 Do the Write Thing Challenge. **Teachers are invited to join a webinar scheduled for September 23, 2025, from 3:00 pm – 3:30pm.** The webinar will provide an overview of the Challenge, classroom lesson plans, resources, and guidelines on how to facilitate student-friendly discussion about the topic. Join the webinar live via this [Zoom link](#).

For instructions on how to participate, teachers can visit the [Utah Do the Write Thing Challenge website](#) or contact Cuong Nguyen @ Cuong.Nguyen@schools.utah.gov for more information.

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GENERATION VOLUNTEER

GENERATION VOLUNTEER SUMMIT

The Generation Volunteer Summit is a free annual conference hosted by [UServeUtah](#), the state's commission on service and volunteerism, to empower the next generation of community leaders. The summit is designed to inspire, inform, and equip young people with the tools, knowledge, and motivation to make a meaningful impact through community and civic engagement.

This event will be held on Saturday, November 8th at the SLCC Taylorsville campus from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Young changemakers age 15–25 are invited for a day packed with breakout sessions, inspiring keynotes, prizes, and service projects. Breakfast, lunch, snacks and materials are included, and students who attend the full-day are eligible to receive eight verified volunteer or service hours.

[Registration](#) is open now. For more information on how you can promote this to your students or be a chaperone, please review the [partner toolkit](#).



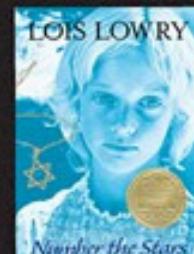
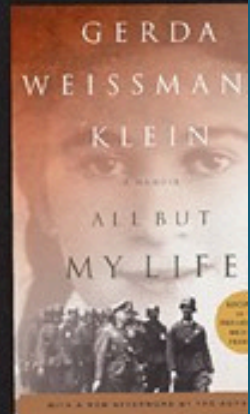
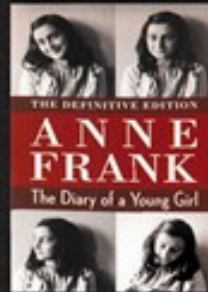
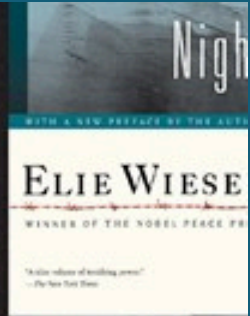
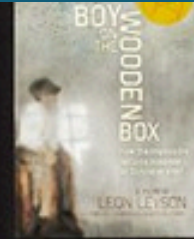
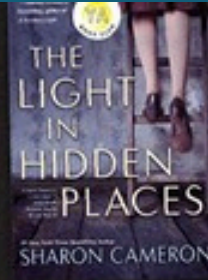
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VIRTUAL EVENT

Exploring Holocaust Literature

in the Classroom



REGISTER NOW

by U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

Thursday, October 23, 2025

7 p.m. ET | VIRTUAL & FREE

Join us for a free virtual program on how to effectively teach the Holocaust while building essential literacy skills. This workshop is designed for middle and high school educators and will be led by experienced teachers.

You'll learn how to use historical context to help students understand the Holocaust's impact on people and communities, and discover instructional strategies that strengthen skills like close reading, writing, and analysis.

As a bonus, we will send a free copy of Lois Lowry's *Number the Stars* to all U.S. and U.S. territory educators who register.

Key topics will include:

- Approaches for building historical understanding and literacy skills simultaneously
- Strategies for developing skills like close reading, writing, and analysis
- Foundational teaching resources based on the museum's primary source collection
- The benefits of cross-curricular connections

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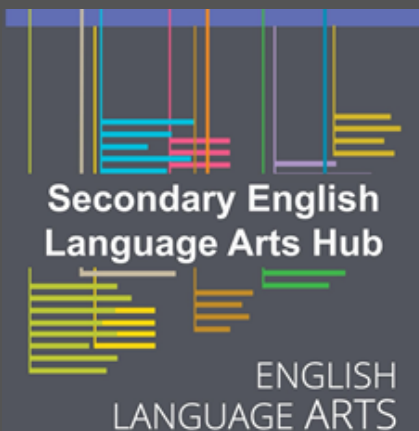
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UTAH FILM FESTIVAL WORKSHOPS

Calling all content creators and future filmmakers! Tumbleweeds workshops give kids the tools to tell great stories and up their filmmaking game! Our workshops will feature filmmaking and camera use, editing, green screen, stop motion animation, and MORE! These hands-on workshops will have your kids making awesome content they can share with their friends, family and beyond.

[LEARN MORE](#) 

UEN SECONDARY ELA MEDIA HUB



UEN has curated a hub for secondary ELA resources. Phase 1 is now live, and we will be continuing to evaluate and add resources. If you have quality online resources that you frequently use, feel free to send them my way so we can get them on the hub.

[→ LEARN MORE](#)



BOOK LOVE

F O U N D A T I O N

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.

TeachingBooks is...

a dynamic, PreK–12 a dynamic collection of resources that strives to deepen understanding, engagement and joy of the books they are reading.. With hundreds of thousands of engaging video, audio, and online resources, TeachingBooks brings to life the books that are enjoyed in your community.

Access Directions

1. Go to www.TeachingBooks.net/Utah
2. Sign in with your school email address
3. Start exploring and enjoy!

To explore without logging in, visit <https://onlinelibrary.uen.org/>



For assistance, please email accounts@TeachingBooks.net or call 216-573-6886 (press 2).

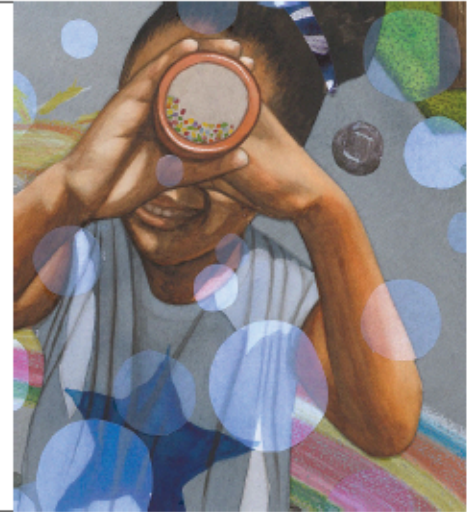


Image courtesy of Bryan Collier

Exploration Suggestions



Search for resources about a book, author/illustrator, or subject, using the search box on the top of the screen.



Explore the resources, including Meet-the-Author interviews, Read-along Book Recordings, Leveled Lesson Plans, Video Book Trailers, Literature-based Vocabulary Lists, and more.



Browse the books, authors, lists, series, awards, and collections. Highlights include...

- Grade Level, Genre, and Cultural Area exploration.
- Diverse Books Collection
- Meet-the-Author and Illustrator Original Resource Collection



Share tools provide immediate access to the book and author resources of your choice. No sign-in required.

Distribute via...

- QR Code Printables
- Any Digital Platform



Technological Highlights



Any Device

including phones, tablets, and computers, deliver literacy connections to everyone in your community.



Home Screen Button

for Apple and Android devices includes scanning a barcode to immediately have resources for the book in your hand!



Integration

into Clever, Canvas, Classlink, Google Classroom, and more.



Sharing tools

so that teachers, students, administrators, and families can seamlessly learn about and access materials via email, text, QR code flyers, and more.

Utah TeachingBooks Webinars

Visit <https://www.uen.org/uosl/webinar-archive.shtml> to access current webinars and trainings.

Activities & Lessons



Book Readings



Book Trailers



Games



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Where books come to life

Author Interviews



Want to learn more?

TeachingBooks.net/QuickStart



Questions?

800-596-0710

accounts@TeachingBooks.net

TeachingBooks.net/Help

READY TO ADVANCE YOUR CAREER

Master's of Education (M.Ed) in Literacy Education AND Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement

Literacy Education at the University of Utah develops literacy professionals and leaders in a variety of educational settings

Contact Us:
Program Director, Dr. Claire Son
literacy@utah.edu

Program Overview

Our program provides research-based professional education, dedicated to develop exemplary practitioners and leaders in the field of literacy. We are committed to support research-informed teaching practices to ensure literacy learning for all students.

Students can take individual endorsement courses, which can count toward a master's degree in literacy education (33 credits).



Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement

We offer USBE approved courses to fulfill all ten competency areas for Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement.

- (Area 1) EDPS 6711-030 Foundations of Literacy
- (Area 2) EDPS 6631-030 Assessment and Intervention
- (Area 3) EDPS 6126-030 Content Area Literacy Instruction
- (Areas 4,5,6) EDPS 6713-030 Literacy Acquisition
- (Area 7) EDPS 6840-030 Vocabulary
- (Area 8) EDPS 6714-030 Comprehension
- (Area 9) EDPS 6130-030 Writing
- (Area 10) EDPS 6124-030 Children & Adolescent Literature in the School

A Different Kind of Program

Our courses are fully online with summer and evening classes to accommodate a working schedule of professionals, including:

- PreK-12 educators
- Literacy specialists
- Reading coaches
- School media/library specialists
- Special education teachers
- School administrators

Our core courses are offered at a significantly reduced rate for educators. Merit-based scholarships are available for master's students.

With rolling admission, you can start your study during any semester.





University of Utah Reading Clinic AND Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement

The UURC was established in 1999 by the Utah Legislature to serve K-12 educators, students and families.

Contact:
Director, Dr. Kelly C. Patrick
uurc@utah.edu

Overview

The UURC provides evidence-based professional learning experiences for Utah educators seeking to develop best practices in literacy instruction.

Educators can participate in a **school-based clinical practica** or **enroll in select individual endorsement courses** (applicable toward a Master's degree in Literacy Education)

Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement

We offer USBE approved **certificates** and **courses** to fulfill 9 of 10 competency areas for the Secondary Literacy Interventionist Endorsement.

Requirement Area 2: Assessment Informed Instruction

Tier I Word Study, Higher StepsSM, WRS[®] Lvl 1

Requirement Area 3: Planning & Differentiated Instruction

Tier I Fluency/Comp., Higher StepsSM, WRS[®] Lvl 1

Requirement Area 4-5: PA and Phonics Tier I Word Rec/Fluency, Higher StepsSM, WRS[®] Lvl 1

Requirement Area 6-8: Fluency/Vocab./Comp. Tier I Fluency/Comp., Higher StepsSM, WRS[®] Lvl 1

Requirement Area 9: Writing Tier I Writing about Challenging Text

Requirement Area 10: Motivation & Engagement Tier I Text, Writing about Challenging Text

Supported hands-on learning

Certificate Practica can be scheduled at Utah schools, during school hours and include:

- clinical trainings with modeling and lesson planning support
- 1:1 feedback sessions with UURC Intervention Specialist
- fulfill 9 of 10 competencies
- graduate credit included for successful completion

Online Courses:

- available in summer and evenings
- significantly reduced rate



UNIVERSITY OF UTAH READING CLINIC
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION | THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH



Earn your Secondary Literacy Interventionist endorsement

The School of Teacher Education and Leadership is now offering 5 courses that will count towards a Secondary Literacy Interventionist endorsement through the Utah State Board of Education. Join us and finish your endorsement in just 3 semesters! This sequence of endorsement courses can be started during any semester and will be offered yearly. For more information on literacy courses at USU, contact Dr. Marla Robertson: marla.robertson@usu.edu.

All courses will be offered either online or through synchronous broadcast over Zoom. Students are not required to attend through a USU campus.

Courses (3 credits each):

- TEAL 5380 Effective Writing Instruction
- TEAL 5320 Foundations of Literacy*
- TEAL 6350 Literacy Assessment and Intervention
- TEAL 6340 Adolescent Literacy Development and Engagement
- TEAL 6310 Multi-Component Literacy Instruction and Interventions

**If you have completed LETRS training, you can be exempt from taking TEAL 5320.*

These courses can also count towards a Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction at USU. To learn more about graduate programs visit cehs.usu.edu/teal/graduate/master-of-ed or contact Dr. Max Longhurst: max.longhurst@usu.edu.

To view the Secondary Literacy Interventionist endorsement application scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/SIL-endorsementapplication



Emma Eccles Jones
College of Education & Human Services
UtahStateUniversity

