

# SECONDARY ELA NEWSLETTER

November 2022

Hello, Secondary ELA Colleagues!

In these times, we need to take the wins when we can. After the past few years, Utah's 8th graders remained steady in their reading on NAEP. I'll take it -- and with an eye to how help our students and ourselves navigate this new world we live in. I'm also eyeing upcoming holiday breaks. I'm sure you are, too!

Naomi

## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

- [Teacher Resources from National Museums & Archives](#)
- [Debbie Reese's American Indians in Children's Literature Blog](#)
- [Resources from UEN](#)
- [10 New Children's Books by Native American & Indigenous Authors](#)

### I'M CURRENTLY ENJOYING:

- The Bear River Massacre: A Shoshone History by Darren Parry
- Selena Gomez: My Mind & Me on Apple TV+
- Taylor Swift's Midnights

### NCTE ANNUAL CONVENTION

Are you joining other ELA educators across the country for NCTE's annual convention in Anaheim from Nov. 17-20?

If so, I'd love to see you!



### CONTACT INFORMATION

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## Educator Spotlight

**Ashley Marks**  
**Orion Jr. High School**  
**Weber School District**



- ✓ In her 2nd year as English Dept. Chair
- ✓ Currently training for a half-marathon that will be held in June at West Yellowstone
- ✓ Started a non-profit, The Better Together Project, whose aim is to help other nonprofits in my community, specifically those helping the unsheltered population in Ogden.
- ✓ Favorite book: Salt to the Sea, by Ruta Sepetys

### WHO INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A TEACHER?

It was the example and support from my 7th-grade teacher, Mrs. Burnett, that fostered in me a love for reading and writing. Mrs. Burnett always created a positive learning environment within her classroom. She continually spent time discussing books and encouraging her students to look at the world through a writer's lens.

**To nominate a secondary ELA educator to highlight in the monthly newsletter, contact [brenda.mcmurtrey@schools.utah.gov](mailto:brenda.mcmurtrey@schools.utah.gov)**

### WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST REWARDING PART OF TEACHING?

I am always looking for new ways to reach her students. I feel that passion plays a vital role in being a great teacher. I have even created her own classroom library to help students have easy access to a wide variety of genres.

### WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT TEACHING ELA TO KIDS?

I want my students to feel my interest and passion for what I teach. My goal is to ignite in them a love for English!

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## GOV. COX ANNOUNCES THE 2022-23 DO THE WRITE THING CHALLENGE

The Office of the Governor and the Utah State Board of Education invites you and your students to participate in Utah's 23rd Annual Do the Write Thing Challenge.

The Challenge offers 7th and 8th grade students across the state an opportunity to examine the impact of youth violence on their lives and then write what they think should be done to change the culture of violence.

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate the Challenge into their regular classroom curriculum. Lesson plans, rules, entry forms and additional can be found on [the website](#).

## AWM & MfA ESSAY CONTEST

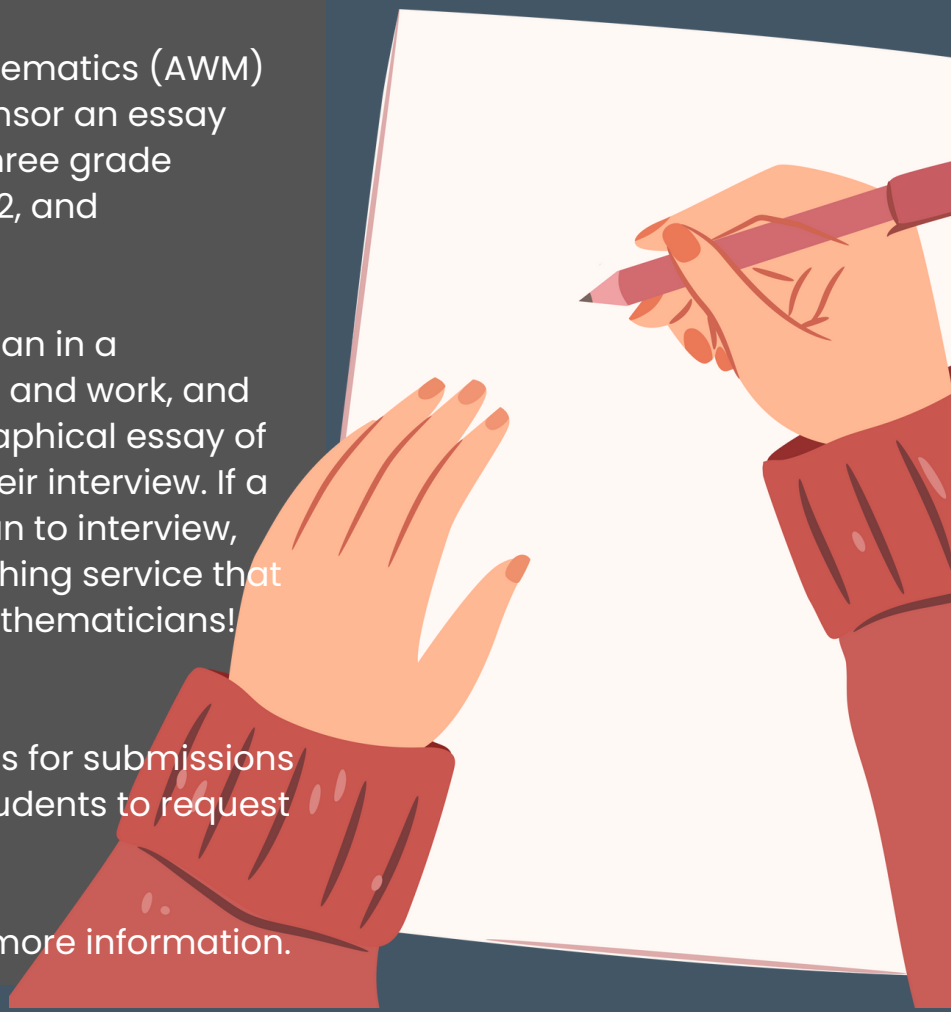
The Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) and Math for America (MfA) cosponsor an essay contest each year for students in three grade categories: Grades 6-8, Grades 9-12, and Undergraduate.

To enter, students interview a woman in a mathematical career about her life and work, and then they write and submit a biographical essay of about 500-1000 words based on their interview. If a student wants help finding a woman to interview, they can ask us -- we have a matching service that connects students with women mathematicians!

Important dates:

- December 1, 2022: Contest opens for submissions
- January 10, 2023: Last day for students to request a match with an interviewee
- February 1, 2023: Entry deadline

Visit the [essay contest website](#) for more information.



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## SHOUT OUT TO ALL-DAY ELA PODCAST

Scott Christensen and Lesli Morris at Canyons School District have started a podcast to address all things secondary ELA in their district and beyond. [Give it a listen!](#)

## SECONDARY LITERACY DIRECTOR MEETINGS

- November 15, 1-3pm | virtual
- January 24, 1-3pm | virtual
- March 21, 1-3pm | virtual

message [brenda.mcmurtrey@schools.utah.gov](mailto:brenda.mcmurtrey@schools.utah.gov) for an invite

## CIVICS INNOVATION GRANT

THE FALL ROUND IS OPEN for HB 273 Local Innovations Grants Program! The purpose of this three-year grant program is to support evidence-informed local innovations in civics teaching and learning. Applications are due November 30th.

- See the USBE's grant announcement [HERE](#)
- For inspiration, read about the [grantees in round 1](#). Or check out [THESE IDEAS](#) from the UCLC listening tour.
- USBE encourages applications from rural areas and more proposals in category 3 (academic service learning).



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## LIBRARY OF CONGRESS VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

Involve your students in collecting veterans' stories or utilize the stories in lessons & research.

## APPLY TO THE PBS LEARNING MEDIA PILOT TESTING PROGRAM

Calling all educators! PBS LearningMedia is currently seeking ELA and Social Studies educators in grades 6-12 to pilot test educational materials created for the Ken Burns in the Classroom collection. This paid opportunity will require implementing materials in your class, providing sample work, and when possible, allowing classroom observation by a member of the PBS LearningMedia team.

[Apply Now.](#)

VETERANS  
DAY



## 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](#)

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## STATUE OF MARTHA HUGHES CANNON HEADS TO D.C. SOON

- [Request](#) a Martha Hughes Cannon digital toolkit and celebrate the upcoming installation of her statue in the U.S. Capitol with your students!
- Download [Better Days' Utah Women's History curriculum](#) on Canvas with ELA strands & connections



## TUMBLEWEEDS KIDS FILM COMPETITION WITH UTAH FILM CENTER

Utah K-8 learners may submit entries for the [2023 Tumbleweeds Kids Film Competition](#) from now through Feb 14. Prizes include free access to exclusive workshops, recognition at a red carpet event and have their shorts screened during the 2023 Tumbleweeds Film Festival.

## SHE STARTED IT FOR ALL OF US 2022-23 STUDENT ART CONTEST

Utah women make history, but they're often missing in our textbooks, classrooms, and public art. We need your help to change that! Students grades 4-12 are invited to submit original art portraying a Utah woman who has made a difference in their community. Share this contest with your students and consider making it a class assignment!

Better Days' annual student art contest is open for submissions through January 25, 2023.

Visit [their website](#) to access a flyer with more details and to submit artwork.



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## 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.

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## 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>



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## JOIN THE POETRY OUT LOUD 2023 COMPETITION

This national competition encourages Utah's 9th-12th graders to engage with great poetry through memorization and performance. More than \$100K in prizes is awarded to students and schools; a \$20K award goes to the national champion. Student workshops with Utah Poet Laureate Lisa Bickmore are available.

Regions will advance one winner to the state final competition, to be held on March 8, 2023. State winners can compete at the national competition in Washington, D.C., in April 2023.

[Register by January 27, 2023.](#) More info [here.](#)

## FREE TICKETS FOR EDUCATORS!

Educators throughout the state can visit the immersive art experience now playing at the IDEA Space within The Leonardo Museum located in downtown Salt Lake City at Library Square. Simply follow [this link](#) and use code TeachArt22 to check out Van Gogh 360, Monet to Kandinsky, Italian Renaissance, Great Impressionists, or Monet To Kandinsky En Español. The code is good for **two complimentary admissions** through the month of October. Art Through Experience programming is open Wednesday through Sunday.

Link to ticketing [here.](#)

**\*\*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.