

*A Special Interest Group
of the*

INTERNATIONAL

Reading

Association



Reading and the Deaf / Hard of Hearing Student

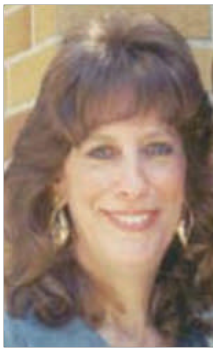
Newsletter

April 2010

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At this convention our SIG will present:

Dr. Barbara Strassman
**“Research-Based Instructional Writing Practices for
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students”**

Early research on the writing of deaf children focused on English grammar, vocabulary and assessment instruments. This research clearly documented that deaf students do not write as well or as effectively as their hearing peers. More recent research with deaf writers has paralleled research that was done with hearing writers, learning disabled writers and writers learning English as a second language. The corpus of studies focusing on deaf writers is however small but does give evidence of effective practices for teaching and improving the writing of deaf or hard of hearing students. This literature has shown that:

- 1) emergent deaf writers go through the same phases of writing as hearing children;
- 2) the nature of the writing task and the familiarity of the writer with the topic and audience significantly improves students' level of writing;
- 3) explicit and systematic writing instruction which includes metacognitive knowledge is most effective;
- 4) on-going writing instruction is most effectual when used to help the writer think through ideas as in the learning of a content area.

Dr. Barbara Strassman will provide a meta-analysis of the experimental and quasi-experimental research on writing instruction with deaf and hard of hearing students. She will compare those findings to the literature on typically hearing children, on learning disabled children and on children learning to write in a second language. Areas for future research will be identified and implications for classroom practices will be explored.

Also at this convention:

Barbara R. Schirmer, University of Detroit
Laura Schaffer, Michigan School for the Deaf
William J. Therrien, University of Iowa
Todd N. Schirmer, Napa State Hospital

will present the research poster session

**“Effectiveness of the Reread-Adapt and Answer-Comprehend Program:
Impact on Fluency and Comprehension among Elementary Deaf Readers”**

For students who are deaf, research has focused primarily on understanding the reasons underlying historically low reading achievement levels and investigating interventions aimed at improving word recognition and comprehension. Our studies are the first series of investigations on Repeated Reading as a strategy for improving the fluency of deaf readers. We implemented the Reread-Adapt and Answer-Comprehend (RAAC) intervention, which was supplemental to regular reading instruction. The study took place within the elementary school at a state school for the deaf in which American Sign Language (ASL) and English are used in instruction. We found statistically significant gains in fluency and improvement in comprehension during intervention.

Of interest:

SIG Newsletters On The Web

New!!! The Special Interest Group for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Readers has posted the archives of the SIG newsletters and information about the upcoming convention online at www.sfdesales.org. Click on the IRA link. You can view the previous newsletters. Joining the SIG will be even easier. The membership application will be posted shortly.

Gallaudet University's Online Course

Deaf Characters in Adolescent Literature 3 credits at Gallaudet University 5/17/10-7/9/10

This course provides a forum for intense reading, discussion, and exploration of the texts and issues associated with deaf characters in adolescent literature. The course will introduce students to quality adolescent literature and will examine issues relevant to the reading and teaching of the genre. The course will also explore the history, characteristics, and benefits of deaf characters in adolescent texts.

As educators, parents, librarians, and advocates of literacy development, we often try to hook young people on reading by presenting books with characters they can relate to. Such books can help increase their overall knowledge of the world, open their minds to multiple realities and variations of the human experience and provide scenarios in which they can live vicariously. The benefits of reading literature with diverse characters are extensive especially for reluctant readers who seldom find characters like themselves in novels.

Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor, sharon.pajka@gallaudet.edu **Instructor:** Sharon Pajka
For more information on enrollment and courses, visit [Gallaudet University's website \(http://summer.gallaudet.edu/Summer_Programs_Home/UndergraduateGraduate_Courses/Undergraduate_Course_Schedule/UG_Online_Courses.html\)](http://summer.gallaudet.edu/Summer_Programs_Home/UndergraduateGraduate_Courses/Undergraduate_Course_Schedule/UG_Online_Courses.html)

New Book

Signing in Puerto Rican: A Hearing Son and His Deaf Family by Andres Torres

Signing in Puerto Rican is based on the author's experiences as a child in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan. Torres was born in the South Bronx of deaf parents who emigrated from Puerto Rico during the 1930s and 1940s. He was among the first deaf families to come to the United States from the Caribbean. Dr. Torres, whose first language is Sign Language, grew up in a tri-cultural environment in which Spanish, English, and Sign were used to communicate. Andrés (Andy) Torres is Research Associate at the Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College of The City University of New York. He holds a doctorate in economics from the New School for Social Research and a master's degree in economics from New York University. Torres has taught in the fields of Puerto Rican/Latino Studies and Economics. He is also the author of *Between Melting Pot and Mosaic: African Americans and Puerto Ricans in the New York Political Economy* (1995) and the edited volume *Latinos in New England* (2006).



Become a member!

IRA has been supportive of deaf education issues. Become a member of the SIG to keep issues of deaf and hard of hearing literacy in the forefront of IRA. The current number of members allows IRA to provide the SIG a meeting of an hour and 15 minutes at the annual convention. Increased membership will increase our meeting time. Please become a member and encourage membership among your colleagues. In order to be a member of the SIG you must be a current member of the IRA (reading.org) and submit your IRA membership number to the SIG. And a special bonus... **dues will no longer be collected**. Jennifer Storey is continuing to compile a database of email addresses in order to publicize the SIG to interested educators.

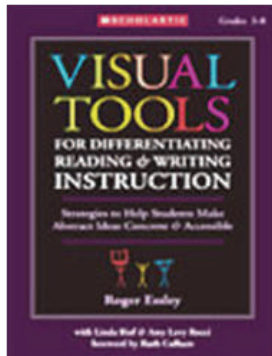
IRA provides Sign Language Interpreters

IRA provides sign language interpreters if deaf convention attendees make this request on their registration forms. All sessions can be accessible to deaf and hard of hearing participants.

**Save the dates!! May 8–11, 2011
IRA's 56th Annual Convention
in Orlando, Florida**

**The Special Interest Group for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Readers
will meet on
Monday afternoon, May 9, 2011**

**Roger Essley, author of Visual Tools will be presenting.
Roger has been working with St. Francis de Sales School for the Deaf adapting this
mainstream tool to enhance language, reading, writing and the content areas.**



Roger Essley
www.rogeressley.com



Got Reluctant Readers and Writers?

Explore targeted Visual Tools that increase reading comprehension and make writing easier. See how low-text tools engage students with different learning styles, offering powerful support for reading, writing, note taking and more. Click on the link above to look inside the book.

WRITING: See a writing process that allows less stressful pre-writing and revision. Let your students try the unique Shared Writing process that connects writers with their audience, pulling all learners into the literacy circle.

READING: Use storyboards to teach essential visualization skills. See how simple sequenced drawing makes abstract ideas concrete, making reading and class discussion more fun and meaningful.

CONTENT AREA: Learn how integrating visual tools in content presentation and review can make any material from Social Studies, to Physics, to Math Story problems, easier for students to grasp and synthesize.