

READING, LANGUAGE, & LITERACY (RLL)

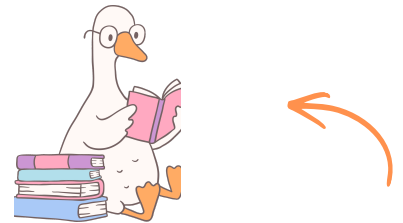
The Power of Relationships

Strong relationships are at the heart of powerful learning. When students feel seen, valued, and connected, they are more likely to participate, take academic risks, and persevere through challenges. pK–12 educators can nurture these connections through small, intentional actions: greeting students by name, listening with curiosity, celebrating growth, and creating opportunities for meaningful collaboration.

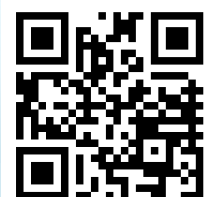
Relationships among students, families, and school communities matter, too. By building classrooms grounded in trust, respect, and belonging, educators create the conditions where every learner can engage and grow. Curriculum matters, but relationships help bring it to life. Connection is not separate from learning—it is what makes learning possible.

When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be..

Lao Tzu



We love audiobooks, and *Make Believe* is currently playing through our speakers. Mac Barnett is a great advocate for story telling!

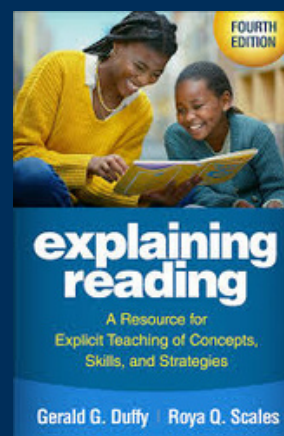
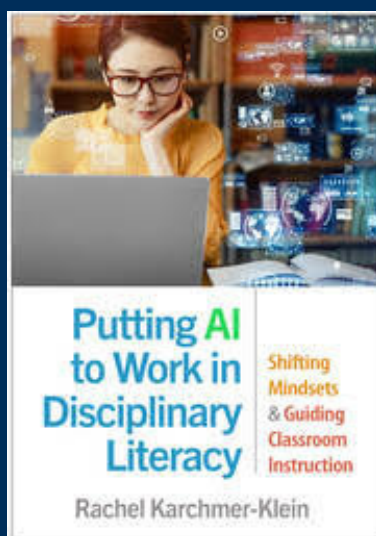
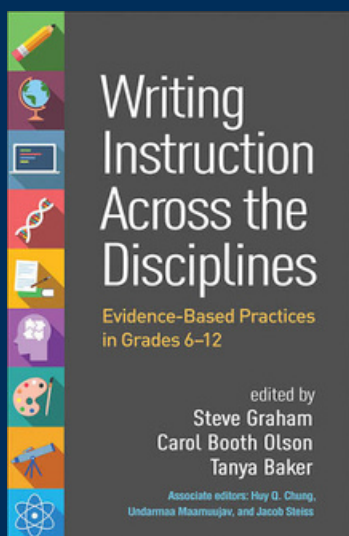


Information sessions for the next application cycle begin on November 4.

Are you interested in sharing your love for the RLL program? [Click here](#) to sign up to join a session! It will only take 30 minutes of your time.



Did you know that CSUSM Alumni keep their borrowing privileges? If you are a member of the [Alumni Association](#), you can check out books and use Library resources! Check out some new digital titles that have just arrived.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Leah Nadir

Leah is October's alumni spotlight, and she absolutely deserves this honor. Leah was interested in the differences and similarities between AI-generated and human-written texts, so she explored that in her thesis. [Check it out here](#), and we know you will find her results as interesting as we did!



I began my teaching career as a first grade teacher. First grade is a hugely important year for literacy development, and I quickly realized that teaching literacy was my greatest passion in education. After being trained in the Science of Reading and seeing the impact of structured literacy methods on my students' development, I knew that I wanted to specialize in literacy. The RLL program proved to be exactly what I was looking for. Not only did it provide me with a broad base of knowledge, it also emphasized literacy leadership in a way that showed me that I was capable of becoming a leader too.

One of my favorite sayings is "two things can be true," and this idea was ultimately one of my key takeaways from the RLL program. This program taught me that students must build strong foundational skills through explicit and systematic phonics and word recognition instruction. And, at the same time, they must have access to rich, complex text that will build their verbal reasoning, background knowledge, vocabulary, and syntactic understanding – in other words, their ability to make meaning from text. I now work as a literacy specialist, providing reading intervention services to upper elementary-aged students. One of my passions in this position is ensuring that all students are provided with opportunities to engage with complex text, and are given the support that they need in order to access it. The RLL program made clear that a student's decoding, word recognition, or reading fluency barriers should not inhibit their access to grade-level knowledge and vocabulary. It was empowering to learn that, as a literacy educator, I do not need to choose between systematic foundational skills instruction or knowledge building and meaning-making. Two things can be true, and our developing readers deserve both.

The program's emphasis on literacy as a tool for meaning-making sparked my interest in qualitative text complexity. A text's qualitative complexity reaches beyond numeric qualities like word and sentence length, taking into account subjective factors such as layers of meaning, complexity of the text structure, and level of background knowledge assumed by the author. As I was learning to evaluate texts for the qualitative factors that made them complex, I began to consider the rising prevalence of AI-generated texts in classrooms. This led to what ultimately became my thesis research question: How, if at all, do AI-generated texts differ in qualitative complexity from human-written texts intended for the same reading level?




CALIFORNIA READING ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE
SPARKING MEANINGFUL LANGUAGE AND LITERACY IN EVERY CLASSROOM

HIGHLIGHTS	COSTS FOR BOTH DAYS
Four Distinguished Keynote Speakers from Literacy Experts	Early Bird Registration from May - August
Four Featured Speakers in Elementary and Secondary Breakout Sessions	• \$75 for members • \$90 for non-members • \$25 for students
Diverse Author Panel	Regular Registration from September - October
California Young Reader Medal and Eureka Nonfiction Winners	• \$85 for members • \$100 for non-members • \$30 for students
Book Raffle	One-day options and group discounts are available.

[Link to Online Registration](#)
REGISTER NOW

RIDAY, OCTOBER 16 - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17
Fully Virtual Conference

www.californiareading.org

Leah's story continued . . .

My research project is a comparative analysis of qualitative text complexity in human-written and AI-generated short fiction. Ultimately, I found that while the AI-generated texts demonstrated a similar level of complexity to their human-written counterparts in the domains of Language and Structure, they demonstrated significantly lower complexity in the domains of Meaning and Knowledge. My conclusion is that AI platforms may be effective at mimicking the surface-level aspects of human writing, but that they are not yet successfully imitating the rich complexity of content found in human-written texts. As I continue striving to support my students in accessing high-quality complex text, I hope that my research will help other educators make informed decisions about when, how, and whether to utilize AI-generated text in their instruction. The RLL program taught me to think critically about my instructional materials and to recognize access to rich, authentic text as an equity issue. I will be forever grateful to this program for building my confidence as a literacy educator and empowering me to continue my lifelong journey in literacy leadership.

The RLL program is
now accepting applications
for cohort 2.9.

Help us spread the word!

