

*For there is always light,  
If only we're brave enough to see it.  
If we are brave enough to be it.*  
—Amanda Gorman

# English Department Capstone Conference



22 April 2022

Kirkhof Center

Grand Valley State University

Allendale, Michigan

# ENG 495 *Capstone Conference*

**22 April 2022**

**Kirkhof Center**

**Grand Valley State University**

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## Why a Capstone Conference?

The English Capstone provides several important opportunities for English majors not offered elsewhere in the curriculum: the opportunity to reflect individually on the intellectual impact of majoring in English (intellectual autobiography); the opportunity to engage in the development and writing of an extended paper (senior thesis); and the opportunity to participate in the public presentation of the thesis work (departmental student conference).

Our Capstone course underscores the department's principles and values: to cultivate critical reading and reflection; to produce excellent writing in a variety of forms; to speak, read, and write effectively; and to achieve literary, analytical, pedagogical, and theoretical skills.

This conference is the culminating event for the English Capstone course. It requires that students publicly present a project for which they have been responsible from its inception to its final form. The presentation makes concrete the expertise that students have accrued in the research process and allows them to speak as authorities on their topic. No matter what career our students enter, public speaking is an essential skill, as is the act of distilling complex knowledge into a compact yet comprehensible package. Thus, this final assignment for the Capstone course is the one that perhaps most clearly transitions students out of the major and into the next phase of their lives. We see this element of the course as a way to help students recognize each others' accomplishments—and to help them be proud of their own as they move forward into their various futures.

## Schedule

Session One: 9-9:50 a.m.

*Panels A, B & C*

Session Two: 10-10:50 a.m.

*Panels D, E & F*

Session Three: 11-11:50 a.m.

*Panels G, H & I*

Session Four: 12-12:50 p.m.

*Panels J, K, L & M*

Session Five: 1-1:50 p.m.

*Panels N, O, P & Q*

Session Six: 2-2:50 p.m.

*Panels R, S & T*

## Notes

Students will present in the order in which they appear in this program; a question-and-answer session will follow once all students on the panel have presented their papers.

Should you have questions, issues or concerns during today's program, please contact faculty in KC 2264.

**Panel A**  
**KC 2259****Exploring Genre**

Facilitators: Dr. David Alvarez &  
Dr. Rachel Anderson

**Grace Morgan**  
**‘Feminist**  
**Manifestation**  
**in the Canonical &**  
**Contemporary**  
**Gothic Genre’**

In 1892 Charlotte Perkins Gilman wrote “The Yellow Wallpaper,” one of the most influential and anthologized short stories within the literary canon. Perkins Gilman’s work employs the Gothic genre as a means to convey the very real domestic horrors that surrounded women in the nineteenth century. Since the publication of “The Yellow Wallpaper,” feminist and literary critics have written books, journals, and scholarly articles that emphasize the relationship between femininity and the Gothic genre, which is referred to as the “Female Gothic.” Throughout this thesis, I will be examining the intersection of gender and genre, specifically the ways in which the Gothic genre is used as a form of expression for feminist agenda. Additionally, I will be addressing the importance of repeating and rewriting these literary traditions, while analyzing the ways in which “The Yellow Wallpaper” has influenced both canonical and contemporary works of the Female Gothic.

**Hannah Nelson**  
**‘The Necessity of**  
**Fantasy’**

The purpose of this paper is to identify the ways fantasy functions within society. Throughout this essay, I will situate the use of fantasy in the elementary classroom, and will analyze fantasy as a means to cope with trauma, fantasy as a way to understand reality, and fantasy as an escape from reality. This paper analyses three fantasy novels: *The Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl, and *When You Trap a Tiger* by Tae Keller, arguing that each of these fantasy novels portrays trauma experienced through societal structures and the author’s personal experiences.

**Katie Spada**  
**‘Stop Shaming**  
**Romance: Empowering**  
**Women Who Enjoy**  
**Romantic Fiction’**

From the beginning of time, the relationship between women and reading has been complicated. Across the world, women have been told whether or not they could read, and then what they could and could not read. During Second Wave Feminism, prominent figures such as Kate Millett, Andrea Dworki, and Kay Mussel condemned their fellow women for reading

certain genres, including romantic fiction. Even today, there is discord on this topic. Women have been, and are still, judged for reading and enjoying romance. For many women readers, this has created a sense of shame in their reading habits. However, in recent years, especially due to the dawn of the internet and shared spaces, women are unashamedly sharing their reading habits like never before. Romance fiction is not something to look down upon and is a genre of merit for many reasons. Also, belittling women for enjoying a certain genre perpetuates sexism. It is important for society to stop shaming women for their enjoyment of romance fiction and for women to have spaces where they feel free to express their literary interests without fear or judgment.

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**Panel B**  
**KC 2266**

**Engaging Critically with Race in the Classroom**

Facilitators: Dr. Adeline Borti &  
Dr. Amy Masko

**Tyanna Marzean**  
**'Is My Student**  
**Destined to be a**  
**Prisoner? The School-**  
**to-Prison Pipeline'**

The school-to-prison pipeline refers to the likelihood of pushing students out of education systems into the criminal justice system. Evidence shows that students of color and from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to become subjected to the school-to-prison pipeline, whereas white and other advantaged students often don't fall into this horrid system. Harsh school punishments, such as zero-tolerance policies and teachers' racial biases work together to allow these particular students to fall into this pipeline. This paper will explore the historical background, causes and effects of the school-to-prison pipeline and provide ways to dismantle and put an end to this institutional racism that plagues our education system.

**Elizabeth Schoettley**  
**'The Role of Critical**  
**Race Theory in**  
**Education'**

Critical race theory, which is becoming more visible in the field of education, examines the connection between race and our country's laws and policies and serves as a tool to seek racial justice within the United States. This paper will discuss the origins of critical race theory as well as the practices and policies that contribute to the persisting racial inequalities within education. Many arguments have been made against the teaching of critical race theory, and this paper will

address those arguments while providing supporting evidence regarding the importance of including critical race theory within educational systems. Critical race theory affirms students' racial and ethnic backgrounds while allowing students to critique and identify the prevailing causes of social inequality within their own lives. It is essential that people are able to understand the way that race continually intersects with all aspects of one's life, and the beginning of that understanding and learning should begin within childhood education.

**Jessie Webb**  
**'Using the Principles of  
Critical Race Theory  
to Inform Teaching  
Practices'**

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is an important topic in the educational world today. As studies show, using CRT to inform teaching practices at younger ages has a greater impact on its effectiveness. This is why many scholars in the field of CRT are arguing for the necessity of employing it in their teaching practices. CRT helps children gain a greater understanding of how race plays a role in one's life and comprehend racial perspectives. I will also present an investigation into what CRT is, common misconceptions, and the pros and cons of utilizing it in today's classrooms. Many scholarly viewpoints place great emphasis on helping children understand how race affects opportunities they and others have, because this is what will help create future citizens that are better able to engage in their communities with well-rounded views informed by democratic values. Other scholars who argue against CRT in the classrooms are concerned that it is about creating guilt for those who are white, or causing emotional distress for young children. However, research shows that the incorporation of CRT has greater benefits in the classroom, and with the research available I aim to demystify misconceptions concerning the role of CRT in our society today.

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**Panel C**  
**KC 2270**

**Thinking Outside the Classroom**  
Facilitators: Dr. Patricia Bloem &  
Dr. Rob Rozema

**Elizabeth Bruxvoort**  
**'Language Learning  
in the Leaves'**

In schools, the time spent on traditional classroom activities has increased, leading to a decrease in the time students get to spend outside. This is detrimental for students' health and academic progress. However,

Forest Schools combine common curricula and outdoor teaching methods to pose a solution to this problem. Their flexible, social, and student-centered nature not only create a more enjoyable educational experience but offer benefits for students' learning capabilities that supersede the traditional classroom. The use of outdoor education in English language arts and ESL has produced incredible gains in literacy and language acquisition for traditional students and ELLs alike. These academic benefits include a stronger understanding of narrative and setting, increased vocabulary, and benefits for creative writing. Additionally, the highly contextualized nature of learning in forest schools creates an inclusive environment for ELLs who often struggle with the abstract nature of language and literature in traditional classrooms.

**Sadie Huizen**  
**'Drama-Based**  
**Pedagogy in the**  
**ESL Classroom'**

Drama-based pedagogy is the approach to classroom curriculum that uses active dramatic approaches to engage students in academic, affective, and aesthetic learning through dialogic meaning-making in all areas of curriculum. Drama and theater include various qualities of effective and clear communication, posing the question as to how these qualities impact the classroom learning environment. This teaching method emphasizes the intentional use of voice, inflection, and whole-body movement associated with learning, while also incorporating theatrical aspects throughout the teaching of common core subjects. The incorporation of drama-based pedagogy throughout schooling has proven to be a highly effective approach to teaching literacy in schools. Because drama-based pedagogy has been proven effective in a non-language learning environment, its effectiveness in language acquisition and language teaching will be challenged and explored through research studies and anecdotal evidence. My research explores how and if drama-based pedagogy can enhance the literacy and language acquisition skills of ESL students.

**Allison Skulbru**  
**'Kinesthetics:**  
**Why It Should Be**  
**Embraced in**  
**English Learning'**

Recent studies have shown the effectiveness of implementing kinesthetics into classroom education to enhance student learning and literacy skills. This paper will examine the several different learning styles and intelligences students possess, namely that referred to as kinesthetic learning. Kinesthetic learners increasingly fall through the cracks as they cease to

appropriately learn from traditional teaching methods, which are widely used across schools. This paper will include individual experiences, identify useful tools and strategies, such as Readers' Theater, and draw on data which supports the integrity of kinesthetic learning.

10 a.m.

SESSION TWO

**Panel D**  
**KC 2259**

**Madwomen, Demons, and Fairytale Villains**

Facilitators: Dr. Corinna McLeod & Dr. Ashley Shannon

**Alexander Childs**  
**'Temptation and the Representation of Demonic Forces in *The Screwtape Letters*'**

C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*, published in 1942, is one of the most comprehensive pieces of literature spoken entirely from the perspective of demonic beings. This is done specifically through the genre of epistolary fiction, which is the style in which the author uses the exchange of letters to display conversation between characters and progression of the plot. Lewis' work aims to capture the means by which human beings are tempted into abandoning their Creator, the Christian God, and engage in evil practices. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters* follows a long tradition of Christian and Secular Literature attempting to represent the battle of virtue and vice waging inside human souls. Lewis does, however, disagree with how authors of the past have chosen to represent this force, claiming that the slightest hint of virtue in a being meant to be the incarnation of Evil is catastrophic to readers. While there are many (un)satisfactory characteristics in how devils are displayed in the literature of the past, Lewis has the most comprehensively correct representation of demonic figures from the Christian tradition. This thesis will address the differences between the interpretations of demonic beings in the works of authors of the past, such as Austen and Milton, and of Lewis', and analyze how Lewis has been best able to capture the essence of evil in the two demonic characters Screwtape and Wormwood.

**Madison Scheuneman**  
**‘The Deconstruction of  
the Madwoman:  
The Feminist Problem  
of Jane Eyre’s Bertha’**

Charlotte Brontë’s novel *Jane Eyre* is one of the most celebrated novels of British literature and is often cited as a reflection of the proto-feminist values that were emerging during the Victorian era. However, later adaptations and retellings of Brontë’s original novel, the most significant of these works arguably being Jean Rhys’s 1966 novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*, have grappled with the themes within *Jane Eyre* that are by modern standards considered to be anti-feminist and colonialist. By deconstructing and reshaping Brontë’s depiction of the madwoman trope, patriarchal values, and colonialist values, *Wide Sargasso Sea* and certain theatrical and filmic adaptations of Brontë’s novel illuminate how the once feminist themes of the novel are at odds with the feminisms of later generations, which in turn reflects the often-fraught relationship between original progressive movements and their later, more radical iterations.

**Lauren Weston**  
**‘The Depiction of Evil in  
Children’s Literature’**

Known as the keepers of modern-day fairy tales, the Grimm brothers published centuries of folklore and fairytales that have later been adapted and tweaked to better fit a more positive and uplifting feel. Reflecting on how the brothers displayed evil in their stories and how evil is presented in the twentieth century, we can see many differences as well as some consistency. In this thesis, I will be analyzing those differences and similarities, making a connection between how children interpret evil and develop a moral compass, and assess how censorship has affected what society considers to be evil.

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**Panel E**  
**KC 2266**

**Working Towards Inclusive Classrooms**

Facilitators: Dr. Patricia Bloem &  
Dr. Amy Masko

**Hannah Barnett**  
**‘Building an Inclusive  
Classroom Using  
Language & Literature’**

Building an inclusive classroom environment is something that is important. In an ELA classroom, this can be done by using diverse literature and inclusive language. In schools across the country, students are reading novels that are not particularly representative of the diverse population of the American schools. Most of the canonical novels taught in the United States public school system feature a white, usually male protagonist. It is important for all students to be

able to see themselves in the literature that they read. Building an inclusive classroom canon can help students to become more interested in reading and to make them feel more welcome in the classroom. Using and encouraging the use of various English varieties in the classroom is also an important step in creating an inclusive ELA classroom where our students feel comfortable.

**Taylor Boze**  
**‘Where is the Diversity?  
The Effects of a Lack of  
Racial Representation  
in Children’s Literature’**

A goal for educators would be for all students to feel that they belong and are fully represented in the classroom. The representation of diverse identities can be portrayed through literature within the classroom. In my thesis, I will be examining research on the representation of racial diversity—or lack thereof—in children's literature taught within K-8 classrooms. I will explore the representation of racial identities of characters within the books used in the classroom, as well as racial identities of the books’ authors. The evidence will show racial diversity in children’s literature is very important for reasons of inclusiveness and understanding for students. Not only must students be able to identify themselves in the books, but that representation must be authentic throughout the literature in the classroom. It is also important for all students to have access to racially diverse literature, so they do not have misunderstandings or develop prejudiced views of the world or of other racial groups.

**Taylor Dionise**  
**‘The Importance  
of Diversity in  
Children’s Literature’**

There is a growing importance of the need for diversity in children’s literature. In the past, a majority of children’s books have been written by and for the white population. While this offers great representation for this group, it is not always an accurate depiction of the world. The world contains many diverse peoples; however, the representation of these peoples is lacking greatly. Scholars address the lack of diversity in children’s literature and understand that it is important not only for diverse children but for all children. Children use books as a way to understand the world around them, and without accurate representation, they do not get an accurate view of the world.

**Panel F**  
**KC 2270**

**Supporting English Language Learners**

Facilitators: Dr. Dan Brown &  
Dr. Shinian Wu

**Emily Lyday**  
**‘How Learning a**  
**Second Language**  
**Benefits our English’**

While a large amount, almost 75%, of the United States is monolingual, we do most of our trading and business with other countries whose first language isn't English. The United States relies on other countries to know English; while that may seem beneficial to us, that is actually a huge hindrance. Bilingualism and bi-literacy actually benefit our first language capabilities when it comes to reading, writing, and comprehension of English. While a second language can be learned at any age, early immersion within a language is the most beneficial for the best outcomes in bettering our own English. Even more so, having a second language allows us to be more prepared to help ESL learners around us.

**Alexis Sova**  
**‘Migrant Students:**  
**Experiences and**  
**Identities Battling**  
**with Education’**

In recent years, administrators, teachers, and students have been pushing for reform in migrant English as a second language (ESL) education. Migrant students, also known as seasonal farm-working students, face many obstacles when trying to obtain an education such as language barriers, socio-economic status, and disjointed schooling due to migrant work. While most agree that there is a need for reform and attention to this area of education, studies are still being conducted on teaching strategies that best support this group of students and their needs. My research addresses the specific needs of migrant ESL students as well as their unique educational experiences. This study also examines teaching strategies that can be implemented in classrooms to aid in English literacy development for these students, long and short term. An important goal of this research is to identify which strategies work best for migrant ESL students when acquiring the English language, as well as what specific needs must be met by said strategies in the K-12 curriculum of the United States.

**Nancy Velasquez**  
**‘The Importance of**  
**Native Language Use**  
**in an Elementary**  
**ESL Classroom’**

The number of English language learners in America is continuously increasing over the years. These students face a number of challenges when trying to adapt to their new environment. Most of these students are children of Immigrants who speak little to no English. Using their native language has become a source of support of learning the English language and making

other connections. However, this act alone has brought forth many controversial arguments. The use of the native language in an elementary classroom can offer many advantages to and support for English language learners. Teachers play a huge role in students' learning, and allowing their students to depend on their native language for extra support is allowing them to enhance their learning. In this thesis I will analyze the benefits that arise from allowing ESL students to use their first language in the classroom as well as ways educators can learn from this experience and apply their learning to enhance their teaching methods.

**11 a.m.**

**SESSION THREE**

**Panel G**  
**KC 2259**

### **Literary Engagement with Popular Culture**

Facilitators: Dr. Fred Antczak &  
Dr. Ashley Shannon

**Jocelyn Gutierrez**  
**'Wherever We Go,  
We Rep Our People:  
In The Heights & the  
Importance of  
Immigrant Stories'**

The United States is and has always been a country of immigrants. Within its borders reside millions of immigrants who contribute to the richness and beauty of American society and culture. It is a beauty that is present wherever we look, but that is simultaneously under the constant threat of suppression and erasure. Young immigrants especially are often made to feel that their linguistic and cultural heritage is second-rate in comparison with standard English and American culture. This narrative that to succeed and to be truly American one must forsake their roots and forget their native tongue is upheld by the lack of recognition and respect that culturally and linguistically diverse American literature receives. Through an analysis of Quiara Alegria Hudes' and Lin-Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights*, this presentation aims to underscore the importance of valuing multicultural and multilingual literature. Immigrant students deserve to feel that their stories are worth being told, that their culture is worth being shared, and that they may wave their flags and speak their languages with pride.

**Taryn Harwell**  
**'Wonder Woman:  
A Symbol of Progress'**

This presentation will examine a fictional woman from a foreign land wrapped in an American flag coming to defend and protect the values of a world her own people turned their backs on, because she saw a

glimpse of something worth saving. Most people know this heroic woman by the name Wonder Woman. Be prepared to dive into the ever-evolving world of comic books. My focus will be narrowed on Wonder Woman comics from her creation in the 1940s to present day. We will be looking at what societal movements in history have helped aid in her cultural development over the past 81 years, specifically examining the societal movements of the different waves of feminism and how they are reflected in her cultural development as a fictional character within her comics. Understanding Wonder Woman's evolution throughout history helps us recognize how one fictional character has become one of the most well-known feminist icons.

**Kas Roush**  
**'Language and the Importance of Re-made Culture in Media: How *Horizon: Zero Dawn* Builds Culture'**

Language makes culture. *Horizon: Zero Dawn* is a video game about how culture is made and maintained. Through the interplay of history, technology and religion, HZD presents a cyclical nature of a culture's destruction and the function of empathy. This story, rooted in this two-footed placement of "history" and "future," balances its critical gaze of modern-day culture's relationship with knowledge and empathy. The interplay of culture is built by language, whether constructed by technology or passed generationally. Under the pretense of an apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic literary mode, HZD uses these two genres to present the critique of culture and language.

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**Panel H**  
**KC 2266**

**Turning Students into Readers**

Facilitators: Dr. Brian White & Dr. Shinian Wu

**Faith Bleyenburg**  
**'College Literacy Challenges: Supporting, Advancing Literacy Through the Elementary Classroom'**

Literacy has been researched and studied extensively, and teachers are continually attempting to improve methods of instruction for the benefit of the student. Today, an issue which must be addressed concerns the literacy of college students. College students are literate in that they are capable of reading, yet when faced with challenging texts, they are often ill-prepared and do not read with a full understanding. Research demonstrates that the texts which present the most challenges are non-fiction, often including scholarly articles and philosophical texts. To face these

challenges, different ideas have been put forward: Some say that mindset and perseverance lead to the students' literacy successes, while others argue that prior education is responsible for students' literacy competencies. I will explore and discuss methods of incorporating the previously mentioned challenging texts into the elementary classroom in age-appropriate ways in order to teach students skills and techniques that they can develop and use appropriately. In this way, students might be more prepared to benefit from reading challenging literature at the collegiate level.

**Renza Jacobs**  
**'The Science of Reading vs. Balanced Literacy Approaches to Reading Intervention'**

In the late 20th century, a war on reading instruction began. Two approaches surfaced: a whole language approach to literacy instruction, and a more phonetically centered approach. Ultimately, neither approach took a foothold, but a combination of the two won out. Scholars called this approach "balanced literacy." However, here in the early 21st century, we find ourselves yet again searching for an answer as to the best approach to reading instruction. This time things look a little different. Instead of phonics-explicit instruction we find ourselves looking at the science of reading approach. This time, it's pinned up against the balanced literacy approach that reading instructors settled on last century. I will be investigating the research to see if the more balanced approach can stand the test of time, or if yet again, reading instruction will undergo another major reform.

**Emma Jenkins**  
**'The Importance of Teacher Assisted Student Comprehension'**

In my thesis, I will examine the relationship between how teachers educate students and student comprehension. I will explore what tactics educators can employ to propel student comprehension forward. The current scholarly conversation around student engagement explores teacher lesson planning, questioning styles, and how they can positively impact student learning. In addition, many scholars are researching how teachers bring emotion and urgent social issues into the classroom. This is such an important topic to explore for educators because it helps future teachers feel the most prepared to educate students so that they are prepared to engage with real-life challenges they'll face as adults.

**Panel I**  
**KC 2270**

**Linguistics and Society**

Facilitators: Dr. Rachel Anderson &  
Dr. Dan Brown

**Hailey Gordon**  
**‘Charismatic Cults**  
**and the Language**  
**of Oppression’**

Cults can be defined in many different ways, but it is hard to narrow down exactly one definition that can determine if a specific group of people or a movement is a cult. While it is difficult to define all that cults encompass, there is clarity around their calculated use of the English language. When we look at the different aspects of language that could push a group closer to the cult category, we find common language characteristics. These characteristics are used on a wide spectrum through selective communities. From the harmful devastation of Jonestown to the seemingly innocent LuLaRoe multi-level-marketing (MLM) groups, we can identify many of the same vocabulary styles, social restrictions, and fear tactics within language use that can contribute to the continued oppression or control, and as a result, dedication that many followers of cults have toward their community and figureheads.

**James Paul**  
**‘From Hashtag to Lol:**  
**A Dialectical**  
**Analysis of English**  
**on the Internet’**

Technology has often influenced language change, and the internet is no different. Since the launch of the World Wide Web in the early 1990s, internet users have shaped the English language to make it suit both the technological limitations and unique advantages of the platform. This linguistic variety, often referred to as netspeak, text speak, and computer-mediated communication (CMC), is often spoken of as a “corruption” of the English language. However, linguists such as David Crystal argue that Internet English is a heavily rule-based system with its own grammar and vocabulary. Indeed, linguistic studies show that this variety of English is a complete dialect. This thesis serves as an introductory linguistic analysis of Internet English, as well as further support for its divergence from spoken varieties.

**Lauren Vanderburg**  
**‘Maintaining**  
**Love Through**  
**Communication’**

For decades, researchers have claimed that roughly 70% of communication is nonverbal; this leaves only 30% of communication through verbal language. Although the use of verbal and nonverbal language is salient for a relationship, there are intricate details within these language types that create successful communication. This paper addresses the various

forms of communication in romantic relationships and how the use of verbal, nonverbal, written, and other forms of communication shape satisfaction. Every relationship has a foundation of communication, but the way we communicate with our romantic partners is developed over time and specified to one another. This paper will analyze methods used for successful and unsuccessful communication in maintaining love.

**12 p.m.**

**SESSION FOUR**

**Panel J**  
**KC 2259**

**The New Lyrical Poetry: Popular Music**

Facilitators: Dr. Sherry Johnson &  
Dr. Rob Rozema

**Chloe Cassidy**  
**‘Appropriating Rap:  
Reinforcing Women’s  
Sexual Identity,  
Autonomy & Pleasure’**

This project explores the music genre of women’s rap and the commodification of women’s bodies. The rap genre is primarily dominated by men, but the women’s rap genre has expanded among mainstream platforms. Women reclaim and appropriate language and labels that were once claimed and utilized by men in rap. Women in rap can prioritize and explore their sexual identities while combating hegemony and white cisheteropatriarchy. Sexual metaphors and explicit mention of bodies in women’s rap serve as a method of empowerment and monetization of women. Music is utilized not only as a tool for social movements but to challenge the ideologies against women in rap and in society.

**Alexandra Dora**  
**‘One Wave, Two Wave,  
Three Wave, Four:  
The Ever-Changing  
Tone & Definition of  
Feminism in Lyrics’**

This presentation will focus on how feminism has influenced musical lyrics and how the ever-changing tones and definitions of feminism can be found through music examples. The feminism critique has changed with each passing year since the passing of the nineteenth amendment. With every new decade, layers of feminist accomplishments are added to the growth goal of equality for the sexes in society. After reviewing each measured movement of feminism and its accomplishments and contributions to society, this essay will explore the lyrical implications depicted throughout the decades from a variety of female artists. Feminist issues that will be examined in lyrics will include women’s issues such as domestic violence (physical/verbal/emotional), sexual freedom, and

purity culture. This presentation will conclude that feminism is not beholden to a finite definition, and the constant changes can be seen through lyrics.

**Raina Piersma**  
**‘Global Inspirations**  
**Transcend Media:**  
**BTS’ *Wings* Album &**  
**Hermann Hesse’s**  
***Demian*’**

Humans are drawn to what inspires them. We are surrounded by a plethora of artists, musicians, writers, actors, and online influencers. These are the people who represent a physical manifestation of our inspirations. We’d all like to be as well-known as Michael Jackson, Shakespeare, or even Denzel Washington. The key to inspiration is interpretation. My thesis demonstrates inspiration across different media, and in this case, language and culture as well. I use Korean-Pop boy group BTS and their interpretation of Hermann Hesse’s novel *Demian* within their *Wings* album released in 2016. I examine the ways in which the group uses themes of double-consciousness, temptation, self-worth/self-love, and the concept of good and evil through their lyricism, artistic videos, and the stylistic message choices within the album as whole. The purpose of this study is to display the importance of language and literature and to highlight what can be created from artistic inspiration.

**Panel K**  
**KC 2266**

**Supporting Students’ Emotional Needs**  
**Through Literacy**

Facilitators: Dr. Amy Masko &  
Dr. Brian White

**Haley Ezerkis**  
**‘Promoting the Power**  
**of Literacy Through**  
**Social & Emotional**  
**Learning’**

In recent decades, educators have strived to create all-inclusive classrooms where students can identify, understand, and apply their social and emotional needs to their daily lives. Through the power of literacy instruction, students can recognize and connect to their social and emotional needs, helping them thrive in all learning aspects. The Theory of Social and Emotional learning was established in the twentieth century. Still evolving, it is intended to guide children to become well-rounded students. Ultimately, when we help students develop a wide range of competencies, such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making, we are setting them up for success. This thesis will emphasize the link between commonly used literacy practices and the social and emotional well-being of the student. The paper will include

discussions about how crucial it is that children use literacy practices to understand their social and emotional needs. By understanding these needs, children will become more successful students.

**Kelsey Rands**  
**‘Addressing  
Reading Anxiety’**

Anxiety is an issue facing many of today’s youth. It is important to identify a child experiencing anxiety in school. Reading is a fundamental goal of the education, and a cause for anxiety in many children. It is important that an educator provides tools for their students to overcome their anxiety. If anxiety is overlooked and not addressed, it can stifle the learner throughout all of their education. It is the teacher’s role to identify the root of a behavior and provide a variety of strategies for learners to aid in overcoming their reading-based anxiety. The goal in education is to help students acquire a growth mindset. Educators that are willing to scaffold learning for their students will first recognize a student’s anxiety as it may manifest in a variety of ways. Once they recognize the anxiety and provide any necessary interventions for the student, they can access their toolbox of strategies to aid the learner in overcoming their reading-based anxiety.

**Hannah Vickory**  
**‘Amending  
Intervention:  
Rethinking the Way  
Teachers Work with  
Challenging Behavior’**

Dealing with challenging behaviors in the classroom setting has been a constant struggle for educators everywhere. Old-fashioned methods regarding misbehavior used to revolve solely around punishment and discipline, things that could quickly solve misbehavior issues but did not help to maintain desired behaviors. Research shows that bibliotherapy, mindfulness practices, and meaningful student-teacher relationships foster positive and desired behaviors within students. These practices help students instill self-awareness and regulation of emotions within themselves all while improving behavior and academic achievement in the classroom. Meeting the needs of students and fostering connections with each individual has been shown to be highly effective in comparison to other discipline strategies. Specifically, bibliotherapy has proven to be very effective in creating hope in young students and providing them with an outlet when they are acting out and cannot describe their feelings, which is often when misbehavior often occurs.

**Panel L**  
**KC 2270**

**Meeting Language Needs**

Facilitators: Dr. Adeline Borti &  
Dr. Colleen Brice

**Rebekah Bargas**  
**‘The Role of**  
**Children’s Literature**  
**for English Language**  
**Learners’**

Children’s literature has the potential to benefit all students, but especially those who are working to acquire the English language. The question lies in how educators choose to utilize this tool. Although scholars agree on the importance of children’s literature, there are many different views on how to best use it within the classroom. These ideas can be viewed collectively to give educators the insight needed to use children’s books across school curriculums. This research project focuses on the English language learners’ literacy and language acquisition journey. Educators today are encountering a wider range of language skills in the classroom than ever before. This is a direct result of increasing ethnic diversity. It is to everyone’s advantage that teachers are informed on the best way to aid English language learners in their literacy and language acquisition journey. Teachers can make significant progress towards this goal with the use of children’s literature.

**Alyssa Ortiz**  
**‘General Educators**  
**Advocating for**  
**English Language**  
**Learners’**

This thesis argues that general education teachers need better preparation to advocate for and ensure English language learners (ELLs) succeed. Research focuses on the intersectionality of eight learning disabilities seen in mainstream classrooms, leading to misdiagnoses in ELLs. There is a distinction between educators who believe that ELLs should be in special education or intervention programs for them to perform better academically and meet their needs, and those who think this immediate classification hinders the child's success rates. Evidence shows a continuous influx of ELL students in the classroom and general educators need to obtain the knowledge to decipher whether these students truly have a learning disability, or are facing other challenges affecting their academic performance.

**Theodore Tett**  
**‘Language &**  
**Integration: AAVE and**  
**Bias in the Classroom’**

AAVE, or African American Vernacular English, has been and still is a contentious topic in academia. Through years of research, debate, and practical analysis, linguists and scholars are unanimous in their legitimization of AAVE as a dialect of American English. Despite this acknowledgement, the majority

of academia on both the federal and state level have not taken steps to integrate AAVE into the American classroom. This thesis seeks to validate and recognize the benefits of creating spaces for AAVE, drawing correlation between language/dialect integration and reduced dialect bias in American classrooms. Studies illustrate that there is a tangible correlation between improved student writing proficiency and cultural/dialectical integration within the classroom. By researching the relationships between language, culture, and bias, this thesis demonstrates that the integration of AAVE not only improves student writing proficiency and reduces language and dialect bias, but that greater cultural inclusion and integration is not just beneficial: It's necessary.

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**Panel M**  
**KC 2201**

**Thinking Critically About Banned Books**

Facilitators: Dr. Fred Antozak &  
Dr. Patricia Bloem

**Kurstin Frank**  
**'Molding in Vain:**  
**The Concerning World**  
**of Children's Literature'**

The vast world of children's literature today includes an array of different books, poetry, picture books, magazines, music, graphic novels, and more. Dedicated to entertaining and educating our future generations, children's literature has become an important facet of modern society. However, people often overlook the powerful, persuasive, and manipulative nature of children's literature in the development of our future generations. While censorship, politicization, and socialization are often big topics of interest in terms of children's literature, the conversations surrounding our foundations for children have been blown out of proportion and have steered away from the important purpose behind children's literature. Through deconstructing the mechanisms underlying the most popular and well-known children's literature today, we can better extrapolate how these tools aid children in their creation of understanding the world around them. Until we thoroughly deduce how these literary materials are affecting our children, we cannot support their growth and future impact on our society.

**Tara Maher**  
**‘The Banning of Books  
in School Libraries:  
Curriculum & Students’  
First Amendment  
Rights’**

My Capstone thesis aims to inform readers about the violation of First Amendment rights that students are facing in schools across the country. There has been a concerning spike in the number of books that are being banned in school libraries and the curriculum. An increasing number of school administrators, parents, and librarians are fighting for books to be banned in school libraries and curriculums. The authors of banned books believe that students have a right to read what they are interested in without censorship. Yet there are many people who are working to defend students’ freedom to choose what they want to read. These people are also school administrators and librarians. My thesis will explore how and why the recent banning of books began, as well as the many challenges this issue poses to educators.

**1 p.m.**

**SESSION FIVE**

**Panel N**  
**KC 2259**

**Critiquing the Canon**

Facilitators: Dr. Kurt Bullock &  
Dr. Sherry Johnson

**Madison Hansen**  
**‘Get These Kids  
Reading: Why Young  
Adult Literature Should  
Be Incorporated into  
Classroom Curriculum’**

It is an unfortunate trend that most middle school and high school students do not enjoy reading. It is important that students read often in order to build the skills necessary to develop into stronger readers and meet the required standards, but since students do not like to read, they are much less likely to read as often as they should. One of the main culprits for this trend is the overteaching of classic literary texts, which are typically complicated, difficult to read, and not relevant to students’ lives. Research suggests that incorporating more Young Adult literature into the curriculum can help solve this problem, as it is both more appealing and palatable to students. By creating a balance between YA literature and classic literature in the classroom, teachers can ensure that students develop a healthy relationship with reading while still meeting the required state standards.

**Jasmyn Pearson**  
**‘Classroom Classics:  
Detecting Harmful  
Ideologies’**

Classic American literature has done a great disservice to African-Americans in how they are represented. What is considered to be “classic” literature perpetuates negative stereotypes of black people and these stereotypes are manifested in media, films,

images, and other forms of entertainment and popular culture. Many of these books are read in the classroom and can encourage students to adopt this same kind of harmful ideology such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Many scholars believe that these traditional works of literature may need to be censored or replaced altogether by more contemporary and positive literature that represents the black culture and its people. My contribution to this conversation is that in drawing connections between racial stereotypes to books read in the classroom, educators and parents alike will become more aware of what students are reading and how their lack of attention to the overt and casual racism in literature can contribute to harmful manifestations and stereotypes today.

**Emily VanKeuren**  
**‘Got Books?’**  
**The Importance of**  
**Leisure Reading and**  
**The Power of Choice’**

Reading is arguably one of the most important skills for students everywhere to have. Not only is reading a heavily tested skill in school, it is also a tool humans use every day in their life and at any given moment. But how does reading outside of the school curriculum affect students in the classroom? Research shows that students who read for pleasure receive many positive benefits. We have seen academic scores rise and social and mental behavior soar because of leisure reading. But how do we get students to fall in love with reading when it is one of the hardest subjects to learn and can often be frustrating? We have to find what motivates students to read, whether it's a certain subject or genre that piques their interest. Having a hearty and diverse student library will be a key factor in giving students the power of choice. Allowing students to have choice in what they read and modeling positive reading behavior in the classroom and more importantly at home are key factors in opening students' minds to reading for pleasure and reaping the many benefits.

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**Panel 0**  
**KC 2266**

**Investigating Social Justice through**  
**Literature**

Facilitators: Dr. Rachel Anderson &  
Dr. Rob Franciosi

**Kelsey Acker**  
**‘In Defense of Difficult Literature: Finding Value in the Brutal Texts of Morrison’s *Beloved* and Ozick’s *The Shawl*’**

With a spike in book bannings in several US school districts, it is important to ask what value difficult, dark, or brutal literature holds. Texts that are centered around brutal historical pasts are not necessarily enjoyable reads, but the images, emotions, and questions they pose are essential for a full understanding of the effects of human cruelty. I am going to focus on fictional stories concerning slavery in the United States and the Holocaust, using Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* and Cynthia Ozick’s *The Shawl*, respectively. Through the analysis of these two novels, I will explore how narrative distancing and differing perspectives bolster empathy and understanding that the reader is not likely to find in a history textbook.

**Rachel Radwan**  
**‘The Intersection of Gender, Race, and the Environment in Rhys’ *Wide Sargasso Sea*’**

I will examine how the white male British characters in Jean Rhys’ *Wide Sargasso Sea* exhibit a parallel between their attitudes towards women and their attitudes towards the environment and people of color. Though *Wide Sargasso Sea* has received much attention from feminist literary critics, scholars have pushed for more environment- and race-focused analyses of the work, noting the benefits of a multifaceted approach that considers the intersection of systems of oppression as they affect multiple and diverse identities. Scholars have also drawn a link between the domination of women, people of color, and the environment, as well as the means through which individuals and institutions attempt to exert control over these groups. Analyzing a work from a variety of perspectives not only provides an audience with a richer experience, but sheds light on the interconnectedness of social problems, thus leaving readers better equipped to address complex issues such as sexism, racism, and environmental injustice.

**Lauren Smith**  
**‘Representations of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Popular Literature: The Impact of the DSM-5’**

Autism Spectrum Disorder, ASD, has been commonly represented in popular literature using the harmful stereotype of the “autistic savant.” This stereotype not only lacks inclusivity, as it fails to represent the diverse spectrum of autism, but it also emphasizes the medical model and deficit model of disability, pathologizing only the negative traits of autistic people instead of connecting to their unique perspectives and experiences. To improve upon the representation of ASD in popular literature, we must challenge the exclusionary language in the diagnostic criteria for ASD and partake in discourse that is inclusive of

autistic adults, women, and people of color. In this presentation, I will discuss how the diagnostic criteria for ASD, presented in the DSM-5, plays a large role in creating and perpetuating these negative stereotypes and tropes in popular literature.

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**Panel P**  
**KC 2270**

**Interrogating Masculinity in the English Classroom**

Facilitators: Dr. Kathleen Blumreich & Dr. Janet Navarro

**Andrew Markel**  
**'Literature Phobia in Male Students'**

These days it can often be very rare to find a young male with a book in hand. Male students are lacking interest in reading as a whole. And if they do happen to have an interest in reading, they are often shamed for it or judged. This can raise some controversial questions and conversations. Some may say it's a personality trait, and that males just tend to not enjoy reading and being literate because it's in their nature. Others may say there are many young men that enjoy reading but are intimidated in to not expressing this due to different societal pressures and judgements. This is also reflected in male students' participation in an English classroom. There is an unspoken and underlying problem of male students having a large distaste for English literature and coursework, enough to the point where they are discouraged from activities like reading, and activities among the arts as a whole. This research will look into the root of these issues and prevail with an explanation that will help people better understand the tension between a young man and a good book.

**Bradley Sanford**  
**'Inclusive Masculinities: Teaching Literature & Language to Deconstruct Hegemonic Norms'**

Hegemonic masculinity is socially constructed and maintained. Being influential towards students' identity development, schools and teachers may unintentionally influence students' gender identity development according to a dominant discourse of masculinity that devalues femininity, restricts gender expression, and maintains stereotypical perceptions of Otherness. In the Language Arts classroom, that may mean using exclusive language or teaching literature with stereotypical constructions of masculinity, femininity, or Otherness without critical exploration of those representations. This paper focuses on the ways

teachers can teach language and literature—examining specific pieces of literature—to help students critically explore hegemonic masculinity. Instead of unintentionally supporting hegemonic norms, teachers can teach literature and language in inclusive and culturally relevant ways to support open, non-restrictive pathways of male gender identity expression.

**Travis Stube**  
**‘Absent Masculinity:  
Literacy & the Role of  
Male Elementary  
Teachers’**

For years past and continued throughout today’s society, the call for more male elementary teachers is at an all-time high. Underrepresentation of males in the workforce of the American education system has always been a key factor in why there is such a lack of men teaching. Acknowledging this gender gap in society as the desire for more male teachers intensifies by the school year is the first step in fixing this current problem. This paper will focus on the imbalance of male to female teachers, predominantly at the elementary or primary level. Throughout this paper, statistical data will be a key factor in allowing the reader to best understand how elementary teaching is a female dominated field. Through promotion of masculinity and literacy among young boys, males have been blamed during the same time they have been asked to stand up to teach for boys having the problems they do.

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**Panel Q**  
**KC 2201**

**Engaging LGBTQIA\* Students**

Facilitators: Dr. Brian Deyo &  
Dr. Ashley Shannon

**Jordan Lipski**  
**‘Teaching Transgender  
Literature: How to  
Respect & Humanize  
Trans People’**

In recent years, there has been an increase in awareness of transgender and non-binary people, but this has yet to be properly implemented in school curriculum. Many cisgender (non-transgender) teachers feel inadequately prepared to discuss the issue, which can leave trans students feeling invisible and runs the risk of letting myths and misinformation about trans people perpetuate. One of the best tools to combat this is to not exclude trans education to just sex education but also incorporate it into the English classroom by teaching stories that properly represent trans characters. Doing so provides students a glimpse into the lives and experiences of trans people and creates an opportunity for better understanding on a more human level. This presentation seeks to explore how

teachers can properly prepare for such a unit so they can teach trans literature with confidence while avoiding the pitfalls that come with discussing the subject unprepared.

**Olivia Pitlock**  
**‘Boys Act, Girls Don’t:  
How Children’s  
Literature Supports  
the Patriarchy’**

Much of the children’s literature that is published in the United States reinforces patriarchal structures and gender binaries. White men are typically seen as having more power, value, and purpose than women and minorities. Furthermore, there is a limited discussion of LGBTQ representation. This paper argues that children's literature serves as a curriculum that teaches children gender stereotypes from a young age. Teaching children gender stereotypes or that they must fit into the gender binary hinders their opportunity to express or experience their most true identity and be accepting of others.

**Alexandria Ward**  
**‘Banned Books:  
A Closer Look at  
Censorship & The  
Relationship Between  
LGBTQ+ Literature’**

For many years, books have been banned or challenged from classrooms and libraries in schools all across America. Recently, literature containing LGBTQ+ content has been on the rise for the most diverse banned topic. Due to this, many children and young adult books containing LGBTQ+ characters have been taken off shelves in most if not all school libraries. This presentation will discuss the relationship between censorship and LGBTQ+ content and the beneficial reason for keeping LGBTQ+ literature in libraries. With more non-traditional families arising in many communities, and therefore in many schools, it is important, especially for children, that they are reading some literature that contains non-traditional content while still having age-appropriate content. By introducing LGBTQ+ literature in the classroom, students can gain a different perspective about the world and other family lifestyles outside of their own.

**2 p.m.**

**SESSION SIX**

**Panel R**  
**KC 2259**

**Feminist Approaches to Literature**

Facilitators: Dr. Brian Deyo &  
Dr. Corinna McLeod

**Morgan Doolan**  
**‘The Dystopian  
Revolution: Feminist  
Representation in 21st  
Century Literature’**

Feminist dystopian literature has provided humanity with warnings for decades of the potentially catastrophic consequences of ill-designed political and societal structures. Unfortunately, women inside literature have historically not been given equitable representations to male counterparts. As the genre of dystopian fiction surged in popularity for young readers in the mid-2000s, young readers were ready to take on a missing piece in their libraries: an exhilarating adventure uprising of a non-gender-conforming female protagonist. While there have been progressive portrayals for women in feminist dystopian works, such as Offred’s characterization in *The Handmaid’s Tale*, Offred’s oppression inside *Gilead* was too constrictive to allow for a more active insurgence, limiting her potential as a symbol of revolution. The immensely widespread series *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent* directly contrast the tone of rebellion in *The Handmaid’s Tale* and therefore paved new representations of feminism in the 21st century.

**Clara Moore**  
**‘Little Women and its  
Four Hollywood Film  
Adaptations:  
Portraying Feminism  
Through the Ages’**

*Little Women*, by Louisa May Alcott, has been a popular novel from its publication to the present day. It has maintained strong influences in culture and literature. Over the years, it has been adapted into many films, television shows, plays, musicals, and books in worldwide countries. Moreover, it has also played a role in the representation of the ideological struggles in the United States. My thesis will examine the limits and representations of female portrayals in the original text of *Little Women*, as well as four Hollywood film adaptations, filmed in 1933, 1949, 1994, and 2019. This examination will look at the femininity and feminism in characters, plot, structure, authorship, and the rights of women’s lives as seen by the public.

**Kelley Sommers**  
**‘Her Own Troubles:  
Conflict, Memory, and  
Identity in Northern  
Irish Women’s  
Literature’**

Even after the sectarian warfare of the Troubles era came to an end in the late 1990s, the ripples of conflict trauma and societal inequalities have haunted the Northern Irish people. Poets and novelists alike have used writing as a way to cope with this trauma and share the stories of their communities. However, Northern Irish women writers have been widely overlooked as valuable narrators, being considered too domestically-focused to accurately contribute to a historical account of war and the peace process. But in reality, these narratives explain how generational trauma and gender inequality can continue to cripple

the growth of a society. Northern Irish women writers use their medium to express the importance of history and memory, the strength of femininity, and the need for gender equality in both the private and public arenas of life.

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**Panel S**  
**KC 2266**

**Double Worlds, Double Identities**

Facilitators: Dr. Kathleen Blumreich &  
Dr. Ashley Shannon

**Shelby Brewer**  
**‘Emergency Response**  
**Teaching: Students &**  
**Teachers Fall Behind’**

For many years, students have had the option to take classes in a Distance Education (DE) setting rather than in the traditional classroom. In the spring of 2020, due to the worldwide Coronavirus pandemic, many teachers and students were forced to transition their teaching to Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) and learning to Emergency Remote Learning (ERL). Students and teachers were underprepared for this, and, as a result, many fell behind in their studies. In interviews with researchers as well as results described in surveys, elementary, middle, and high school teachers felt that they were underprepared for the difficulties that ERT would cause them, citing loneliness and the inability to multitask as two main reasons why ERT was not working. Students felt ill-prepared for the switch due to several issues, such as a lack of access to internet connectivity and the home being too distracting of a place to get quality classwork done. My research focuses on student motivation, student assuredness, and student confidence during online learning, as well as teacher preparedness for ERT. My research in this field is important to the education system because it aims to help teachers know what to do if they are ever in a situation where ERT has to take place again in regards to their teaching and their students’ motivation levels.

**Megan Logan**  
**‘The Many Faces of**  
**Bunbury: Double**  
**Identities in Wilde’s**  
***The Importance of***  
***Being Earnest*’**

Oscar Wilde was the darling of Victorian England high society and, at the same time, a social nuisance for the establishment. Victorian England was a highly repressive social institution that valued conformity and tradition, and Wilde, an aesthetic and a literary dandy, lived a life that constantly subverted social expectations, which was reflected heavily in his works through the double identities adopted by his characters. This social performance took many forms

in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, including Algernon's pretend invalid named Bunbury, Jack's adoption of the identities of both John and Ernest Worthing, Gwendolen's proper mannerisms in public and complete control of her relationship with Jack in private, and even Dr. Chasuble's respectable religious position juxtaposed with his lust for Miss Prism. Through the characters in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Wilde demonstrates that having a dual identity was the solution to living a life true to one's self in a society that was known for being repressive and stifling. Adopting an outward-facing persona that was acceptable in the eyes of English society allowed one to both maintain appearances with society and live authentically behind closed doors.

**Danielle Stover**  
**'Literature as Productive Escape: Knowledge and Temporality in Secondary Worlds'**

With a world as absurd and constricting as ours, we naturally rely on escapism to cope with the limitations we face throughout our existence. This thesis emphasizes the importance of looking towards literature if the end goal of our escape is to improve our lives within the world to which we are intrinsically bound. By examining William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, paying particular attention to his use of primary and secondary worlds, we are able to recognize the functions of these opposing worlds, as well as the potential transference of knowledge between them. Additionally, this thesis will respond to the heavily debated philosophical question regarding whether art, as an imitation of life, can contain knowledge.

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**Panel T**  
**KC 2270**

**Effective Methods of Reading Instruction**

Facilitators: Dr. Colleen Brice & Dr. Kurt Bullock

**Kayla Conlon**  
**'Digital Literacy: Incorporating Digital Reading Materials in the K-12 Classroom'**

In order for students to be successful learners, they must be effective readers and be able to consume different types of textual materials. There is controversy over whether digital reading materials can be useful tools or rather serve as a distraction to students in the classroom. Although the research is clear that students benefit the most from print-based texts, with technology on the rise, it is important that

educators understand the benefits of digital reading materials and how to appropriately incorporate digital reading tools into their classrooms (Delgado et al. 36). While data shows that students' comprehension is higher with print-based texts (Al-Sulaimi et al.), digital materials are interwoven into our everyday lives, including the literary lives of children. Therefore, it is important that educators evaluate how to appropriately use digital texts in classrooms.

**Kaitlyn Stogdill**  
**'How Do Multimodal  
Forms of Literature  
Effect Student  
Learning?'**

Teachers need to prepare students for their future, which will undoubtedly be ripe with technology, while also ensuring they receive the best reading instruction supported by literacy research. In this paper, I argue that teachers should teach reading with paper text, which is optimal for comprehension and student neuro health, while also carefully utilizing multimodal text to prepare students with 21st literacy skills.

**Sarah VerSluys**  
**'The Function of  
Reading Scores in  
Reading Instruction:  
Promising or  
Problematic?'**

All over the United States, schools and educators are practicing the method of leveling books for reading abilities. Children are evaluated through multiple assessments, assigned reading scores, and given a selection of books to choose from for their independent and group reading that align with their reading score. Libraries have color coded and assigned letter or number codes to children's books as a way to categorize the books available to them in their particular reading level. This method has been used for a long time, but does it actually work? This research evaluated the efficacy of using reading scores and leveling books for reading instruction in schools. In this paper, the problems and benefits of this literacy method are analyzed. Particular attention is paid to student choice in reading instruction.

**4 p.m.**

**AWARDS**

**Annual Awards  
Ceremony  
KC 2204**

Please join us in honoring our students during the English Department's Annual Awards Ceremony, held in the Pere Marquette Room of the Kirkhof Center.

**Honoring Student  
Writing in the  
Persuasive and  
Personal Essay,  
Poetry, Fiction,  
& Drama  
Held in Conjunction  
with the Departments  
of Classics &  
Writing**

Named in honor of former department member E. William Oldenburg, this annual contest offers GVSU students first-place prizes of \$50 and second- and third-place prizes of \$25 in each of the following categories:

- Personal, analytical, or persuasive essay written by a freshman;
- Personal essay written by a sophomore, junior, or senior;
- Analytical or persuasive essay written by a sophomore, junior, or senior;
- Poetry written by any GVSU undergraduate student (a portfolio of three to five poems would be an appropriate entry, and a single poem would not be considered);
- Fiction written by any GVSU undergraduate student (one short story per entrant);
- Drama written by any GVSU undergraduate student (one short play per entrant);
- Essay, poetry, fiction, or drama written by a GVSU graduate student.

**Entry Requirements:**

- Entries must have been written while enrolled at GVSU;
- Entries should be typed, double-spaced (photocopies are acceptable), and submitted with a detachable cover sheet indicating:
  - title of work;
  - category entered (please specify graduate or undergraduate);
  - contestant's name and student ID;
  - address, phone number, and e-mail for March and April of the academic year;
- Place contestant's name on the cover sheet only, not on the manuscript.

All winners who have not been or currently are a student employee at GVSU must complete an I-9 Form, which may be obtained and turned in to Student Employment (105 STU). Entries are accepted online through the English department website. Manuscripts will not be returned.

**The Robert C.  
Chamberlain  
Scholarship**

**A Tuition Scholarship  
for Junior English  
Majors  
Demonstrating  
Excellence in Writing**

The Chamberlain Scholarship will be awarded at the English Department's Awards Ceremony held in April.

**Eligibility Requirements**

- Students must be English majors;
- Students must have Junior status;
- Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA;
- Students must be full time;
- Students must demonstrate financial need by filing the FAFSA.

**Application Requirements**

Each student must submit:

- A short letter explaining why the student qualifies for this scholarship;
- Two pieces of writing, at least one from a class at Grand Valley State University.

Applications must be submitted online at:

[www.gvsu.edu/scholarships](http://www.gvsu.edu/scholarships)

Application deadline is TBA, Winter 2022.

**The Gilbert R. and  
Patricia K. Davis  
Endowed Merit  
Scholarship**

**A Merit Scholarship  
for Full- or Part-Time  
Junior and Senior  
English Majors**

The Davis Scholarship will be awarded at the the English Department Awards Ceremony held in April.

**Eligibility Requirements**

- Students must be a Junior or Senior declared English major;
- Students must have completed 30 credit hours at GVSU;
- Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA;
- Students may be full or part time (part-time students are especially encouraged to apply);
- Financial need is not a criterion;
- Students who receive the award as Juniors are eligible to receive the award as Seniors if they maintain their eligibility.

**Applications Requirements**

Applications must be submitted online at:

[www.gvsu.edu/scholarships](http://www.gvsu.edu/scholarships)

Applications deadline is TBA, Winter 2023.

**The English Faculty  
Scholarship for  
New Majors  
A Scholarship Made  
Possible through the  
Generosity of GVSU  
English Department  
Faculty Members**

The English Faculty Scholarship for New Majors is awarded to two English majors annually at the English Department Awards Ceremony held in April.

**Eligibility**

- Applicants must be a declared English major at the time of application
- Applicants must be a currently-enrolled student with fewer than 60 credit hours completed (1st or 2nd year student) during the semester of application
- Cumulative 2.5 grade point average or better
- First-generation college student

**Supplemental Questions**

1. Are you the first person in your immediate family to pursue a college degree (neither parent/guardian(s) has a four-year degree)?
2. In 100-200 words (1-2 paragraphs), explain why you are applying for this scholarship, why you should receive the award, and how it will assist you in achieving your academic goals.
3. Why are you interested in this scholarship?

Please include an academic writing sample, minimum three full pages in length, submitted for a class during your freshman or sophomore year.

**Applications Requirements:**

Applications must be submitted online at:  
[www.gvsu.edu/scholarships](http://www.gvsu.edu/scholarships)  
Application deadline is TBA, Winter 2023.

**Dr. Andrew M.C.  
Brown Memorial  
English Scholarship  
A Scholarship  
Created to Assist  
Language &  
Literature Emphasis  
English Majors**

The Brown Scholarship will be awarded at the the English Department Awards Ceremony held in April.

**Eligibility Requirements**

- Candidates should be accepted or currently enrolled at GVSU;
- Must be a senior with a declared major in English with Language & Literature emphasis;
- Must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher;
- Preference will be given to students intending to pursue an advanced English degree.

Financial need may be considered, as evidenced by

filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

### **Application Requirements**

Each student must:

- Provide a short statement of why you qualify for this scholarship;
- Submit two pieces of writing, at least one from a GVSU English class.

Renewal Criteria: This scholarship is non-renewable. Award sum varies.

Application deadline is TBA, Winter 2023.

**Robert Franciosi  
American Literature  
Scholarship  
A Scholarship  
Created to Assist  
English Majors who  
Express Interest in  
American Literature**

The Robert Franciosi American Literature Scholarship is awarded annually at the English Department Awards Ceremony held in April.

### **Eligibility**

- Applicants must be accepted for or currently enrolled at Grand Valley State University;
- Applicants must be an undergraduate junior or senior enrolled full-time or part-time with a major in English with Language & Literature or Secondary Education emphasis;
- Applicants must be a resident of Michigan;
- Applicants must have completed 30 credit hours at GVSU with a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA;
- Applicants must be meeting satisfactory academic progress (<https://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/satisfactory-academic-progress-sap-17.htm>).

### **Supplemental Questions**

- Please describe in 1,000 words or less your experience studying American Literature and why you feel it has been valuable.

Preference will be given to students who demonstrate an interest in American Literature.

Financial need may be considered and will be demonstrated by the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

### **Applications Requirements:**

Applications must be submitted online at:  
[www.gvsu.edu/scholarships](http://www.gvsu.edu/scholarships)  
Application deadline is March 3, 2023.

Acker, Kelsey — 23  
Bargas, Rebekah — 19  
Barnett, Hannah — 9  
Bleyenbergh, Faith — 13  
Boze, Taylor— 10  
Brewer, Shelby — 28  
Bruxvoort, Elizabeth — 6  
Cassidy, Chloe — 16  
Childs, Alexander — 8  
Conlan, Kayla — 29  
Dionise, Taylor — 10  
Doolan, Morgan — 27  
Dora, Alexandra — 16  
Ezerkis, Haley — 17  
Frank, Kurstin — 20  
Gordon, Hailey — 15  
Gutierrez, Jocelyn — 12  
Hansen, Madison — 21  
Harwell, Taryn — 12  
Huizen, Sadie — 7  
Jacobs, Renza — 14  
Jenkins, Emma — 14  
Lipski, Jordan — 25  
Logan, Megan — 28  
Lyday, Emily — 11  
Maher, Tara — 21  
Markel, Andrew — 24  
Marzean, Tyanna — 5  
Moore, Clara — 27  
Morgan, Grace — 4  
Nelson, Hannah — 4  
Ortiz, Alyssa — 19  
Paul, James — 15  
Pearson, Jasmyn — 21  
Piersma, Raina — 17  
Pitlock, Olivia — 26  
Radwan, Rachel — 23  
Rands, Kelsey — 18  
Roush, Kas — 13  
Sanford, Bradley — 24  
Scheuneman, Madison — 9  
Schoettley, Elizabeth — 5  
Skulbru, Allison — 7  
Smith, Lauren — 23  
Sommers, Kelley — 27  
Sova, Alexis — 11  
Spada, Kate — 4  
Stogdill, Kaitlyn — 30  
Stover, Danielle — 29  
Stube, Travis — 25  
Tett, Theodore — 19  
Vanderburg, Lauren — 15  
VanKeuren, Emily — 22  
Velasquez, Nancy — 11  
VerSluys, Sarah— 30  
Vickory, Hannah — 18  
Ward, Alexandria — 26  
Webb, Jessie — 6  
Weston, Lauren — 9