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From the Editor

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From the Editor

Reading is a fascinating pastime and subject. Personally, I love to read a good book and am most passionate about fiction. I am also interested in supporting the literacy needs of my students by researching effective ways to enhance their reading comprehension. As we all know, reading is a complex process that comes easily for some and not so easily for others and, no matter the age, reading is also part of our daily lives. All day long – from the time on the early morning alarm clock that often makes us wish for just 15 minutes more to the memo from the boss to the good night story as we tuck our child to bed – we read. In addition, as we learned from our dear friend Louise Rosenblatt, we need to set a purpose for our reading. Where do we fall on that continuum? Are we at the efferent end reading for information, looking to take something away from the text, or are we engaged in the moment, that aesthetic reading that elicits strong emotions and empathy for the characters? There are so many facets to the reading process that we devote countless research and writing hours to helping us and others understand it. Reading is, indeed, fascinating.

This issue of *Reading Horizons* embodies many hours of research as the authors have tackled some interesting questions working with a wide age range of readers. Lynn Cohen, Rosanne Kurstedt, and Maria May investigated one facet of reading – the effect of narration and dialogue on oral reading fluency. Fascinated by a small study they did as doctoral students, they wanted to know if similar results would be found with third graders. Their research led them to the socio-psycholinguist work of Chomsky, Clay, Goodman, and Smith as well as to investigating reading comprehension, oral reading fluency, and text structure. Molly Ness looked at secondary social studies and science teachers, asking them if they taught specific comprehension strategies in their content area classrooms. This facet of reading illuminates how literacy instruction is perceived and utilized in the upper grades and highlights the fact that teachers are often loaded down with teaching content to pass a test and don't have the time to support those necessary literacy skills.

Susan Steffani and Paula Selvester worked with 20 kindergarten children, analyzing the link between vocabulary development, drawing, and picture naming, three other facets of reading. Their questions led them to understand the important place drawing as a form of visual communication has in the reading process. Peggy Daisey asked her pre-service education students to write personal literacy histories in which they described their past reading experiences. Upon reflection, these future educators revealed



that one's personal interest and enjoyment in reading truly does affect how they value reading both personally and professionally. While we may think that this facet of reading is a given, it is a harbinger of what is to come as our pre-service teachers turn into full-time teachers who will directly affect our students' lives as readers.

And what about that other intriguing facet of reading – boy readers and their literacy needs? Many of us are faced with a classroom of boys on a daily basis and we desperately try to find something to interest them. This issue has Terrell Young and Barbara Ward directing us to yet another list of great books, this time discussing books that are especially appealing to boys. From President Obama to bullfighters to “the art of fart,” these books are sure to pique the curiosity of boys everywhere. Next issue, our book experts will discuss books that appeal to girls.

With all those (and so many more) facets of reading, it is quite apparent that reading is a complex gemstone meant to be enjoyed and valued. And we, as literacy researchers, will keep that gemstone bright as we continue to ask those countless questions and share the many answers.

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**There is no more crucial or basic skill
in all of education than reading.**

