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## From the Editor

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## From the Editor

I'm sitting at my desk and when I look up just a bit I see five shelves of books that help me better understand my profession as a literacy specialist. Names like Au, Tatum, Beers, Romano, Glasgow, Burke, Reutzel, Conley, Wilhelm, Dewey, Vacca, and Daniels appear on the many spines. Looking to my right there are multiple shelves of other books, mostly novels and many of those young adult literature written by Collins, Cormier, Crutcher, Gaiman, Giles, Volponi, Stratton, Zuzak, Flake, Clare, and Card. Then there are the shelves of picture books, mostly non-fiction written by Giovanni, Yolen, Bang, Bridges, Krull, and Tang. I am surrounded by books of all kinds and I feel a sense of security; these names and texts are well known to me. I have spent serious face time with most of these books and those I don't know yet are on my long TO READ list.

Personally, I still like to read traditional bound books as I love to hold the book, feel the pages, and hear the sound of the page turning. When I drive long distances I frequently take along a book on CD and enjoy being read to as the miles quickly pass. A colleague of mine constantly has ear buds on as he listens to books on his MP3 player. He is an avid reader, enjoying the many books he downloads from Audible.com. His wife, on the other hand, is an equally avid reader and downloads books onto her Kindle. Three devoted readers entering and experiencing texts in three different ways. Technology has opened up multiple pathways to the written word, ultimately affording us multiple opportunities to read.

This issue of *Reading Horizons* contains research on some of the many ways people of all ages experience texts. David Paige studied the effect of Whole Class Choral Reading (WCCR) on a group of sixth grade students. The students read out loud as a class, increasing their eyes-on-text time by a mere 16 minutes per week and that increased their oral fluency and phonological decoding skills. A side benefit of the activity was that the students began to feel more comfortable reading aloud as they had the safety net of each other and the teacher and the attention was not solely focused on the individual.

Kelli Estevez and Elizabeth Whitten compared the efficacy of assisted reading using digital audiobooks with more traditional book reading during Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). All participants had Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) and were allowed to choose what book they wanted to read but some had it loaded onto an iPod or MP3 player and listened to as well as read while others just read the book. While all



of the students had gains in their reading fluency as measured by words read correct per minute, the audiobook group had significantly larger gains.

Andrea DeBruin-Parecki and Kathryn Squibb challenge readers to think deeply about the reading needs of prekindergarten children, in particular how to teach them comprehension skills such as predicting and making connections. Their study included teachers reading books out loud to their young students and specifically teaching comprehension strategies that went well beyond the constrained skills of alphabetic principle, phonemic awareness, and concepts about print.

Sau Hou Chang focused on reading gains as a result of participating in a school-based tutoring program. This study specifically looks at the gender and grade level differences in reading gain of first and second grade tutored students compared to those not in the tutoring program. Young readers were engaged in a variety of reading materials in both the tutoring program and the classroom.

Understanding how bullies are portrayed through many different media, Barbara Ward and Terry Young present us with a review of some of the latest books about bullies. From the Three Bully Goats Gruff who bully a gentle ogre protecting the grassy meadow, to Cuban refugee children left in America after the 1961 Pedro Pan Airlift and who were bullied in the refugee camps near Miami, FL; these books show that bullies come in many forms and can have horrid affects on the victims.

Having read these articles repeatedly and being immersed in the thinking of such relevant research, I find myself needing to find more books to add to my ever-growing collection. What other research is out there about early/emergent reading comprehension and audiobooks? What else might I read about choral reading and tutoring programs? And how can I ever read all these books about bullies? I might need to follow my colleague's example and download books onto my iPhone just to keep up.

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

