

# Secondary Reading League

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## Big Ideas from IRA 2014

**Patti Tylka**  
**SRL Secretary**

The IRA Conference 2014 in New Orleans was a whirlwind of interesting experiences and an opportunity to hear some of the foremost experts in literacy. What did they say? Here are five big ideas that continue to resonate with me:

1. In his presentation on text complexity, Doug Fisher stressed the equal importance of all three sides of the text-complexity triangle. Too frequently, he noted, teachers and administrators base decisions primarily on the quantitative score of a text, causing an inaccurate evaluation. For example, quantitatively, Hemmingway's *A Farewell to Arms* is appropriate for second and third grade readers! "Start with what the teachers know about the text," said Fisher.

2. Jan Burkins and Kim Yaris gave me questions to answer when preparing a lesson: Am I excited about teaching this lesson and why? How does this lesson help my students/me meet the expectations others place on my students and on me? How does the core of this lesson make future work easier, better, or deeper? How does this lesson teach students to love learning?

3. According to Tom Newkirk, "The most important reading we do is sustained reading." He said that reading narratives is the fundamental key to understanding the world. He, Penny Kittle and Kelly Gallagher concurred that good writers use narrative in persuasion and exposition to connect to readers. They suggested that teachers help students to recognize narrative in professional models and use it in their own pieces.

4. Peter Afflerbach stated, "Reading to answer comprehension questions, while common school practice, is rarely encountered in the reading done outside school." He stressed the importance of metacognition throughout the reading experience, not merely as a fix-up strategy and suggested that reading assessment focus on how students use the meaning they construct from text.

5. Laura Robb said, "We don't learn words by definition, we learn them by association," as she advocated using 10-15 minute lessons that focus on vocabulary words that help students unlock other words. She recommended that students make multiple connections to each word during the learning process.

Mark your calendars: IRA2015, Transforming Lives through Literacy, will be held in St. Louis, on July 17-20.

An Exclusively Secondary Literacy Conference for Grades 6-12  
Tinley Park Convention Center, 18451 Convention Center Drive, Tinley Park, IL

### Pre-Conference Workshop

*Friday, November 14, 2014*

Come to a special all-day workshop (9 am- 3pm) with

### Dr. Janet Allen

International Adolescent Literacy Expert

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### 38th Day of Reading

*Saturday, November 15, 2014*

Breakfast and lunch included in Registration Fee  
(\$145/SRL members, before 11-5-14)

#### ~ Marissa Meyer ~

Young Adult Author

~Author: *The Lunar Chronicles* (a new take on old fairy tales)

*Cinder*- YALSA Top Ten; Publishers Weekly Best of 2013

*Scarlet*- NY Times bestseller

*Cress*- Remember Rapunzel?

Best Books for Young Adults,

Quick Picks for Reluctant YA Readers (YALSA)

#### ~ Dr. Janet Allen ~

Internationally Known Adolescent Literacy Researcher

~ High school reading and English teacher for twenty years

~ Recognized for literacy work with at-risk students

~ Directed Central FL Writing Project; Assisted in creation of

Orange County Literacy Project

~ Milken Foundations' National Educator Award

~ Author: *Plugged-in to Reading; More Tools for Teaching Content*

*Literacy; Inside Words: Tools for Teach Academic Vocabulary, Grades 4-12*

Marissa Meyer's and Dr. Janet Allen's books will be sold & autographed at the conference.  
Only books purchased at the Pre-Conference & Day of Reading will be signed.

For more information contact:

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Terry McHugh 708-220-4544 tmchugh@dayofreading.org

Team Discounts Available

[www.dayofreading.org](http://www.dayofreading.org)

## Tech Tip Time with Camille Lutz

**SRL President Elect**

Are you looking for a quick, easy, and free way to stay in contact with your students? You should try Remind101! Whether you sign up online or through an app, Remind101 provides a great way for you to message your students (or parents of students) pertinent information in one quick swoop. All phone numbers are

kept private, messages can be created and scheduled to be sent at a later date, and they are one-way, so you will not receive any replies. Once you create a group in Remind101, a class code is provided for students to join the class, and the process is complete. Please be sure recipients understand if they provide a phone number, the message comes across as a text, and charges from their phone carrier will apply. If a phone number is not available, Remind101 will send messages to email addresses.