



TRANSCRIPT

Joyful Reading at School and at Home: Webinar 2

JULIE DUFFIELD

Good afternoon, everyone. We're very excited you could be with us. Welcome. And before we begin, could you please type in the chat what is something that brings you joy and why? Music, I know, brings our presenter, Pam, a lot of joy. She's in the screen there.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Yes!

JULIE DUFFIELD

So, please, as we get ready to commence the webinar, type in to the chat something that brings you joy and why. Family. Thank you. Children. Thank you. Pets, family, my dog. Wonderful. Sunset walks. Working with my family. Mountains. Grandchildren. Nature. Thank you so much for these wonderful posts.

So, thank you everyone. We are officially beginning today's webinar, Joyful Reading at School and at Home. And I'm Julie Duffield. And I'm here to help you with technical support with my colleague, Delphean Quan. As we go to the next slide, we're going to just go over some virtual meeting norms. And Pam will take us to that slide. Keep your video on. It's great to see faces, but if you have a slow connection, we'll understand that you'll turn it off. Use the chat to support each other, share ideas. Questions, use the hand raising. If you can remain on mute that would be great. We have lots of folks in the room, so we're using the chat as the main way of interacting. Please, thank you for participating fully like you just did. And, of course, have fun learning together today. As we go into the next slide, we're just going to ask a little bit about who's in the room today and share some polls. So, we'll bring up those polls about who is joining us. You should see on your screen now a poll role. Role poll pop up. Well, thank you. We've got lots of preschool teachers and paraprofessionals, school administrators. And if it's other and it's not there, use the chat to describe. Pam, you can probably see those coming up as well.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Yeah. Yes. Great. It's wonderful to see all of our early childhood educators joining us.

JULIE DUFFIELD

Thank you. Student. We have student and literacy coordinator in the chat. After school—

PAMELA SPYCHER

Wonderful. Parents. We've got some parents and coaches. School board members or state leaders. Fantastic.

JULIE DUFFIELD

And social services, special ed, Early Start. Thank you so much. We'll hand it over now to our colleague, Kim Austin, who has been planning and supporting a lot of this webinar. Kim, over to you about REL West.

KIM AUSTIN

Thanks, Julie. It's wonderful to see you all here. Feel free to keep using the chat to introduce yourselves and say where you're from and use the chat throughout this next 90 minutes. It's fine if your camera doesn't work and your audio doesn't work, mainly if you can access the chat. That's the best.

So, who are we? We are Regional Educational Laboratory West. One of 10 labs across the country that do three things. We do research, we provide TA, and we also facilitate dissemination of research evidence-based practice. And that's what today is all about—is starting with a little bit of research and getting into a whole lot of practice. So, thanks for joining us, and we wanted to also invite you to participate in the rest of this series.

So, this is Webinar 2 in a series of four. And we're also happy to provide the recording for Webinar 1, which was in January. And welcome all of you back who attended Webinar 1, the Community of Practice, which was great fun—where we got into small groups and shared what we tried out from Webinar 1. Here we are in Webinar 2, which is about cultivating a love of books through all kinds of creative expression. And what we're hoping is that you will go out and try some of the things, get inspired by the wonderful ideas that are going to be shared today, and come back on April 15th and do a one-hour Community of Practice session with us because we learned so much from you. And we've already had some folks share some beautiful art that they've done with their kids and you'll see a little bit of that today.

So, it's back to you all for a little interactive activity. You'll see a code in the chat or a link to click on and we want to hear from you. What's your favorite artistic way to express yourself? And that can be anything from performing art, visual art, home decorating, how you choose your clothes in the morning, poetry.

JULIE DUFFIELD

And just to say, Kim, there's a link in the chat where people can click on the Mentimeter to put in their words.

KIM AUSTIN

Great. So, some folks have found the link in the chat. They're putting in words. We've got dancing, finger paint, laughing. That's great. Singing. Baking. Yes! Love it. What else are you seeing, Pam?

PAMELA SPYCHER

I'm seeing music. Music and dance and dancing. Art. Cooking! I love cooking and I love eating, too. That makes me...I don't know if that's expressing myself or just enjoying the expression of food, but it's all related. Talking. That's a great way to express yourself. Writing. Singing. Beautiful. Decorating. And, oh, gardening. Yes! Now's the time to go out and get your fingers in the dirt. Do that gardening.

KIM AUSTIN

Beautiful.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Yeah, and smaller and smaller!

KIM AUSTIN

It's getting smaller!

PAMELA SPYCHER

And my eyes are getting older and older.

KIM AUSTIN

Feel free to keep sharing in the chat. But...decorating cakes. Yes! Smiling. Sketching.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Beautiful.

KIM AUSTIN

Thank you, everyone. So, I just want to introduce our three speakers today. We have Pam Spycher, who you've already heard a little bit from who's at REL West in WestEd and in Davis. We have Thea Fabian, who's with Fresno Unified School District. And we have Danielle Garegnani, she's down in San Diego. All three of them started as teachers and all three of them continue to support teachers in many different ways. And we're just thrilled to have some real live principals in the room, who are super busy trying to get kids back in classrooms but have taken some time with us today to share the exciting things they're doing. So, with that I'll hand it over to Pam.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Wonderful. Thank you, Kim. OK. So, we are going to have a lot of joyful time together today. Sometimes you might feel a little overwhelmed, like a lot of information's coming at you, but just don't worry. We're also going to take a lot of pauses to breathe and do some self-affirmations. And we're going to start, actually, by getting into just a nice transition activity. It's just a settling-in activity because we know that you've probably been running around doing a billion things today. Either working with young children or if you're a parent, helping young children do whatever it is that they're doing. So, we're just going to do some settling in. And I like to call this, "It's a beautiful, sunny day today where I live." And, of course, if it's not

sunny you can always pretend that it is. But I've got my "Love is My Superpower" t-shirt on today to make me feel very loving.

And I'm going to just lead us in a little breathing activity. I just call this sunshine breathing. So, I invite you to do this with me. It's kind of fun if you want to sit, if you want to stand, however you want to do it is fine. But basically, we're just going to—well, first let's get our wiggles out. So, just go ahead and, you know, roll your shoulders, move your head, whatever you need to do. Get into your body again. And we can kind of walk around like this all day! And it's really good to kind of loosen up. Yeah, do whatever you need to do. And then [exhale] let's just do some sunshine breathing. Basically we're going to, just as we breathe in, we're going to raise our arms up to the sun and try to hold onto that beautiful sun and as we breathe out we're going to feel those rays. Those beautiful sun rays coming into our hearts. And again, breathe in. [inhale] Look to the sun. And breathe out those beautiful sun rays into your heart. [exhale] Breathe in. [inhale] Breathe out [exhale] and feel that beautiful sunshine warming your heart. And just rest your hands over your heart and feel, just feel the love that you have for yourself right now. Self-compassion is so important. So, just love. Just take a moment to love yourself. Feel that sunshine warming your heart. Take a few just regular breaths just to be in the moment. [pause] And when I count to three, we're going to do a sunburst of love out to everybody in this community today. You're going to wiggle your fingers out like this to everybody, but we're going to do it in a sunburst. I'm going to count to three and say go. Ready? One, two, three, go! Wiggle all that sunshine out! Send all that sunshine love out to everybody with us today! Beautiful! Beautiful! [exhale] Ah! It feels good.

So, this is obviously something you can do with young children to sort of...as a transition activity. Whatever the activity you're moving into, it just kind of gives a nice little break from activity to activity. And, of course, as adults it's nice, too. I actually like to do this throughout the day for myself. It's important.

OK. So, today we're going to have a lot of fun together. We are going to, as Kim was mentioning, this is the second webinar in a series. But don't worry because I'm going to give you a recap of what we did in the first webinar. And it's all about joyful reading. So, the big umbrella is Joyful Reading. And we call it a routine that you can use at home and at school. And today we're going to be primarily focusing on creative expression and be talking about how creative expression supports all sorts of things. It supports language and literacy development, social-emotional development, mental and emotional wellness, among other things. And including just an artistic sense of self...I mean itself, which is of high value. We're going to give you lots of examples of creative expression activities. Danielle and Thea, as Kim mentioned earlier, they're going to share how they've been engaging in this project at their school sites with their school communities. And we're going to just load you up with lots of resources. So, but as I said, it might feel a little bit overwhelming, like a lot's coming at you. But the idea is that we just want to give you a lot of options for engaging in creative expression activities in whatever context you're in.

So, as I said, I want to give you just a brief recap of Webinar 1 because there are just some key things that are important to keep in mind as we move into the content of today's webinar. And I also want to let you know that I'm just going to explain some things and then we're going to show you where all the resources that I mentioned are. So, you're going to have full access to them. So, in our first webinar, we actually focused on sort of the actual reading of the book experience. A shared book reading experience with a particular type of book that we are promoting. And so, in the Joyful Reading Webinar 1 we focused on really paying attention to

the types of books that we are selecting to read with our young children. And we prioritize culturally affirming books and books that are very inclusive of the students that we are serving; the children that we're serving or if we're parents, the children that we are nurturing in our homes. And you can see just a few examples of the books that we love.

So, one of the books that we talked about last time was *I Am Every Good Thing*. I'll talk a little bit more about that book later. And these are some other book covers of some really wonderful books that nurture students', children's minds, but also just make them feel affirmed as human beings and for whatever their multilayered identities are. The other thing that we look for when we're choosing books is that we want books that have rich language in them. So, beautiful, figurative language, beautiful vocabulary, just beautiful language in all its form. Because that's really modeling the kind of language that we want our young children to start engaging with in terms of their understanding, but also using. They're wonderful creators, our young children. So, the more we expose them to rich language, the more they're going to be using that language. And the illustrations, the artwork in these books is really important to us because as we know, a great children's book is not just about the words. It's about the visuals, the illustrations, the artwork. So, we really, you can see just by the covers of these books how beautiful the artwork is. And then the other...so that's sort of in the book selection, which is really important. And we've given you some resources in the Padlet that I'm going to share with you soon for how you might think about examining your own library to make sure that you're including lots more of these books.

And then we also talked about the importance of dialogic reading; so, a really rich, shared reading experience with young children where there's lots of talking before, during, and after the actual reading of the book. So, lots of encouragement to young children to ask their own questions, to notice things, but also quite a bit of prompting from the adult reading the book, you know? Asking particular questions about what's happening in the story or whatever kind of text type it is. But we've been really focusing on stories in narrative texts. Asking about the language in the books that we're reading, "Oh, what do you think that means? Oh, my goodness! How does that phrase make you feel?" And just, so we can get children kind of acclimated to noticing these things in these beautiful books. And then, of course, talking after the book has been read about like, "Gosh! What do you think? What did you enjoy most about that book and why? What was your favorite part and why? And what do you think the author wanted us to learn from reading this book together?" Those types of questions are the kinds of questions that are really going to get to deeper thinking and deeper engagement. Of course, the questions about, like, who are the main characters and where did they live and what's happening—now, those are critical. But we're really also kind of wanting to really get our young children into more extended discussions about the books that we're reading, because that not only helps them engage more deeply with the book, but it also helps with language and literacy development.

So, as I said earlier, we focused last time in particular on this beautiful book called *I Am Every Good Thing* by Derrick Barnes and illustrated by Gordon C. James. And this book...one of the reasons why we love this book is that, well, it's written by a Black author and it's narrated by a Black boy and the illustrator's a Black illustrator also, which we think is very, very important. It promotes—I think the thing I love most about this book, and obviously everybody has their own interpretations—but it just promotes a love for yourself. So, promotes self-love and, in particular, pride in one's Black culture and history. And, of course, that can be transferred to anybody's culture and history. But I think it's especially important to be focusing on providing

opportunities for young Black children to have pride in their culture and history. Illustrations are gorgeous. They're just beautiful and the language is beautiful and rich and the vocabulary is so amazing. And it provides such great models for children as they're learning to create their own stories. As I mentioned earlier, the narrator is just so, has so many different aspects that you see throughout the book. He's talented, smart, hilarious, loving, and curious and also encounters challenges. But when the narrator encounters challenges and when things are hard he shows us how important it is to be brave and hopeful and know that we're all worthy of kindness and respect and safety and happiness. And so, this book is a really, it's one of those books that you can just read over and over again. And that's what's been happening.

Another book that we have been featuring, although we didn't talk about it too much last time, is this wonderful book called *Esther the Wonder Pig*. And *Esther the Wonder Pig* is just, first of all, it's hilarious, which is really fun. So, it's funny and has an engaging plot and that's really important for engaging in these rich discussions with children. But it's also promoting compassion. And that's a really important thing right now. So, it's promoting compassion for animals. And really kind of getting us to think about what our responsibility is for caring for them and caring for each other. It also has features of a very loving family with two dads, which teaches us that all families are different and they're what we make of them. And the most important thing in a family is love. So, those are two books that we featured in the first webinar.

And we also shared sort of the sequence of the dialogic reading. We gave ideas for before, getting excited about what we're reading about! Ideas for connecting with the ideas in the book and the language and the art. And then some ideas for after reading. And we just gave a little nod to the creative expression activities, which is what we're going to be focusing on today. So, that's sort of, you know, in a nutshell what we talked about.

The other thing that we provided is some home and school reading guides to support teachers and parents and families and caregivers to engage more deeply with these two books either at school or at home. So, it's basically a two-sided piece of paper. The guide. And on the first side it gives a little synopsis of the book and on the second side some creative expression activities, which again, we'll go over today. We also gave some templates because we are a big believer in crowd sourcing. We're really hoping that as people kind of engage with some of the ideas that we're sharing with you, you'll get real excited about creating your own home and school activity guides and you'll share them with us and we'll be able to share them with the world. So, we have—oh! The home and school reading guides are in both English and Spanish currently and the templates are in both English and Spanish, too. And we'd love to translate in more languages as we move forward.

So, there is a recording if you want to, you know, just kind of do a little more than the little recap that I did. There's a recording of our first webinar and there's also the slides available. And where they are is in a Padlet. And I believe that Delphean is pasting the link to the Padlet right now. And we won't be spending a lot of time...I'm not going to take you to the Padlet. I'm trusting that you can just kind of go there and if you want to take a look at it while we're doing other things in this session, that's fine, too. But you can see on the very left-hand side those home and school reading guides that I talked about for those two books. And then there's a whole slew of resources so when you first get in there it's going to feel probably a little overwhelming. But just, you know, peruse at your leisure and see what strikes your fancy and see what kind of attracts you and then just go there. And have fun with it.

OK. So, that was just a little brief tour of what we did in Webinar 1. And one of the things that when you take a look at those home and school reading guides with the *I Am Every Good Thing* book, remember I told you that it's all about self-love and self-affirmations? Well, I believe it was Danielle that shared this Morning Affirmations for Kids with me, because actually, as an adult I kind of want to do this every morning for myself. But I just wanted to share with you a creative expression activity that you could do that's connected to that book. And I'm just going to show you a brief part of it so you can see what it's like and if you want to say some of the affirmations as I'm playing it, please feel free.

[video begins]

CHILD

Speak these affirmations every morning before you start your day!

ADULT

I have purpose.

CHILDREN

I have purpose!

ADULT

I am a good person.

CHILDREN

I am a good person!

ADULT

My life has meaning.

CHILDREN

My life has meaning!

ADULT

I am here for a reason.

CHILDREN

I am here for a reason!

ADULT

I am important.

CHILDREN

I am important!

ADULT

I am intelligent.

CHILDREN

I am intelligent!

ADULT

I love who I am.

CHILDREN

I love who I am!

ADULT

I am filled with love.

CHILDREN

I am filled with love!

ADULT

I can change the world.

CHILDREN

I can change the world!

[video pauses]

PAMELA SPYCHER

OK. So, that was just a little brief teaser, a preview. Hopefully to encourage you to check that out and, you know, use as you would like. So, I just want to pause because I've been talking for a solid amount of time. And I just want to pause because I haven't obviously been monitoring the chat. I just want to see if Kim or Julie or anybody has noticed any questions that have come up or comments.

KIM AUSTIN

Folks are loving the affirmation and asking for links and all of the links are in the Padlet.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Yes.

KIM AUSTIN

To the videos, to the blank templates, to the Spanish template. So, we tried to put it all in one place, but please let us know if you can't find it.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Yeah.

KIM AUSTIN

And people have been asking about certificates of participation and we have a link in the chat for a form to fill out if you would like proof of participation. That's what we can provide.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Great. Thanks. OK. So, I'm going to keep going then. And please keep asking your questions and Kim and Julie know they should just kind of jump in if there's a question that comes up. So, don't be shy. Comment, question, share resources, anything you want is great. There's also a place in the Padlet if you want to share your resources. So, don't be shy about doing that either.

OK. So, moving on to the second side of that guide that I've been talking about. And the whole second side has to do with creative expression activities. And we've sort of tried to, like, put everything in there because we really feel that it all needs to be integrated. So, for us, part of Joyful Reading means everything you do around the actual reading experience as well as the actual shared book reading. So, the way we have conceptualized creative expression includes things like kindness and community and it includes things like mindfulness and self-awareness so that you can kind of get into that self-compassion and self-love and compassion for others that I alluded to in the previous section. It includes visual and digital arts, movement and music, poetry, and literacy and oracy. So, this is not to say that you have to try and do everything all the time. And in fact, that would be kind of hard. So, what we're doing here is we're providing options and ideas. And really, it's just intended to kind of spark your own creativity and give you ideas for unleashing your own creative powers with the children that you serve.

So, this is side two. What side two looks like of that home reading guide. And I'm going to go through and give you sort of the example. So, you don't have to feel like you have to read this teeny tiny font here. I'm going to go through the sections and explain them. So, first of all, in addition to the fact that focusing on creative expression is just really fun and joyful and intrinsically we know it's a good thing to do, the great news is that research shows us that we're getting some big payoffs by prioritizing creativity. So, we know that creative expression and arts-integrated experiences, they provide unique opportunities to help our young children express themselves and communicate their ideas and who they are to the world. And also understand the world around them. We also know that creative expression promotes social and emotional well-being and social-emotional development and can enhance children's self-esteem as well as their self-awareness. We really learn about ourselves through creative expression. When the arts are integrated and creative expression is integrated throughout the day we know that this promotes motivation. It makes learning more fun and it makes it more meaningful and feel connected. And it helps our students be more connected to school. And also, by the way, boost academic achievement. So, all good things.

When we think specifically about language and literacy development, I'm a researcher that focuses on language and literacy development in particular and specifically for multilingual children. It's really encouraging what the research is showing, and these are some recent studies showing that all types of arts-integration is really having a huge, beneficial impact on

children's oral language development and reading comprehension and written development. So, if you want to integrate more creative expression activities into your daily curriculum and somebody is telling you no, you can put them to the research and say, "Well, the research shows that it's actually having some real tangible academic and social-emotional benefits." [whispers] And it's fun!

So, I'm just going to start with mindfulness and kindness. And actually, this would be like mindfulness, kindness, and community. And this kind of, the reason we wanted to include this is because it's just critical to incorporate this whole child approach in early childhood education. I think early childhood educators know this. We understand this and sometimes we have to continue to make the case that focusing on our children's mental and emotional well-being is just good all around. We know that mindfulness practices really do align very well with social-emotional learning. And there's a huge opportunity to integrate contemplative education with social-emotional development. And we also know that it's really important to maintain an open-minded stance so that we are not being too prescriptive in the way that we're approaching mindfulness and kindness in community. And ensure that we're being culturally and linguistically competent and sensitive. We're thinking about establishing pluralistic classroom communities and that all of our mindfulness and kindness in community practices are focused on this greater goal of social justice and self-actualization. I just love this beautiful child right here. I want to make a poster of this beautiful child and learn to sit that way, because I wish I had that flexibility.

So, I wanted to talk just briefly about this hot new topic in the neuroscience world called neuroplasticity. You may have heard of it. You may have read about it. Maybe just kind of let us know in the chat if this is a new term or if you've heard a little bit about it or if you know a lot about it. It's pretty new and it's pretty exciting because one of the things that we're learning from neuroscience is that our brains are plastic. So, neuroplasticity basically has to do with your brain. Every time you learn something new or experience something your brain is, like, is reshaping itself. And we have the ability to actually create new neurons, new neural pathways, new connections. And so, it really matters what we're focusing on. One of the things we know from the trauma-informed research is that... I do this all the time; this is like your brain... If anybody's familiar with Dan Siegel, he's a neuropsychiatrist. He's big on talking with children about how your brain works. But basically one of the ideas is that, you know, with trauma and stress, the part of your brain that has to do with fear and anger and things like that, the amygdala is kind of in control. And with mindfulness and kind of helping to focus our mind on the present and on the breath and things like that we can help create greater connections between the prefrontal cortex—that's this part of the brain—and the amygdala so that we can help children to identify their emotions, learn to respond to their emotions rather than reacting from a place of fear and anger. And we know that right now we're in a really challenging time and so it's really exciting all the things that neuroscience research has to teach us.

One of the things that I wanted to mention is that one of the things that the neuroscientists are telling us is that what you practice grows stronger. So, it's not just a matter of, like, doing mindfulness once every once in a while or meditation once every once in a while. It's really this repeated practice of mindfulness and meditation and kindness and gratitude and self-compassion often and frequently that is going to help us grow those areas of the brain to be stronger and more flexible. So, the question neuroscientists asked is, what do you want to spend your time on? And if you're interested in learning more about neuroplasticity, I put my

three favorite Ted Talks from—they all happen to be women neuroscientists—but I put those in the Padlet. So, if you're a Ted Talk junkie like I am, have at it and enjoy. And this is kind of goes along with, like, what is it that we want to spend our time on? What is it that we want to help our young children cultivate and grow in their brains? And Rick Hanson—he's also, I think, he's a neuropsychologist. But he talks a lot about focusing on positive emotions, like if we are focusing on these positive emotions, these can actually—and research shows that this will, actually, through mindfulness and meditation—strengthen your immune system, protect your heart against stress and trauma, and help you build stronger connections with other people. Which in itself is a trauma buster. It helps you increase resilience and helps you be successful in all different times. And so that's why it's important to protect joy in all its forms especially when we're facing challenges. We really need it.

I want to make sure that when we're talking—I know I'm kind of blasting through this. So this is not a course in mindfulness and meditation, but I just am making a pitch for us to take a closer look at it as people who work in education for our own mental and emotional well-being. But also to really consider the power that it has for our young children and our parents, families, and communities. And I love this Thich Nhat Hanh quote which is, "Breathe in deeply to bring your mind home to your body." And, of course, Ram Dass. If you're familiar with Ram Dass says, "Be here now." Research also shows that people are more happy when they are more present. So, mindfulness and meditation helps us to be more present.

I also just want to make a pitch for this book by Thich Nhat Hanh which is *Happy Teachers Change the World*. And if you're interested in learning more about this, this book is chock full—see how thick it is? It's chock full of different mindfulness meditation activities that you can do. There are lots of free resources in the Padlet, so you don't have to spend money. That's one of the great things about this is most of it's free, but if you're interested. The other book that I wanted to recommend is, I had mentioned Dan Siegel. This is a great book called *The Whole Brain Child*. It's actually a book for parents. I find it useful as an educator to help me understand how to talk with young children about how their brain works and how we can, you know, identify our emotions and respond to them. And it's not about getting rid of anger and fear and things like that. It's about how we respond to them.

OK. So, just to give you a little taste. These are some of the activities. These activities are embedded in those home and school reading guides. And I was going to do a...let me see if I have time. I don't think I have time. Well, let's do a little one. I'll do a little one with you so you can feel what it feels like. So, let's just...once again just a really, like, a one-minute meditation. Go ahead and put your hands over your heart. Again, this is from Kristin Neff, who practiced self...she's a meditation teacher focusing on self-compassion. And it's just really important to give yourself this loving kindness as you touch your heart. And just breathe deeply a few times. [pause] And let's just add a little self-compassion, and the way I like to practice self-compassion is saying the following things: "May I be safe. May I be peaceful. May I be kind to myself. May I accept myself just as I am." So, you can say that in your head with me: "May I be safe. May I be peaceful. May I be kind to myself. May I accept myself just as I am." [pause] And just a little bit of that throughout the day to yourself and with our young children can make a big difference. And you'll see that these are embedded in the home reading guides.

Just briefly, because Danielle and Thea are going to talk a lot about arts-integration in their schools. I just want to reiterate the point that the arts are important in their own right, but also because we need more creative people in the world and some people say that what distinguishes us—because we all are animals, right? What distinguishes us from other animals is

our creativity. Some people do say that. But we also know that arts-integration has a whole slew of benefits, academic, social-emotional, etc. Those are some key points to remember. And in the home reading guides you'll see just some little ideas that you can use to get you further in your artistic journey with young children or get you started if you're starting out as an educator of young children.

So, this is just a very specific example of a movement where you can kind of get dancing. So, in this instance you would—actually, let's just do it because I think we have time in the minute that I have left to do this. In this activity, basically after you read the book there's this beautiful language in the book. And you can see on those bullet points, those are phrases from the book: "A nonstop ball of energy! A glow of moonbeams! A cool breeze!" etc. So, you can put on some music and let the children know that when you freeze, you're going to say one of these phrases from the book that they just enjoyed. And they need to kind of creatively show you what that means. So, we're just going to try one of them for fun because this is about joyful learning. So, if I can find my music, I'm going to play and then I'm going to freeze. And I'm going to tell you the phrase and then you're going to show me what that looks like with your body, if you're brave! You don't have to, but just if you want to play. I can get my thing to go to the music. Here we go! You can dance when the music is on. Just dance until I stop it.

[music plays]

You can just nod your head if you want, if that's comfortable. Snap your fingers. OK. Now...freeze.

[music stops]

And now I want you to show me what a cool breeze looks like. You can even make noises. Sounds with your mouth [makes sound like wind]. OK, that was just one little example. I wish we could just do this the whole time, but...you can! In your own context. You can take this and do it however long you want.

And just briefly, poetry, literacy, and oracy are also in the card. And we know how critical it is for young children to have rich opportunities to develop not only their written language, but also their oral language. So, we want to infuse opportunities for them to express themselves creatively through drama, through puppet shows, through poetry, spoken word, creative writing, whatever the case may be. This is all fueling their rich language and literacy development. And I just chose this. If you haven't seen Amanda Gorman's inaugural poem, please look it up and watch it. And watch the whole thing. You will just feel inspired and fueled by the power of her poetry. She's the youngest—she's 22 years old—youngest inaugural poet. Thank you for hearting her! Yes! She's awesome. Youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history. And this is an example of what all of our young children can develop into as long as we are cultivating their creativity. And again, you'll find lots of examples about how to do that on our home and school reading guides.

I just wanted to show you a few examples—whoops!—from our wonderful Community of Practice. This is Danica from Irvine, California. And she shared the book *I Am Every Good Thing* with her children, and they created these life-sized murals where they painted themselves or colored themselves and came up with all these wonderful ways of describing themselves. And it's just a beautiful way to affirm. Affirm yourself and affirm the love you have for yourself. So, thank you, Danica, for sharing. And this is just some writing. I did this in my own organization

with some children, young children across my organization virtually. And they sent me some examples of their art and writing. So, I just wanted to share this with you. And I'm going to skip this part right now because I really want to hand things over to Thea. But I want to make sure that before I do, were there any questions or anything significant, Kim or Julie, that I can address before we move on?

KIM AUSTIN

No questions. Just a lot of gratitude.

JULIE DUFFIELD

No questions. Yes.

KIM AUSTIN

Go ahead, Julie.

JULIE DUFFIELD

Well, just the same. A lot of gratitude. Lots of sharing, lots of appreciation.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Yay! Please continue to share. That's how we learn and grow together. Share the love. OK. So, I am going to pass the baton over to my wonderful colleague, Thea Fabian, who is the vice principal from Wawona K-8 School in the Fresno Unified School District. Thea's an amazing school administrator and she is going to share how she has been collaborating with her school community on some of these things.

THEA FABIAN

Thank you! Yeah, I'm so excited to be with you guys again. It's so nice to bring together, like, such a big group of people who just want to do wonderful things with kids in the world. Love it! Yeah. So, yeah, Kim, do you want to advance to the next slide? So, I'm Thea and I'm the vice principal at Wawona K-8 School. And we have a block of social-emotional learning that all our kids have right now once a week. And then we kind of integrate it throughout the day. And what we're working on is combining social-emotional learning capacities, like under the CASEL skills, and creativity. And also developing parent leadership around culturally and linguistically responsive texts. And today I also have with me our librarian and some of our parents. And so, after I speak for a little bit I'm going to be asking them some questions so they have an opportunity also to share what they've been doing.

Alright. And these are some pictures from one of our classes. And I put up there "un enfoque en el amor y el autoestima." A lot of our work, I think, is hyperfocused on a positive self-esteem and so the kids were able to, this was actually part of reading *I Am Every Good Thing*—y en español, *Soy Todo lo Bueno*—and the kids selected words that they felt really reflected who they were and helped to kind of sponsor their positive identity development.

In this next one—I love this one. There's a project that is on the California EL Roadmap and it's all about your name, and the meaning of your name as a way of sharing a piece of your identity. And this popped up in the text and the teachers thought, why don't we ask the kids about this? "Me gusta que me llamen... I like people to call me..." And the kids ended up writing

about their own names and their significance. Some of them interviewed their parents and asked them, “Why did you give me that name?” and they wrote about it. And in this little picture some of the kids are just sharing “Me gusta que me llamen ____” and share their names.

And in another classroom activity one of our culturally responsive texts, and just generally a good text, is the book *Sulwe* which is written by Lupita Nyong’o, the Mexican-Nigerian actress. And it’s all about colorism and Sulwe talking and developing this wonderful conversation with her mom about her beauty. And so, this generated a lot of wonderful, deep reflections on the part of the teachers and the kids. And our teachers really dive in. So, the first one is like “Mi nombre significa...” because in the book *Sulwe*’s mom talks to her about why she named her Sulwe. And then in the next one she’s talking about the shine of her eyes, “El brillo de mis ojos...” And so the kids are writing “El brillo de mis ojos es tan resplandeciente como la...”—they’re developing their language, so they’re putting together different pieces of English and Spanish, but he said, “It’s resplendent like the sun.” And somebody said, “Well, it’s like actually my eyes are resplendent like the moon.” So, the kids are talking about the beauty of their own eyes. And then this one is about the color of our skin. And so, the kids spent some time thinking about the beauty of their own skin because this book is about loving the skin that you’re in. And so, in this one the kids wrote too, “El color de mi piel es tan hermoso como...”—it’s beautiful just like something.

So, other projects that we’ve been doing include “Yo soy...” poems. And so, our second grade team has worked on “Yo soy...” poems about all the positive things that they are as individuals and they’ve also created mosaics of themselves.

OK. So, at this time I was going to ask our wonderful librarian, Jennifer Agazarian, to share a little bit with us about our “biblioteca,” our physical and digital library work and the things that she’s been able to do to make connections with our work in working with culturally and linguistically responsive texts, but also kind of just our greater mission of the school in connecting with parents more strongly and building our resources. Jen, are you ready?

JENNIFER AGAZARIAN

I am. Hi! I’m the librarian here. We do have middle schoolers and Spanish elementary, which is a fun and exciting thing. And you’d wonder if the middle schoolers like the elementary and yes, they do. Middle schoolers love working with elementary students and I can’t wait until we’re back in the same space to be able to share together. Real quick, my biggest plug as a librarian this year for SEL work has been Kobi Yamada. If you’ve never heard of this author, beautiful books and all. This one’s *Maybe*, which we’ve selected for our cultural responsive and SEL work. And it’s a story about the endless potential in all of us. And just...I just...they’ve really spoken to me. They speak to the kids. They’re just very...he’s a great author.

Also, wanted to discuss...so we did, as you can see on this slide, we have started a website where parents can go. And down at the bottom one of our parents that you’ll hear from had an amazing idea about...I like to pick books based on other people’s suggestion. So, on our site we actually added a place where parents can add what they’re personally reading and what they’re reading to their kids so that we can share that as a group. And as that builds and grows, I’m planning on sharing those responses with our whole community. So we can share and love reading together because, of course, as a librarian and as a lifelong reader, it is my mission to help kids love reading.

My personal story—I struggled to learn to read. I am dyslexic and still struggle with that as an adult. But my mother worked very hard to get me excited about reading and just committed and seeing myself in books. So I’m just very committed to helping my kids see themselves in our books. An example that I’ve been reading this week for Women’s History Month, I read *Oona*, which is about a treasure hunter mermaid. And the kids have enjoyed that one and the fact that it’s an African American character, yet they never make reference to it, I think is beautiful because it’s authentic. This isn’t a book about an African American girl. She just happens to be the main character and I think that’s really powerful for our kids to both get the clear message, but also just see themselves in an awesome story. So, I’ve enjoyed that.

The one Ms. Fabian wanted me to share about is *Give Bees a Chance*, which was just...I’m all about education and entertainment. I was a theatre major before I decided to become a teacher. So, entertainment is a huge part of education to me. And Bethany Barton has just done an excellent job with this book. And the kids got so excited. And I read this to my third grade group and they all started sharing stories about pools and bees and, “I always see bees by my pool!” and “I got stung!” And I said, “Well, our book doesn’t talk about that!” and I said, “Why don’t you go out and figure out why bees are always by pools and water?” And so, they all went out and did research and sent me—and this is third grade. I love it because I met with the first person to respond, so she got the biggest prize. She didn’t know what a link was! And I got to talk to her guardian about providing valid research to back up her statements. So, I got to inadvertently teach a third grader how to do research. But just such an exciting...getting my kids excited about books is my main goal and I’ve had a blast with it this year. And connecting with them on a real level even during all of this, I’ve tried so hard to help them feel good and see themselves and connect that way, and it’s been a blessing. But, yeah. So, that’s my...

THEA FABIAN

Thank you, Jen. Thank you so much for sharing because the librarian at our school, as you can see—first, she’s amazing. But also that she’s such an integral part of making things work in terms of texts at our school because she’s totally tied in to every single person at this school. So, she works with every single teacher on campus. She reads to the kids. She collaborates with the middle school departments on texts that they’re reading with the kids. So, I think her central role in this for us has been really, just really fantastic. So, for the last few minutes that we’re sharing if we could advance the slide. Oh, oh! Let me share that last one real quick, actually.

This one is something that our second graders are about to do. They’re writing about “things that make me beautiful both inside and out.” And then they’re going to be working on “I Love ME Because...” So, a lot of, like, Pam was saying, they’re going to be working on a lot of self-love and positive self-identity. And the next slide takes us into our parent work. I’ll... Ms. Maribel Ternate, our parent lead, is going to be chatting with us, and I think we have a couple of our other parents in the room, too, which is awesome! And some of the things you’ll hear about on the screen, we have one of our parents, Señor Acero, reading a book about hip hop, the history of hip hop. And also you see some of the neat, creative things that they’ve been doing. So, Maribel, are you ready to chat a little bit?

MARIBEL TERNATE

Yes, I am. I hope you can all hear me. My name is Maribel Ternate. I’m part of the group. There’s other parents here as well representing Wawona. And one of the goals that we were

approached is that they wanted us to help out, and pretty much we own it now. And it has been a blessing because now that we have more control of the project, we have been able to reach out to other parents. And some parents have gone far and beyond to create a reading challenge so we could get the students motivated to continue reading. Other parents have shared their personal experience of the value of reading. And other parents have volunteered to donate bookmarkers and creating goodie bags. So, once a student has completed their Joyful Reading, one of the Joyful Readings, then they will go to the, and submit a post on social media on our library webpage. Then we will give them a little goodie bag. So, I think it's motivational and many of the parents are doing activities in addition to what the students are already doing at school. So, I think that's a big plus because the students just love just sharing with the parents. And when everybody does it together, I think it even makes a better learning and a better environment to just make it joyful.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Thea, I'm not sure. Do you...

THEA FABIAN

Yes. And do you want to go to the next slide?

PAMELA SPYCHER

Sure.

THEA FABIAN

OK. OK. So, Maribel, do you want to talk to the next slides that are coming up?

MARIBEL TERNATE

Yes, I can do that.

THEA FABIAN

OK.

MARIBEL TERNATE

OK. So, as we mentioned we started doing recordings of the video because we wanted to make sure that everyone had access. And one of the things that we want to make sure is that it's inclusive. We want to include all the parents, so we have done a recording both in English and in Spanish with the Joyful Reading Project. And one of the things that as mentioned we did the little goodie bags, and it's all been donations. Parents have just been, "Oh! I'll do the goodie bags this time." And then we're going to be rotating. It's all donation. We don't have to really work hard. It's pretty much just parents getting together and enjoying the connections with their students. And because of the success with the Joyful Reading we now meet this group of parents. We meet once a week, and we are beginning to get more ideas and we are searching for resources to help us find out how can we connect with more parents? And that's why we meet once a week from 8 a.m. to 8:30. And it works perfect because that's also the time that the administration has their weekly coffee chat with us. So, I think many parents are motivating with that. So, I'm looking forward to continuing the Hora Familiar. And we called it

Hora Familiar for that main reason. We want to have a time with families that we also do the readings and the teachings at home. It's not just at school.

THEA FABIAN

Do you want to advance to the next slide, Kim? There we go.

MARIBEL TERNATE

Jessica, would you like to chat with this one? One of the moms, I don't know if she's here right now, but this is what one of the moms has created for us. This is our Joyful Reading goals. And what we are doing is we're having something printed out and then we are giving them to the families. And every time that the student completes a Joyful Reading we get like a little stamp or something to indicate. And once they complete it and they do the activity on social media then that's where they will receive their little goodie bag.

THEA FABIAN

OK. And we can go to the next one. And Jessica, I don't know if you're there, but you can go ahead and pop in there anytime you want to share.

JESSICA

Yes. I'm here. I'm sorry.

THEA FABIAN

No, you're good.

JESSICA

I just wanted to say, like, I think this program, the Joyful Reading Project and everything, really enforcing children to read especially in the dual immersion program that the kids are in right now is awesome. I know growing up my family kind of didn't...they weren't involved. It was...I came from a traditional Mexican family so parents, you know, focused on working. So, kids were supposed to focus on their work and if we didn't know a subject or if we didn't know how to do something then we had to, we'd reach out to people at school to help us. And so the reading part wasn't really enforced in my family. So, I really wanted to do that for my child because growing up if I didn't have the educators that really pushed me to read, I don't think I would have the love of reading that I have now. So, I really wanted to, you know, enforce that on my children. You know, the love of reading and just like all the different opportunities it brings. And so, I'm really glad I'm part of the Joyful Reading Project.

THEA FABIAN

Awesome. And tell us a little bit about these ones, Ms. Ternate. And Ms. Castro, it was so good to hear you. Thank you so much for joining us. I love how you were able to express how parents having their own group where they can connect with each other on an authentic level, it helps to, you know, really build their own capacity and the things that they're doing with their own children.

MARIBEL TERNATE

Mm-hmm. Yes. And for the slides that you see right now this is in addition to what they're already doing in class. So, this is not graded. This is just family time fun. So, none of this is graded and this parent did—am I supposed to say who the parent was?

THEA FABIAN

You can give that cred if you have it. That's great.

MARIBEL TERNATE

OK. Well, I'll just leave it blank. But the parent did the poem after reading the book. And describing of what identifies with the parent. And then the child did the poem on their identification. And this is a second grader in the dual language program. So, just talking in addition to doing an extra activity. That's the goal and I think that's the overall, like, excitement. Like, it wasn't an actual assignment, and they were excited to do it with the parent because the parent was also involved. So, I think that speaks value.

THEA FABIAN

Alright. And we have, like, all these great things and I saw some people in the chat also were commenting on, "Oh, I do that, too." And you get so much insight into your own children and children in school when they write the "Yo soy..." and all these beautiful things. I love the figurative language, too! OK. You want to go to the next slide, Kim? OK.

MARIBEL TERNATE

And I believe these other assignments may be a younger child. And you know, that's the whole thing. It depends on the child because it's not an actual assignment, so I shouldn't even say the word assignment. It's creativity, fun, it's Hora Familiar. And it's just getting magazines, and if you don't want to write a poem then you just get pictures that describe you, like, what do you feel? So, I think this is awesome that, you know, we were able to talk about the images and why they selected certain things and why they like certain items and just the description was amazing. So, and again, everything is just in addition to what they are already learning at home. And this just got started because, you know, parents read a book with their children and then they try to make a connection. A deeper connection with the actual book. And I think this is one of the best projects that I've been part of so I'm really looking forward to continuing.

THEA FABIAN

Yeah. And I love this one where they get to cut out the magazine and paste it together and it makes me think about cardboard projects, too. You get your box from Amazon and you can do amazing things with that! You just need some scissors and tape and your Amazon boxes and you're good to go! Alright. I don't recall if we have...oh, yeah. We have a couple more slides in this. Absolutely. Go ahead, Maribel.

MARIBEL TERNATE

And I think I'm going to let Jessica...Jessica, would you like to share with us this activity of affirmation?

JESSICA

Yeah. So, I think right now my child is a first grader and she's really into her feelings and she wants to let us know how she's feeling. And we've noticed she's a lot harder on herself than we would ever be on her. And so, I just feel like it's important for her to know all her good qualities and all the positive stuff to focus on instead of, OK, you made a mistake today or, you know, you weren't behaving well during breakfast time with sister. But the day could be better; it can get better. And we just have to focus on the positive instead of, you know, anything negative. Especially when they're starting out their day and then, you know, having the pressure and stuff of learning online and being home all day. So, I think it just helps; like, the affirmations—just focus on the positive and keep going.

THEA FABIAN

Absolutely. OK. Well, as we wrap up I just want to really thank our parents and I want to thank our outstanding librarian, Ms. Agazarian. And this project for me as an administrator in working with the teachers, parents, librarian, and the other administrators on our campus, it's been really neat because I've learned a lot about how we can work together more effectively to make things better in our schools. And also just to keep promoting Joyful Reading! So, thank you, thank you.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Thank you, Thea. And thank you, Wawona community! Really, really appreciate you. And if people can just flood the chat or use your Zoom emoticons, whatever you call those, to show your appreciation for the Wawona school community, that would be lovely. We have so many people on, so if everybody just puts an appreciation in the chat that would be beautiful. Beautiful love. So, I next want to introduce another wonderful, amazing colleague and school administrator, Danielle Garegnani, who is principal for Horton Elementary School. And she is going to share how her school community has been engaging with the Joyful Reading Project.

DANIELLE GAREGNANI

Thank you, Pam. Thank you, Team Wawona. That was, I have a ton of ideas now for our next step, our next piece of Joyful Reading. So, I'm Danielle Garegnani. Thank you, Pam, for that lovely introduction. I'm the very proud principal of Horton Elementary School in San Diego Unified. We are currently in online learning still. We have a few learning labs on campus and we're just about ready to move into phase 2 reopening April 12th. So, we're very busy. [recording interrupted] ...share a little bit as to how we've been engaging with Joyful Reading since the last webinar. If you could advance the slides.

So, our Joyful Reading approach, what we really did was ground it in and align it with our celebration of Black History Month. And while we celebrate Black history every month, right, it's something that we celebrate every month, every day, as are the narratives and the stories of everybody who contributes to our history. During Black History Month we focused a lot and really lifted the wonderful literature and celebrated icons and really built in, especially even more so that particular month, around just the contributions of Black Americans. And we grounded our Joyful Reading in the text of *Tar Beach*, which is an oldie but goodie. Those of you who've been around teaching for a while have probably, are familiar with *Tar Beach*, which was written in 1991. Won awards. And so, we really focused in on creative expression activities through this book, but we also engaged in interactive read alouds and interactive reading as

well. We looked at...so I purchased the text for all of our teachers. All of our teachers read the book. We developed a home reading card, and I will get that put up onto the Padlet as soon as I can. I'm in the process of translating it, so we'll get that to everybody. And I shared the reading card with teachers and basically I said, "Have fun with the book. We're celebrating." We engaged in some creative expression activities that I'll share, and we held our first virtual family art night as well. This particular text we selected because it's such a rich, beautiful book with so many layers of the themes that are called out. And it's beautiful to use with young children. And we even had some very deep discussions and really unpacked it with our upper grade students. And so, it's a very versatile book in the sense of being able to use it at an elementary site and even into middle school. It's connected, it's really integrated. You're able to integrate all kinds of standards, language arts, VAPA, history, and social science if you dig deep with upper grade students, and even language development. Go ahead to the next slide.

So, *Tar Beach* is written by Faith Ringgold. We also chose Faith Ringgold because she is an award-winning artist, civil rights activist, and author. And this book is about Cassie Louise Lightfoot. It's written in first-person narrative. And it's really a story about dreams. It's written in kind of like a dream sequence, so it's like a dream logic. So, she's in between reality and this fantasy world. And it's about a little girl, Cassie, who spends her evenings, the hot summer evenings, in Harlem on the roof of her apartment building with her family. They call it Tar Beach. It's their getaway. It's their party place. And it's where family meets to celebrate with neighbors and enjoy each other. The story also takes place during The Great Depression...shortly after The Great Depression, and so a lot of the themes...and Cassie escapes. She flies. She flies over the city and becomes...she owns buildings. She owns the Union Building. She owns the George Washington Bridge. And it's her way of escaping and really engaging with a very wild imagination. I had mentioned that this text is very, is appropriate for many grade levels. The themes, there's a lot to unpack. It highlights the theme of hope, of freedom, imagination, of family. It really gets at racism and empowerment. And so, our teachers were able to use this in different ways through some interactive reading. Go ahead and slide to the next, or move to the next slide.

Teachers, we engaged in an interactive reading and I had shared the reading card with them. We created one for K-2 and for 3rd through 5th based on the themes that we could unpack, that a teacher might unpack with a particular story. Some of the interactive questions and the deeper dive questions were around, how do we know that Cassie loves her family? What evidence from the story that we have? So, we engaged in some of the images. Some of the artwork in the text actually really demonstrate that. And so, we had discussions about that. We even got to questions with the upper grade students around really looking at racism and discrimination. The story takes place in the 1930s during The Great Depression. And part of the story is that Cassie's father is out of a job and he was not allowed to join the union because he was Black and Indian. And so, we engaged our upper grade students in questions about discrimination and people being treated unfairly, and, you know, talked about comparisons between the 1930s and racism that we see today. So, we were able to really unpack and engage students in interactive reading with this story. Teachers had their students in different ways respond to the text. On the first slide, the slide just before that, it was an example of our preschoolers. Our preschoolers, our preK classroom, our four-year-olds that did a drawing response about one of their favorite parts of the text. And there's Cassie flying over the George Washington Bridge to own it. You can go ahead and advance to the next slide.

And in addition to engaging in interactive reading and responding, a lot of the teachers took on creative expression activities in different ways. So, we had students engaging in using watercolor to respond to, “If you could fly anywhere, where would you go and why?” And so, here’s some examples. I believe this is a third grade example and a second grade example and a fourth grade example. So, on the third grade example the student, they used watercolors and talked about flying to Arizona over the desert where it’s beautiful and calm. A second grade student talked about why she would go to the beach and that it made her happy. And then I believe the fourth grade student with the Eiffel Tower, I think they used chalk. And so they were introduced to different mediums as well to respond to the text. You can go ahead and slide over.

These are some examples of creative expression with our littles. With the kinder and first grade students using paint. Some did finger paint and some used a brush and paint. And again, were responding to, “If you could fly anywhere, if you had the freedom to fly anywhere, where would you go?” So, these are just some examples of the creative expression activities. And one of the big events that we did have was, we held our first virtual family art night. I am very blessed to have a resident teacher, a resident artist, on my campus. One of our kindergarten teachers, Ms. Vance, actually was an art teacher for many years before she jumped in to teach kindergarten. And so, she led our students and our families through a virtual art lesson where students learned about design, about scale, about color. And so, we held the art night towards the end of the month after all of the students had read the text and engaged in interactive reading in their classrooms and then engaged in some type of creative expression activity. And so, we had everybody on Zoom at five o’clock one evening. And students, we pushed out the information to families to make sure their children had a piece of paper and a marker and some crayons or some type of coloring instrument. And she guided them through how to make an interactive design. So, they first cut out their person, their interactive character that they made themselves. And then she modeled either drawing or sketching how to create a landscape. And so, here’s some examples of some of the modeling that she did. And she guided students, so they got to choose their landscape. And then she helped guide them through drawing. And they cut out the figure and then the student...the little doll was the student, and they could fly over the landscape that they had drawn at the end of the activity, at the end of the lesson. And so, this is Ms. Vance modeling how to draw, how to scale, really, and some examples of her landscapes. You can go ahead and slide. Move the slides, Delphean, to the...

...There we go. And so, here’s some examples of our students after they created their landscapes. It looks like Ezekiel right there has a, he actually had his cutout of himself and was moving around his landscape. So, some examples of what the students created. You can slide forward it to the next slide. Some more examples of our student artwork during virtual family art night. And then this was our end, our end before we logged off. Everybody held up their pictures. So, we had staff members join us. We had family members, parents side by side with their children. And so, it was a really, really exciting, really engaging evening. A lot of community building with our families.

A couple of key takeaways. This was our first virtual family art night. And a couple of key takeaways. I would definitely, when we do this next year, because we will, I think the book is a beautiful book. This particular book has so much to offer and so much to unpack that I definitely would ask my teachers to spend more time with the book. To slow down and take the time that this particular text really offers. You can analyze it through the art lens. You could analyze it through the thematic lens. The themes to unpack. It’s really a book that merits

multiple, multiple reads in a lot of time. And I know right now with online learning it's challenging and this notion of, "I have to get through my curriculum because there's so much learning loss and we're already behind." And so, really giving teachers and staff permission to slow down and enjoy this book. There's so much to unpack and pull out of it. There's so much joyful reading to come out of it! I definitely think that encouraging more written responses with their artwork is also definitely warranted with this particular book. This particular activity. But even going through poetry. Expanding on some of those creative expression activities. Poetry, movement, and including written responses with the artwork.

Deeper connections to SEL as well. I have an onsite, I have a counselor and a guidance assistant who really support teachers and students with social-emotional learning. They coteach lessons. And this particular text also has a lot of connections to support students. One of the themes in the book is job loss. Cassie's father was out of a job during The Great Depression and had to leave his family to go find work. And we know that a lot of our children, a lot of my community, is experiencing that right now with this pandemic. And so, making deeper personal connections with the text through social-emotional learning is something that I would do again with this particular book. Or I would jump deeper into with this text.

And then, finally, just some type of art celebration and exhibition. A whole school exhibition. We were able to celebrate on virtual art night, but actually posting and making visible and making public the work of art that the children made and the responses is something that will be a next year task. And a takeaway for next year.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Beautiful. Thank you, Danielle, and representing your school team! I know this has been a super collaborative project at your school. And thank you, Thea and the Wawona team. At this point we have some time. I'm going to stop sharing so I can see everybody's beautiful faces. We have some time for questions, if anybody wants to share something. I'm going to ask Kim and Julie if you saw, or anybody on our team, to see if you saw something in the chat that you want to bring up. And if people want to open their mic to ask a question you could raise your hand. It's a little ambitious to ask that with 300 people, but you know, hey! We're risk takers. But Kim or Julie, have you been seeing any questions or...

KIM AUSTIN

No questions...

JULIE DUFFIELD

They had a paint night to involve students. They sort of did something easy. It was with paint. So, that was great. Just the ideas building on what everyone was sharing.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Beautiful.

KIM AUSTIN

Yeah. Encouraging quality time with parents, how important that is right now. Just people loving all the ideas. They're just grateful. And the cutout. They really like the cutout photo of

the child to fly over the drawings. Just like the interactivity of that without a screen is pretty cool.

JULIE DUFFIELD

Yeah.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Beautiful. Thea or Danielle, did you want to, I know that you were enjoying one another's sharing and know that you have a lot to talk about. Is there anything you wanted to ask each other? Or comment on each other's...

DANIELLE GAREGNANI

I'll be pulling from the Padlet. That will be another task that we'll be doing for some of the family—I really, I appreciate the Hora Familiar. And for me, personally, on my site, engagement online has just been very, very difficult for families, just because of circumstances. Not because families don't want to, but because we're still in a pandemic. And some of the hardships are difficult. And so, finding ways to engage families and bring them in and make them more part of our school and community is really something that I'm working on and I continue to work on this year. And so, I'll be reaching out. I'll be pulling from the Padlet and checking in with Thea and her team to brainstorm and thought partner.

THEA FABIAN

Yeah. Absolutely. I loved the art pieces you shared and just one thing I was thinking is, as we come back to in-person instruction—we're coming back April 6th—as we come back to in-person instruction, one benefit I think will be to put the little flyer in the backpacks to join the Hora Familiar and just have increased contact and communication with parents. So, apart from the difficult parts of coming back, that will be one of the great benefits.

JULIE DUFFIELD

And, Danielle, I want to say someone shared that they've taught Tar Beach with quilting with the illustrations in her first kinder back in 1995.

DANIELLE GAREGNANI

Yeah. I have a really young staff and so many of them had not seen it. So, it was a new text for many of them. It was great. They enjoyed it. And again, especially with our upper grade teachers, there's so much to unpack. So, we've created the home reading card and have actually differentiated it. And so, I'm hoping to actually develop it and have my teachers develop it more so we can turn it into a much more extended book to use as we move forward.

PAMELA SPYCHER

That's great. And I wanted to share—one of the things I'm really hoping people will find the home reading guide template to be useful for them. And just as a way to kind of capture the wonderful things that you're doing so that you don't have to try to remember. You know how it is if you're a classroom teacher, to try to remember what you did last year is really hard. So, it can be used either ahead of time to do some planning or it can be used after you do a bunch of really great activities just to document it so you can remember. And I love the way that

Maribel, you and your amazing team of parents have been innovating and making this work so much better. And, you know, we just were planting some seeds and you've just made it blossom and bloom and so grateful for all of your creative minds on it. So, thank you.

So, with that I do want to...this is a good segue. I'm going to see if I can share my screen without breaking Zoom again. Let's see. I think I go to...OK. I think we did it. I do want to make a pitch because we do have... following this webinar, everybody here is invited if you would like to come to a very interactive—this session was not that interactive, though we did throw some interactive things in there. But we do have a Community of Practice session on April 15th from 2-3 p.m. And we welcome you to come. It is very interactive. It's mostly you getting into small breakout groups or coming and the whole group kind of talking because the whole idea is, like, go out and try some stuff based on what you learned today or from Webinar 1. Ideally, try those home and school reading guides, at least some of the ideas from them. And then come back ready to share because this is really what this community is all about. Like, we get so much better and we grow so much more when we're sharing our amazing ideas. And if you can also bring, if you're going to come to that Community of Practice meeting...and it's low pressure, it's not like a test. It's just like, come and talk and share! And it's OK if, you know, you didn't get very far. That's OK. But if you can bring an artifact, like an art piece a child did or a poem or, you know, something that the class did together, that would be amazing because we learn so much from seeing what was done. So, we invite you to that. I believe an invitation to that will go out in some form. Or there's a link that's going into your chat which I cannot see. Is that correct, Kim?

KIM AUSTIN

Yes. Yep. The link's in the chat and you'll get it with a follow-up email.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Perfect. Repetition is really important. Practice makes perfect. So, we wanted to leave you with a beautiful image and quote. Again, we mentioned that we're just planting seeds here and we're so thrilled to see how all of your creativity is blossoming. And the Rumi quote is, "Every leaf that grows will tell you: what you sow will bear fruit, so if you have any sense, my friend, don't plant anything but love." So, I'm going to come back to this and send you out with some music and hopefully dancing to the rest of your day. But just a reminder that check your email. You'll be getting a survey link, webinar recording information, invitation to the April 15th 2-3 p.m. Community of Practice. And then if you have questions, please contact us. Kim, any last words?

KIM AUSTIN

Oh, just to thank our presenters again.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Oh! That's right!

KIM AUSTIN

You are amazing, including Pam. There's just so much going on in the chat that is a lot of love, I'm going to tell you. Lot of love coming back at you for what you're doing in this world. So, thank you so much. And yes, please come back for the Community of Practice and please fill

out that survey because we really do look at your responses and incorporate those into what we do next.

PAMELA SPYCHER

Yes. Thank you, everyone! We really appreciate you spending your precious time with us. And I'm going to leave you with some joyful music so you can end this session with some joyful dancing. So, here we go.

[music plays]