

Secondary Reading League

Volume 3 Issue 6
March 5, 2014

A Letter from the President

I am so excited for IRC's annual conference, that I can barely contain myself! I just downloaded the guidebook app and now can peruse the entire conference in the palm of my hand! I am a bit of techie and love my gadgets so this just makes me giggle with even more anticipation for the conference than usual. Of course, it doesn't help that I am completely fangirling over both the professional authors and the novelists that will be there. I have added plenty of time in to swoon over them in their sessions and the autograph booths. I am also very proud that we have several SRL members presenting at the conference, so be sure to include time to see the presenters in our SRL strand. The best thing about this conference is the absolute depth and breadth of the presenters so there is always something for everyone. You will find sessions on Common Core, reading, writing, collaboration, motivation, and so much more. I always come back with an arsenal of ideas to incorporate into my classroom on the following Monday. See you in Springfield!

Cordially,

Cindi Koudelka

SRL President, srl@illinoisreadingcouncil.org

For Your Professional Library, May We Suggest...*Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions*

Patti Tylka
SRL Secretary

"When students know how to ask their own questions, they take greater ownership of their learning, deepen comprehension, and make new connections and discoveries on their own; however, this skill is rarely, if ever, deliberately taught to students," say Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana, co-directors of the Right Question Institute. Rothstein and Santana make a case for the importance of teaching students how to ask their own questions, and they provide a step-by-step process to help students formulate and prioritize questions in *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions* (Harvard Education Press: 2011).

Rothstein and Santana argue that education can be transformed if students, rather than teachers assume

-Continued on page 2-

In the Classroom with Patti Tylka

Find the Fiction (modified)

Looking for a way to improve students' ability to ask and answer questions? Try a variation of Find the Fiction. Also known as Two Truths and a Lie, this activity is often used as a teambuilder: Each student writes two true statements and one false statement about him/herself. Then, teammates use their background knowledge to guess the false statement. (Find a quick YouTube explanation at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cBOLE9OPyg>.) Find the Fiction is a great way to get students to connect to each other, but with a little modification, teachers can transform this simple teambuilder into a powerful thinking and discussion activity. Here's how:

After reading a text, each student in the team focuses on a different portion. Carefully rereading the assigned segment of the text, each student crafts a multiple choice question that he/she thinks might "stump" his teammates. (The teacher may first want to model good questions.) The object is to focus on important comprehension elements, such as "The main argument of the passage is ..." or "Which of the following events was the first to occur?" or "As it is used in the passage, the word ___ means ..." Next, the students meet in expert jigsaw groups; three or

-Continued on page 2-

IRC Conference

SRL Meet -n-Greet

Your days at the conference will be a whirlwind of amazing speakers, exhibits, and learning so you will want to kick back and relax with good friends at the end of your day. SRL would like to extend an invitation to join us Thursday evening at the Celtic Mist Pub at 117 7th St. (right across from the Abraham Lincoln Hotel) beginning at 8:30 pm. Although this is not an official reception, it will be a fun time to hang out with colleagues, unwind, and swap stories with other conference attendees.

Executive Board Positions Openings

As we come into spring, it is already time to think about SRL officers for next year and we need YOUR help! The following positions will be up for election and we would love to have you join our dedicated executive board. Our organization is only as good as its active membership, so please consider running for a position.

-Secretary – takes minutes at executive and general membership meetings; one-year commitment

-Treasurer – manages the finances for the organization; deposits money, writes checks, keeps accurate record keeping via QuickBooks, and submits report annually to IRC and IRS for auditing; one-year commitment

-Membership Chair- tracks and maintains membership records and notifies members of upcoming renewals; assists with membership drives and completes related paperwork to turn into IRC; one-year commitment

-Vice-President – works with Executive Board to help with events and decision-making; moves up to President-Elect during the second year to plan events, and then to President during the third year to coordinate and ensure smooth operations; in the final year you are Past-President and continue as a mentor; four-year commitment

If you are interested in running for a position, please contact Cindi Koudelka at koudelka@fieldcrest.k12.il.us by April 1, 2014. We will be voting during the general membership meeting/Pizza Dinner-Book Talk on April 10.

Professional Library

-Continued from page 1-

responsibility for posing questions. *Make Just One Change* is founded on two principles: (1) all students should and can formulate their own questions and (2) all educators can easily teach the skill as part of their regular classroom procedures. The book provides an easy-to-use format for teaching students the Question Formulation Technique, and it gives examples of how to use QFT in the classroom. For example, teachers can use QFT to introduce a unit, guide students to process new information and to assess students' knowledge. Students might use QFT to develop science projects, develop research projects, prewrite an essay, analyze a word problem, prepare for an interview, or examine a reading passage.

For teachers, the "one change" is a small but significant change in practice: They become the facilitators as students ask the questions.

Tech Tip Time

Camille Lutz

SRL President Elect

Chances are many of you have "pinned" on Pinterest; there are so many great ideas from hair styles and recipes to weddings and bulletin boards. While there are some great ideas related to education shared through Pinterest, have you checked out Learnist? It works a lot like Pinterest, but, if you ask me, provides so much more for those of us in the field of education. There's boards related to professional development like flipped classrooms and technology integration in the classroom. Additionally, you can keep all your favorite and relevant resources in one place and follow like-minded educators or collaborate with other colleagues on boards for cross-curricular activities. Did I peak your interest? You can learn more at learnist.com or download the free app for your iPad, iPhone, or Android.

Find the Fiction

-Continued from page 1-

four students who focused on the same selection share their questions, helping each other to hone the question and the possible answers. Meanwhile, the teacher is moving among the teams, checking the questions and advising each group. Once they have polished their questions and answers, members of each expert group share, so that each student now has an additional 2 or 3 well-crafted questions.

Each expert returns to his/her original team, and the "game" begins: Student one poses one question and the possible answers to his teammates. On their own, each of other students is encouraged to consult the text before choosing an answer. Each one writes down the answer or displays a "A is correct," "B is correct," or "C is correct" sentence strip. It is important that every student commit to an answer, even if that answer is a guess. Then, students take turns justifying their answers using textual evidence. If possible, teammates come to consensus. After discussion has ended, the expert reveals the correct answer, and teammates congratulate each other for choosing the correct answer or applaud the expert for stumping them. Next, another student poses his/her question and answers to the team. Play continues until all questions are asked or the teacher calls time. As a sponge activity for any team who finishes early, the team revisits the text, crafting questions about the text as a whole.

Mark your calendar for our annual Young Adult Book Talk & Pizza Dinner held April 10th from 5:30 to 9:00 pm at Lou Malnati's in Naperville.