



MISSOURI READING INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER: FALL 2007

Meet the Missouri Reading Initiative Staff

The MRI office is always ready to help you with all your literacy needs. MRI is committed to serving our schools so the components of comprehensive literacy can be effectively implemented to improve student achievement.

When you call the MRI office at 417-520-0735, you'll be pleasantly greeted by secretary, Dianne Henry. Dianne will direct your call where it can best be answered, or office manager, Kristi McConnell, will be happy to help if necessary. If issues arise regarding data analysis in your district, Dr. Ira Edelman is the man you need to speak to. Ira is eager to help you in understanding and interpreting DRA, MAP, and other testing data. If you have needs about administrative leadership strategies or establishing Literacy Teams in your school, Dr. Anita Lael is the one to contact. Anita is a former MRI principal and will offer advice anyway she can. Of course, MRI Director, Dr. Becky Haseltine is involved with all aspects of the MRI program. Becky is committed to MRI services including the latest information on best instructional literacy practices delivered through the highest quality professional development possible to schools. *Please let us know what we can do for you!*

Upcoming Events

- Literacy Coaching Institute - Dec. 12
- Literacy Team Institute St. James - Dec. 14, Mar. 10, & May 12
- ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTE - Feb. 5 & June 2

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Missouri Reading Initiative Institute
"Literacy Camp"

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Dr. Jeffrey Wilhelm
June 4-6 2008
Branson, MO



Literacy can
color your
world....

Looking at "TO", "WITH", & "BY"

The very basic elements of comprehensive literacy instruction, in both reading and writing, are reading *to* students, *with* students, and students reading *by* themselves. Almost three decades ago, the Commission on Reading determined the single most important activity for building knowledge required for success in reading is *reading aloud* to students. MRI trainers show teachers how to make the most of their *read aloud* time by utilizing before, during, and after reading strategies. Before reading aloud it is critical that teachers activate

students' prior knowledge by telling them what the book is about and connecting the text to something they already know. During reading, teachers should model *thinking aloud* and assist students in making connections from the text to their own experiences, other texts, or current events. After reading, students should reflect on the text, focusing on various comprehension skills they used while listening. Using these strategies, reading aloud, is an essential teaching tool.

"What is Literacy?"

The ability to read, write, speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential."

-National Literacy Act of 1991

Good schools assume their most solemn responsibility is the task of teaching every child to read. Make no mistake; this is the critical business of education ...The success of the nation is inexorably linked to levels of literacy in society.

-Joseph Bennett

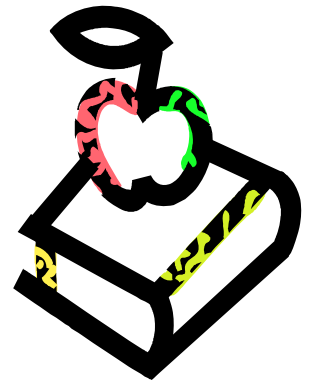
Are good things happening in your school as a result of the Missouri Reading Initiative? Send us your good news! Let us know! We'd love to feature your school in our newsletter and let the rest of the state know!

RESEARCH CORNER *"THE LATEST IN LITERACY"*

Linda Gambrell, professor at Clemson University, in a recent article in *Reading Today*, maintains that productive use of time for independent reading during the school day is critical to the development of proficient readers. Independent reading is an essential component of the MRI model of comprehensive literacy for grades K-12. Research has long shown that practice in reading is necessary for proficiency to develop. Currently, the pervasive feeling is that unless time for independent reading is not built into the school day, students will not receive this much needed practice. Having students engaged in independent reading while the teacher is working with a small group of students is an excellent way to schedule this time into the day. It will be time well spent for students.

Meet and welcome the new MRI Trainers

- **Kim Grayson-** *Bringing experience with both the Mo Writing Project and the classroom from Cuba, MO.*
- **Barbara James-** *As a former Springfield high school English teacher, Barbara adds lots to our secondary staff. She has also participated in the Mo Writing Project.*
- **Susan Kendrick-** *Susan has spent the past two years as a STARR teacher for Missouri. Prior to that she taught in the Paris, MO school dist.*
- **Kathy Heitmeyer-** *Trained in Reading Recovery, Kathy comes to MRI from the Paris, MO school district.*
- **Jennifer Deulen-** *Trained in Reading Recovery, Jennifer comes to us from the Nixa, MO school district.*
- **Shonna Crawford-** *Shonna most recently taught for Springfield Schools, but has also had experience in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma where she served as a Literacy Coach.*



Missouri Reading Initiative ADVISORY BOARD

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OUR MISSION:

The Missouri Reading Initiative is dedicated to working with Missouri public schools to ensure every student will be able to read and write proficiently.

Check out ReadWriteThink.org
 A nonprofit website maintained by the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English this site provides free lesson plans, interactive student materials, and Web resources for K-12 teachers of reading and communication arts.



Missouri Reading Initiative
 1409D W. Sunshine
 Springfield, MO 65807

Phone:
 (417) 520-0735

Fax:
 (417) 520-0739