

We thought you liked us.
 Do it now.

IN THIS ISSUE

2023 CONVENTION: OCT. 13, WAUSAU

CENTERING JOY IN LEARNING

Penny Kittle is passionate about helping students and teachers find their voice in writing and develop a passion for reading.

The WCTE is, too! Doesn't that seem like the perfect pairing? We are excited to bring Penny Kittle to Wisconsin as the Keynote speaker at our 2023 convention. Penny will be talking about her book, *Micro Mentor Texts: Using Short Passages from Great Books to Teach Writer's Craft*. Penny says, "We all want students who write clearly and powerfully. We can teach this through daily practice with 'micro mentor texts,' passages from acclaimed books, and the decisions authors make to craft those texts so they engage readers. We can lead students to see a book as a treasure chest of writing craft moves — the moves that skilled writers use. Even young writers can and will begin to name those moves and use them in their craft through passage study and imitation. They will learn a wide range of writing skills from grammar in context, varied sentence patterns — both the art and feel of cohesion and style — as well as all the ways a writer is an artist of words. Our mini-lessons have the power to fundamentally change the way students understand writing. Come to study and write together."

COVID put a wrench into all our plans and the full WCTE convention as we have known and loved has taken a hiatus for a couple of years. But we're back and making a resurgence! In addition to Penny Kittle, we have a number of great breakout sessions planned for English teachers including topics on grammar, inquiry, classroom management, improving student writing, building a classroom library and much more. Also, you'll be able to explore our exhibit hall and talk to vendors. Last but not least, you'll have a chance to let your voice be heard at the WCTE annual meeting.

Join us in Wausau!



**PENNY
KITTLE**

CONVENTION SCHEDULE>> Thursday Workshops

Plan to attend the convention on Friday, Oct.13, in Wausau at the Jefferson Street Inn.

Come a day early

on Thursday, Oct. 12, for an afternoon of workshops with the Children's Cooperative Book Center and sessions on Embedding Academic and Career Planning in the ELA Classroom and Teaching the Holocaust and Civil Rights through the Lens of ELA. The afternoon will include a snack break followed by time to check in at the hotel and relax before heading out to dinner. WCTE Board members will host facilitated dinners at a number of restaurants within walking distance so you can select your preference or have dinner on your own.



Jefferson Street Inn

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12

9 a.m. -noon WCTE Board Meeting -*Madison*

Pre-Convention Workshops

1-1:45 p.m. Cooperative Children's Book Center - *Grand Ballroom*

1:50-2:35 p.m. Embedding Academic and Career Planning in the English Classroom
Speaker: Lynn Aprill, CESA 8/9 - Grand Ballroom

2:45-3:30 p.m. Teaching the Holocaust and Civil Rights through the Lens of ELA
Speaker: Amber Tilly, Northland Pines High School - Grand Ballroom

5:30 p.m

Meet to walk to dinner...choices:

- Jalapenos Mexican Bar and Restaurant
- Ciao Italian
- Malarkey's Pub and Townies Grill
- The Limerick Irish Pub
- The Mint Café
- Lemongrass Asian Fusion
- Char Grill House (on site)

This year, we'll have a drawing for YA books for your classroom, so bring your ticket money!

WHERE TO REGISTER:

<https://wisconsinCouncilofTeachersofEnglish.wildapricot.org/event-5227783>

HOTEL INFORMATION

To reserve a room at the Jefferson Street Inn call 715-845-6500 and mention you're with the WCTE. **Reserve before September 12 for the early bird rate of \$90.** After September 12, rates will vary.

Registration Schedule

Friday Convention (Non-member) – \$175.00
Friday Convention (Student/Retiree) – \$40.00
Friday Convention (WCTE Member) – \$125.00

Thursday & Friday (Non-member) – \$300.00
Thursday & Friday (Student/Retiree) – \$70.00
Thursday & Friday (WCTE Member) – \$200.00

Thursday Workshop (Non-member) – \$175.00
Thursday Workshop (Student/Retiree) – \$40.00
Thursday Workshop (WCTE Member) – \$125.00

CONVENTION SCHEDULE>> **Friday Convention**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 7:45 a.m.** **Registration, Exhibits** - *Stevens Reception Area*
- 8-9:00 a.m.** **Fresh Start Continental Breakfast** - *Jefferson Ballroom*
- 8:30-9:15 a.m.** **Breakout A1.** Demystifying Grammar Instruction: Keeping It Simple and Effective for All Learners,
Speakers: Heidi Edwards, Kelsey Del Ponte, Ashlee Fugate, *Washington*
- Breakout A2.** Inspiring Inquiry in the English Classroom
Speakers: Bailey Herrmann and Jessica Gallo, *Grant*
- Breakout A3.** Same Story, Different Ending: Classroom Management that Works
Speaker: Jeff Sommerfeld, *Lincoln*
- 9:30-9:45 a.m.** **Welcome** - Sarah Rowse-Borrelli, President - *Grand Ballroom*
- 9:45-11:30 a.m.** **Keynote/Workshop:** Micro Mentor Text - Penny Kittle - *Grand Ballroom*
- 11:30 a.m.-12** **Visit the exhibits** - *Stevens Reception Area*
- 12 - 1 p.m.** **Buffet Luncheon** - Taco Bar - *Jefferson*
Gather with your regional colleagues
Award presentations - 6 awards
- 1 - 1:45 p.m.** **Breakout B1.** Using Brush Strokes to Improve Student Writing,
Speaker: Tracey Budworth, *Washington*
- Breakout B2.** Invigorating the Instructor: Centering Joy in the Job
Speaker: Sarah Rowse-Borelli, *Grant*
- Breakout B3.** Curating Your Classroom Library: Creating a Diverse Library on a Budget
Speaker: Emily Waisanen, *Lincoln*
- 1:50 - 2:35 p.m.** **Breakout C1.** Censorship 101: Information & Current Resources for Teachers
Speaker: Rachel Bargender, *Washington*
- Breakout C2.** Student-Led Conferences
Speaker: Tina Fern-Denzer, *Grant*
- Breakout C3.** The 100-word Rant
Speaker: Patty Rieman, *Lincoln*
- 2:35 - 2:45 p.m.** **BREAK** - Crunchy treat on the way to sessions
Last chance to visit exhibits
Drawings for book bags
- 2:50 - 3:35 p.m.** **Breakout D1.** Invisible Disorders: Accessible Environments
Speakers: Dan Hansen and Becky Hansen, *Washington*
- Breakout D2.** Help Make the WCTE Work for You
Speakers: WCTE Board Members, *Grant*
- Breakout D3.** This could be You!, *Lincoln*
- 3:40 - 4:10 p.m.** **WCTE Annual Meeting** [ALL ARE INVITED], *Madison*



FROM THE PRESIDENT
>>Sarah Rowse-Borelli

Hello Educators,

I hope you all had a wonderful summer and are getting into the school year swing of things. I enjoy the hustle and bustle of back to school as well as the excitement that comes with it. My children are starting various grades, and we all enjoyed the rounds of back-to-school shopping.

This excitement is carrying over to WCTE, as we worked at our board retreat on creating ways to rejuvenate our organization, working to create partnerships, and figuring out what we can do in order to support teachers. We know that the past few years have been challenging, but I am confident that we will continue to collaborate and support teachers in order to continue the amazing things happening in the classrooms all around the state. Teachers are the heart of our schools, and the students in Wisconsin are so lucky to have you. If you have ideas and want to share your love of English education, please reach out and join our board. We need empowered educators!

We are also so excited to welcome Penny Kittle to our convention this year! Taking the time to re-center is incredibly valuable. Please try to join us!! Her building book love and instructional insights will surely enhance your practices. WCTE is consistently working to empower you to be the best teachers you can be. I want you to feel confident in your abilities and know that you have the support of the organization and WCTE is here to provide what you need.

We wish you all the best in the upcoming school year and sincerely hope you join us at the convention and as a member of WCTE, maybe even as a board member. Create an amazing year and find your center in your classroom.

Sarah Rowse-Borelli

Sarah Rowse-Borelli
WCTE President
Mrs.sarahr.b@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Sarah Rowse-Borrelli
President
Eisenhower HS, New Berlin
Mrs.sarahr.b@gmail.com

Tanya Sponholz
First Vice President
Prescott HS
sponholz@prescott.k12.wi.us

Trista Owczarzak
Second Vice President
Oakfield HS
trista.owczarzak@gmail.com

Tom Scott
Treasurer, Membership
tscott2@uwm.edu

REGIONAL DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Patrick Osowski
Fond du Lac HS
osowskip@fonddulac.k12.wi.us

REGIONAL DISTRICT DIRECTOR LIAISONS

Chelsey Bohan
P.J. Jacobs JHS, Stevens Point
cbohon@pointschools.net

John Schad
Kohler M/HS
schadj@kohler.k12.wi.us

BOARD MEMBERS

Lynn Aprill,
Executive Director,
Pooley Trust Officer,
Literary Map
Webmaster,
l.aprill8@gmail.com

Linda Barrington
Pooley Trust Officer,
WCTE Update Editor,
Webmaster
lbarrington@wi.rr.com

Stephanie Hurt
Brodhead School District
shurt5@gmail.com

Shannon Lagore
Diversity Chair
Oakfield HS
stlagore@oakfield.k12.wi.us

David Roloff
UW-Stevens Point,
ELATE state liaison
droloff@uwsp.edu

Kelly Seefeldt,
NCTE liaison,
Webmaster
UW-Stevens Point
kelly.seefeldt@uwsp.edu

Joanna Slattery
Amherst HS
jslattery@amherst.k12.wi.us

Jessa Turner
Sheboygan Falls HS
Archivist
jessaturner12@gmail.com

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Bianca Williams-Griffin
DPI Liaison
bianca.williams-griffin@dpi.wi.gov

Jennifer Moody
Wis. English Journal
editor
Mount Mary University
moodyj@mmu.edu

WCTE Teacher of Excellence inspires, supports, understands students

Amber Tilley, English teacher at Northland Pines High School, is this year's WCTE Teacher of Excellence. Her nominator is a former student and current colleague. The letter of nomination emphasized that both students and colleagues view Tilley as a highly qualified teacher, a spectacular colleague and an inspiration. Tilley often sees something in a student that he or she doesn't even recognize.

For example, Tilley had a student who was self-conscious about the way she spoke and wrote. Tilley listened and worked with her to get through emotional times. She suggested that the student join forensics and tell her story of what it was like to live with Dystonia. The student agreed and Amber met with her outside of forensics meetings to prepare for sub-district, district and state competitions. There were moments when this student was ready to call it quits, but Tilley was there always to support her. The student ended up receiving first place at the state competition. The experience with forensics has inspired that student to become a special education teacher.

Tilley has been a superb co-teacher in English, her nominator said. She is an excellent mentor and a great leader for students. She is compassionate, caring and understanding while

maintaining a high level of rigor for students. The two of them have collaborated on ways that they can meet all students' needs, and Tilley has been open to changing how they instruct students to help them achieve at their highest potential.

Her nominator said, "There are not enough words to describe how amazing and dedicated Amber is to teaching. She inspires, coaches and dedicates herself to her students and co-workers on a daily basis." WCTE is proud to honor Amber Tilley with its 2023 WCTE Teacher of Excellence Award.

--Taken from her letter of nomination



Amber Tilley
Northland Pines High School

AWARD for DIVERSITY and INCLUSION

Dan Hansen, English teacher at Fort Atkinson High School, is this year's winner of the WCTE Award for Diversity and Inclusion.

Hansen is committed to providing a safe space for all students. He has long recognized that schools struggle with incorporating and uplifting students who are neurodiverse and also students who are part of the LGBTQ+ community. Collaborating with the GSA adviser at the school and a neurodiverse colleague, he set out to create a classroom that would be warm, flexible and accommodating without the need for students who struggle with invisible issues to have formal 504 plans or IEPs in place.

To start, Hansen has a beginning-of-the-year survey for students, asking things like "What are your pronouns?" and "Where do you prefer to sit in the room and why?" These questions allow students to open up about issues like this: "I would like to sit in the back because it makes me feel anxious to have people reading over my shoulder" or "I need to sit near the door because I need to use the bathroom more."

School-wide, he's advocated for changes to school "traditions" that have become problematic. This has included asking for alternatives to the "gauntlet" - a first-day-of-school event where the freshmen are corralled in the commons and then funneled through a tunnel of teachers high-fiving them while loud music plays. While many students enjoy the experience, many others find it to be overwhelming and scary.

While it has taken several years, he's confident that next year's freshmen will be given a more organic choice of how to enter the first day of school class meeting, and his administration is

beginning to understand that quiet does not mean unengaged or unexcited. Also, Hansen came to realize that his school, while having been supplied with Trauma-Sensitive Schools training, was failing to implement significant change due to both lack of experience and lack of practical tools. To combat this challenge, he worked with a neurodiverse colleague to develop a seminar about how to make classrooms more accessible to an ever-growing population of neurodiverse students.

Hansen has been a strong voice for Diversity and Inclusion within the high school debate community. A coach for more than 15 years, Mr. Hansen was the first to advocate for change within the community when research showed that female debaters with similar credentials were being given more losses than their male counterparts - which led to elimination rounds that had a far smaller percentage of female-presenting debaters than did the pool as a whole.

When Hansen took over teaching the AP English classes last year, he was first tasked with re-evaluating the existing curriculum. Despite the AP's growing use of current literature, the only cultural diversity was African-American authors. Learning this, he incorporated a number of new major texts as well as short stories and poems. He added a native North American text showing perspective with issues of neurodiversity and strong female characters, as well as a female author.

--Taken from his letter of nomination



Dan Hansen, Fort
Atkinson High School

WCTE TEACHING AWARDS

NANCY HOEFS MEMORIAL AWARD for OUTSTANDING FIRST-YEAR TEACHER

Jonathan Idárraga's growth as a new teacher, collaboration with other teachers, and positive impact on the school culture motivated his principal, Jared Schaffner, to nominate him for the Outstanding First-Year Teacher Award.

Schaffner talked with the associate principal about Idárraga: "He's been such a good fit. And the best part, he's very reflective. He learns quickly and has improved so much from September. He's really student-focused."

In his letter of nomination, Schaffner reflected on Idárraga's growth. "As a classroom teacher, [he] has impressed me with his willingness to examine professional practice, his eagerness to learn from others and his ability to 'reset' procedures or practices in his classroom. He's been very eager to find ways to increase relevance in course materials for students...and at team meetings,

his contributions indicate a deep sense of self-reflection." Schaffner added, "He's improved more this school year than I've ever observed a new teacher grow in a first year of teaching."

Kimberly Thole, district reading specialist, worked with Idárraga on a weekly basis at team meetings. She described him as "a collaborative team member, ...respectful and considerate of others' thoughts and ideas while willing to share his own." Further, she noted his reflectiveness of instructional practices and responsiveness to feedback.



Jonathan Idárraga,
Onalaska High School

OUTSTANDING STUDENT TEACHER AWARD

Allison Langer's student teaching supervisor, Debbie Keller, was consistently impressed with Ally's "leadership skills, natural teacher instincts, rapport with students and professional relationships with colleagues."

Keller described her, "pacing the classroom like a pro, firing quick questions at students and making humorous comments to keep them engaged." The other teachers and the administrators were so impressed with her "that the principal spoke with her about an upcoming job that he's interested in hiring her to fill."

One of the English teachers, Tracey Budworth, worked alongside Ally, mentoring many of the students. "It was evident from the start that she (Ally) possessed a natural talent for engaging and inspiring her students," Budworth said. "She established an inclusive and supportive classroom environment that encouraged active participation and fostered a love for learning. Her ability to adapt her teaching methods to accommodate diverse student needs was commendable, and she consistently implemented innovative" instructional strategies that promoted student success."

"It is important," Budworth said, "to highlight Ally's exceptional interpersonal skills and her ability to build trusting relationships with both students and staff."



Allison Langer,
UW-River Falls

OUTSTANDING STUDENT TEACHER AWARD

Paul Winkler's student teaching supervisor, Barb Koenig, nominated him for this award with multiple examples and explanations of his expertise and ability to relate well with students.

"Paul is one of those natural teachers who not only gets to know his students well, but who is dedicated to making sure that they get the best education possible," Koenig said. She noted his use of scaffolding and varied questioning techniques in his lessons. "He is very reflective and is able to adapt lessons between classes if necessary in order to meet the needs of students coming through the door," she said. "He lets almost nothing upset him, but he has clear boundaries, and students respect him enough not to cross [them]."

Winkler's comfortability around teenagers helps him to build positive relationships with them. He points out students' strengths and "never belittles, judges or humiliates students, but instead points out their strengths and encourages them to be the best they can be," Koenig said.

Associate Professor Candance Doerr-Stevens identified his "previous experiences as a volunteer and mentor at Casa Hogar orphanage in Mexico" as having helped him to connect, communicate and teach across cultures." She said he designed extra literacy supports to facilitate communication practices in his classroom.



Paul Winkler,
UW-Milwaukee

WCTE receives NCTE's Affiliate Website of Excellence Award

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) has selected the Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English (WCTE), as a 2023 Affiliate Website of Excellence Award honoree. Established in 2000, this award recognizes outstanding websites with high-quality content, easy navigation, size, speed, privacy, links and interactive abilities (message boards, live chats, forums, blogs, mailing lists, etc.). The award winners will be announced at the 2023 NCTE Annual Convention in Columbus, Ohio, during the Affiliate Session on Sunday, Nov. 19.





Featured Wisconsin author: Jeff Nania

Wisconsin Connection: Spiker Lake, Wis.

Jeff Nania is a former law enforcement officer, conservationist, biofuel creator and award-winning author. The books in his Northern Lakes Mystery series — "Figure Eight" (2019), "Spider Lake" (2020), and "Bough Cutter" (2021) — have been recognized by the Midwest Book Awards, Independent Publisher Book Awards and Next Generation Indie Book Awards. His narrative non-fiction writing has appeared in "Wisconsin Outdoor News," "Double Gun Journal," "The Outlook" and other publications.

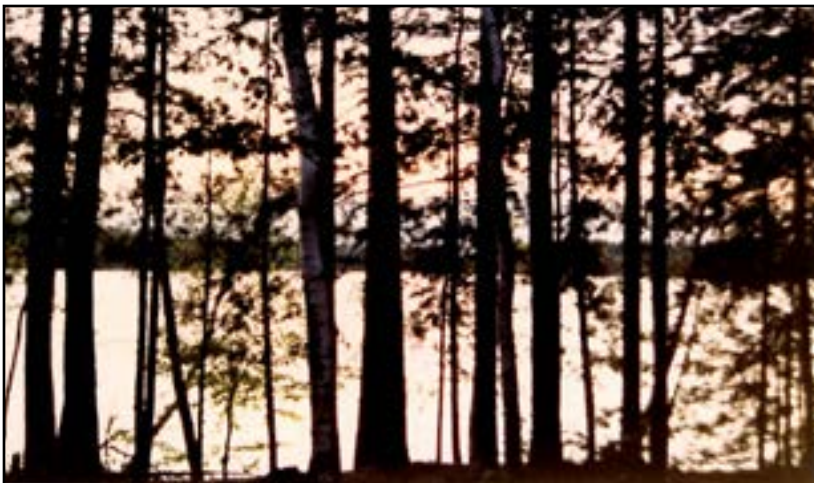
Born and raised in Wisconsin, Jeff's family settled in Madison's storied Greenbush neighborhood. His father often loaded Jeff, his brothers, and a couple of dogs into an old Jeep station wagon for outdoor adventures. These foundational experiences fostered a sense of community, a passion for outdoor traditions and a love of our natural resources.

Serving in many law enforcement roles, Jeff was a decorated officer and member of the first canine unit, patrolling with his dog, Rosi. Things changed and Jeff found himself knee-deep in wetland restoration. He received the National Wetlands Award, and "Outdoor Life Magazine" named Jeff one of the nation's 25 most influential conservationists for his habitat work. The Wisconsin Senate commended Jeff with a Joint Resolution for his work with wetlands, education, and as a non-partisan advisor on environmental issues.

Now a full-time novelist, Jeff spends as much time as possible fishing Spider Lake and exploring Wisconsin's landscape with his friends and family. Find more of Jeff's writing online at <https://www.feetwetwriting.com> and follow him on social media.



Award-winning author Jeff Nania draws upon careers in law enforcement, conservation and a passion for our natural resources in his bestselling Northern Lakes Mystery series. Jeff's narrative non-fiction writing has appeared in "Wisconsin Outdoor News," "Double Gun Journal," "The Outlook" and other publications. Follow him on social media [@jeffnania](#) and [@jeffnaniaauthor](#). (taken from his website at <https://www.jeffnania.com/home>)



Works by Jeff Nania

- Figure Eight: A Northern Lakes Mystery (2018)
- Spider Lake: A Northern Lakes Mystery (2020)
- Bough Cutter: A Northern Lakes Mystery (2021)
- Musky Run: A Northern Lakes Mystery (2023)

Want to learn more about Jeff Nania and another 133 Wisconsin authors? Visit the Wisconsin Lit Map website at <https://www.wisconsinlitmap.com/>

Wisconsin reading education overhauled under bill signed by Gov. Tony Evers

by Mitchell Schmidt | Wisconsin State Journal, July 20, 2023

The state will spend \$50 million to create a new literacy office, hire reading coaches and help cover the cost of new phonics-based reading curricula under a GOP-authored bill signed into law by Gov. Tony Evers on July 16.

The Democratic governor said the bill, which aims to address lagging reading scores among Wisconsin students by increasing the number of reading-readiness assessments for students in 4K through second grade, is “a step in the right direction.” He added that additional K-12 spending on matters ranging from mental health services to school lunches remains a top priority.

“So, if we want to improve outcomes for kids in our classrooms across the board, this bill is only one small part of the work we have to do — we must continue making meaningful investments in our kids and our schools, bolster our education workforce to help keep class sizes small, and expand access to mental health services and healthy meals in our schools so our kids can bring their full and best selves to our classrooms,” Evers said in a statement

Despite Wisconsin’s significant partisan divide - **the issue of how to teach reading to children is shaping up as an area of potential bi-partisan agreement.** GOP legislators have been meeting with DPI and the Governor’s office to find a compromise to address **concerns about the state’s lagging student achievement scores.** But so far, the deal is not final. WisconsinEye’s Newsmakers is joined by Representative Joel Kitchens, Republican Chair of the Assembly Committee on Education and Tom McCarthy, Tom McCarthy - Executive Director for the Office of the State Superintendent at the Department of Public Instruction.

Assembly Bill 321 was introduced earlier this summer and largely mirrored legislation the governor vetoed last legislative session.

The bill originally would have held back students who score poorly on their third-grade reading assessment — an idea that drew strong opposition from the state Department of Public Instruction and Evers, who threatened to veto the measure.

Ultimately, bill author Rep. Joel Kitchens, R-Sturgeon Bay, **amended the measure to only require those students to take part in summer instruction or repeat third-grade reading courses while in fourth grade.**

“This bipartisan plan could not have been accomplished without the countless hours put in by staff to craft a well thought out product as well as the input from DPI and other stakeholders,” bill co-author Sen. Dwey Stroebel, R-Cedarburg, said in a statement. “The Right to Read Act will transform the way we teach reading in Wisconsin, helping better prepare our students for college and career readiness while setting them up (for) lifelong success.”

The bill creates a Council on Early Literacy Curricula within DPI that would be charged with recommending early

literacy curricula and instructional materials to be used in schools. The council would consist of nine members, with three selected by the state superintendent of public instruction and three chosen by each of the leaders of the GOP-controlled Assembly and Senate.

That **curricula would focus on the “science of reading,” a method for teaching children to read that is more focused on phonics,** which is based on the relationships between sounds and words. Many Wisconsin schools teach reading through a “balanced literacy” method, which puts less emphasis on phonics.

The coaches would be assigned to school districts based on pupil scores and requests for early literacy support.

The remaining \$40 million would go to school districts as



Photo credit: Shutterstock

grants to cover teacher training expenses and half the cost of new curricula.

The Legislature approved setting aside the \$50 million as part of a sweeping education funding bill that passed both chambers earlier this month.

Lawmakers said \$10 million would be spent to hire **64 full-time literacy coaches who have expertise “in science-based early literacy instruction and instructional practices and have instructional experience in grades kindergarten to 12,”** according to an analysis of the bill by the nonpartisan Legislative Reference Bureau.

The 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress found that 67.4% of Wisconsin fourth-graders and 67.6% of eighth-grade students were not proficient in reading.

Last year’s levels were the worst recorded in the state since 1998, Wisconsin Watch reported in April.

Despite the low scores, Wisconsin eighth-graders were 3 percentage points higher than the national average, while fourth-graders were close to the national average.

The state’s Wisconsin Forward exam found similar results, with about 67% of eighth-graders and 58% of fourth-graders failing to score proficient or advanced in English language arts.

WITH GRATITUDE

Marti Matyska, Tom Scott honored as 'Legacy Board Members'

The Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English only exists because of the dedication of its board members, all of whom are active or retired English practitioners giving of their time and expertise “to facilitate the exchange of ideas on subjects of special concern to Wisconsin teachers of the English language arts and of English” (as stated in our original 1958 bylaws). We see many of our board members for a season, watching them progress through the executive board roles and then return to their classrooms to carry on. A few, however, continue in their roles year after year, providing awareness of the organization’s history and steering WCTE into the future. WCTE would like to recognize two of those “legacy board members” who, after many years of service to the profession, are stepping back to truly enjoy retirement.

Dr. Marti Matyska

spent 33 ½ years in the Menominee Indian School District, first as a high school English teacher and then advancing to K-5 assistant principal after receiving her Master’s Degree from UW-Madison. Marti joined the WCTE board in 1999, spending one year as secretary before landing in the position of convention manager in 2000. Over the years, Marti also served as a district director for District 8 and Pooley Trust Board member, but it’s her expertise in all things “convention” for which she’s remembered.

Marti went on to receive her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction Leadership from Marion University after her retirement from MISD, but even then she continued to help our first vice presidents to put on stellar English conventions. Every



Marti Matyska

time she tried to “retire” from her role, a new vice president would say, “Well, I’ll take the position, but ONLY if Marti helps me with the convention!” WCTE would like to sincerely thank Marti for her 24 years of service to the board. Marti received the WCTE Chisholm Award for distinguished service to the profession of teaching of English/Language Arts in Wisconsin in 2003.

Dr. Tom Scott started his career as an English teacher and department chair at the School District of Menomonee Falls, where he spent 37 years before joining the faculty at UW-Milwaukee’s Curriculum and Instruction Department. Tom received his Master’s degree from Marquette University and his Ph.D. from UW-



Tom Scott

Milwaukee. Tom joined the WCTE board in 2000 as the chair of the Wisconsin Conference on English Leadership (WCEL), and he spent decades as WCTE’s connection to NCTE and CEL national organizations, mentoring several WCTE board members to become CEL board members as well.

Tom became President of WCTE in 2003-2004, and then shifted to the role of Treasurer in 2008. Since that time, Tom has kept WCTE financially afloat (despite Act 10 and a global pandemic). Having recently retired as Director of Secondary English Education at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, Tom is stepping down as WCTE treasurer as soon as the board can find his replacement. WCTE offers its heartfelt gratitude for Tom’s 23 years of service to the WCTE board. Tom received the WCTE Chisholm Award for distinguished service to the profession of teaching of English/Language Arts in Wisconsin in 2008.

WCTE receives NCTE's Affiliate Newsletter of Excellence Award

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) has selected the Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English (WCTE), as a 2023 Affiliate Newsletter of Excellence Award honoree. The newsletter is edited by Linda Barrington and published by WCTE. Newsletter submissions are judged on content (particularly the inclusion of current, pertinent information with a good balance between theory, practice, and professional growth in formation), quality of writing, a clear and accurately defined purpose for the publication, a format which aids the reader in locating information and is easy to read, and the use of graphics to aid the overall effectiveness of the newsletter. The award winners will be announced at the 2023 NCTE Annual Convention in Columbus, Ohio, during the Affiliate Session on Sunday, Nov. 19.



Managing time in a journalism class

Doesn't it always feel that as soon as you've gotten started the bell rings to end the period? There always seems to be more to do than you have time for during staff time. Where does the time go? If you're not sure how the minutes keep slipping away, consider creating a schedule for each staff meeting so you can make the most of every precious minute.

ORGANIZED TIME

Whether your newspaper or yearbook is offered as an academic course, an elective class or an extracurricular club, it is most important that the time devoted to the publication is time on task. Staff member activity for meeting time should involve those tasks that specifically must be accomplished on site. Editing sessions, computer production and other collaborative publication work that must be accomplished during the meeting time should be well organized.

While some of your staff members may view a schedule as "elementary," remind them that in the real world, most adult work environments have structure. Starting times, stopping times, break times and lunchtime are usually prescribed for employees to facilitate the most productive use of time.

Depending on your allotment of time, divide the period or block into manageable and focused sets of activity. At first, it will be awkward and you must be disciplined about the time allotments until they become routine. Post the schedule in an area of the room with high visibility. Use a kitchen timer to set minutes for each aspect of the staff meeting time. For fun, assign a staff member the responsibility of Minute Manager and provide a bell or whistle to signal the change from one type of activity to the next.

"ME" TIME

For the first five minutes of the class or work period, staff members can focus on themselves. They can complete last-minute homework assignments, have a quick makeover so they look and feel fabulous for the remainder of the period,



Students focus on their staff assignments during "IT" time when they can concentrate without interruption.

replay last night's game highlights or just "chat among themselves." This gives everyone a chance to clear their minds of important "me" stuff.

Feel like you can't justify the homework and makeup during your precious class time since it has no direct relation to the subject area? Consider this alternative: Use the five minutes for an organized sharing time during which students can share their "me" successes. Students can announce good news like getting a driver's license, passing a test, hanging out with a crush, etc. or swap funny moments from the school day. This still focuses on students as individuals but also ties the staff together and establishes a positive climate for production. It may also lead to great coverage opportunities.

"WE" TIME

The next 10 minutes staff members devote to staff organization details and announcement updates regarding deadline progress, special circumstances and a focus on what needs to be accomplished both today and long term. Editors and advisers share the responsibility for keeping this 10-minute meeting topical and timely. Editors should make notes on the board to

reflect the announcements and discussion. During this time, staff members make sure they know what they have to do during the next (and largest) block of time.

"IT" TIME

During this 35-65-minute time span (depending on the length of your class), editors work with staff members and everyone concentrates on tasks that will lead to meeting the staff's deadline. ALL staff members and editors give 100% of their attention to publication planning and production.

If a staff member needs to study for a test or has some other distraction, send him outside of the staff room to study or work it out with a mutually agreeable solution. Anytime one member of the staff is not focused, it inevitably distracts others, so you should find a way to keep everyone in the room working steadily. It is sometimes necessary, however, to make special arrangements with your staffers to address other, more time-sensitive needs like personal emergencies, making up a test or getting extra help from another teacher. Since your staffers put in a considerable amount of time beyond the regular class period, they

Continued on next page



During "WE" time students may discuss as a group or get advice from other staff members or editors as they work on their stories, photos, interview notes, etc.

deserve the favor. Remind yourself that one class period in journalism seems very important today, but your supportive and nurturing relationship of each staff member extends much farther into the future.

"I'M NOT YOUR MOM" TIME

In the final five-to-10 minutes of the period or scheduled meeting time, members tie up any loose ends and clean up the room in preparation for the next meeting. The editors and adviser make

any last-minute announcements. Assign small jobs "quittin' time" duties such as someone to charge digital camera batteries, shut down computers or other small housekeeping habits that help keep the publication room operating at its best.

OUTSIDE TIME

It's important to plan. Your students can be highly productive outside of your time together by conducting research and interviews, writing copy or taking photos. Create a "to-do" notepad for each student or purchase inexpensive pocket-sized notebooks in which staffers can list what publication tasks they need to accomplish before the next scheduled meeting time. Maximizing the time students put in outside of class minimizes the time you have to put in yourself.

If you know you will have to devote extra time to the publication project in order to meet your collective goals, pre-determine those you will make yourself available to work. This will help your editors and staff members plan accordingly with clear expectations for their scheduled work opportunities.

KETTLE MORaine PRESS ASSOCIATION

Save the Date!

**BUILDING A LEGACY
50 YEARS OF KEMPA**

**KEMPA FALL SCHOLASTIC
JOURNALISM CONFERENCE**

**You're invited!
Friday, Oct. 6th at
UW-Whitewater**

Student workshops, awards, anniversary luncheon and more!

For more information visit
<https://www.uww.edu/ce/camps/additional/kempa/kempaconference>

The poster features a vibrant background of red and yellow wavy lines. The text is arranged in a clear, hierarchical manner, with the main title in a large, bold, black font and the event details in a smaller, bold, black font. The date and location are highlighted in a white box with a black border. The overall design is modern and eye-catching.

Managing student anxiety in speech class

As we are all going through planning the first few weeks of school, this time presents us with a unique opportunity to establish an environment and routine to start decreasing student anxiety about speaking in front of the class. Most teachers that I have talked to about public speaking indicate that there is an increase in student anxiety regarding talking in front of the class. Studies I have seen indicate that this is also increasing with any type of social interactions. There is a solid body of research indicating that this stems from social media, but that's my plan for another article this year, so you'll have to just trust me at this point.

One of the ways to combat this that you can actually control, is to give students speaking opportunities early on that are low risk (e.g do not grade them on their speaking ability) with a high chance for success. The best time to think about this is right from the start. Sprinkling in opportunities to give very brief "speeches" in front of the class can be done any time students

are doing group work. In order to do this in as minimally anxiety-inducing way as possible, let the group know ahead of time that what they come up with as a group will be shared by one of them in front of the class. I find the best way to pick the speaker is to go by something random right before sharing happens (tallest/shortest, youngest/oldest, most/least siblings, etc.). This way, the student most likely to want to do it won't

be the default and everyone will get a chance to speak early on (you could also add in the addendum of "tallest/shortest that hasn't spoken in front of class yet"). Especially at the beginning of the year, I would allow, and maybe even encourage depending on the class, that they write out what is going to be said as a group so that

the person picked has a script if they feel they need it.

Will this remove all anxiety for all students? Of course not, but it help make it a bit better and students will start seeing your classroom as a safe space to speak. For sure, when they get to being assessed on their speaking ability, they will be better prepared.

One of the ways to combat student anxiety about talking in front of class is to give them speaking opportunities early on that are low risk with a high chance for success.



Patrick Osowski teaches at Fond du Lac High School. He has a Bachelor's in Speech Education and a Master's in Speech Communication. He has taught a public speaking course for 30 years including more than 20 years teaching through UW-Oshkosh CAPP (Cooperative Academic Partnership Program).

WISDAA

Interscholastic Enrichment Through Expression

Offer students in grades 6-12 opportunities for assessment/feedback and recognition of excellence in a multi-institutional setting:

- **Debate:** online contests once/month, October-March; State Festival in person at UW-Madison, April 19-20, 2024 or online (TBD in April).
- **Theatre:** in October and November schools produce 40-minute one-acts; or individuals, pairs, and small groups of students enter Thespy contest events in acting, musical theatre, or dance; individuals can submit technical portfolio presentations.
- **Speech:** middle level (mid-January through mid-March) and high school (early February through mid-April) students enter literary performance or speaking contests to hone skills in communication.
- **Film:** schools can enter any number of short films online in late April.



www.wisdaa.org
[@wispeechdrama](https://twitter.com/wispeechdrama)

Formerly Wisconsin High School Forensic Association; affiliate of National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

BUILD YOUR STACK >> NCTE resource



Build Your Stack provides a forum for contributors (mostly NCTE members) to share books from their classroom experience. Check this out at <https://ncte.org/blog>. Here are some examples.

Transnational Literacy posted on 8.25.23:
from NCTE's Standing Committee on Global Citizenship

How to Teach Reading in the Middle Grades
posted on 8.14.23 by NCTE member & author Laura J. Robb

Lessons from the NCTE Convention
posted on 8.11.23 by guest author Jacob Wunsh

Reflections on the School Year
posted on 7.14.23 by NCTE member Lindsey Franklin

Oldies but Goodies: Books You May Have Forgotten but Your Students Never Will
posted on 7.10.23 by NCTE member Jodi-Beth Haze

Storytelling and Persuasive Writing in the High School Classroom
posted on 6.21.23 by NCTE member Kristen Kalenowicz

Beyond Poetry Month: Leveraging Poetry's Possibilities All Year Long
posted on 6.26.23 by NCTE member JoEllen McCarthy

Storytelling and Persuasive Writing in the High School Classroom posted on 6.21.23 by NCTE member Kristen Kalenowicz

Build Your Stack®: When Teachers Read
posted on 6.8.23 by NCTE member Carol Jago

How Blank Walls Built Community in 7th Grade
posted on 6.2.23 by NCTE member Katie Durkin, reprinted with permission from MiddleWeb.

In the Harbor of Our Classrooms
posted on 5.22.23 by NCTE member R. Joseph Rodríguez.

Implementing Cosmopolitan Awareness: A Focus on the War in Ukraine
posted on 5.13.23 by NCTE member Cynthia Ryman

'Speed Booking' Lets Students Share Book Recommendations
posted on 5.10.23 by NCTE member Carly Van Der Wende

MEET A NEW BOARD MEMBER

Shannon Lagore enjoys teaching English

I'm one of the newest members of the Board of the Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English. I was first introduced to the WCTE as a resource while I was in my methods classes at UW-Stevens Point. Fast forward a couple years of a pandemic, finishing methods, student teaching, graduating, moving, long-term subbing, moving again, and finally settling into my position as high school English teacher at the Oakfield School District. My incredible mentor, Trista Owczarzak, was a board member of the WCTE and mentioned that the board was looking for more members. As a first-year teacher, I laughed it off, but after two more years, a Nancy Hoeff's Outstanding First Year

Teacher Award, and a lot of growth in the ELA Education field later, I took the leap! I love having a community of people to reach out to when I need ideas, have ideas, or have existential crises over the books I'm reading.

When I'm not reading or teaching, I love playing D&D, painting my own classroom decor, vibing with my two cats (Chipotle Ranch and Winnie), and eating Toppers Pizza with my boyfriend. I'm very much looking forward to going into my third year of teaching feeling more purposeful and prepared than ever before, even though we're adding a puppy to the fam at the end of the summer. What can I say, I thrive on stories and chaos!



Shannon Lagore

Looking for a good book?

Check out these titles, shared by the WCTE Board



**Tanya Sponholz
Prescott
High School**

This Tender Land by William Kent Krueger

“Two young boys, who go to the Lincoln Indian Training School in southern MN, escape along the Gilead River with two other orphan children. They go on an epic adventure running into characters in a quest to get to St. Louis. This is very reminiscent of 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.' Prince Harry writes vulnerably about his life as part of the royal family. He shares how much

his mother's death impacted his life and relationships.” ~ Tanya Sponholz

“In the summer of 1932, on the banks of Minnesota's Gilead River, the Lincoln Indian Training School is a pitiless place where Native American children, forcibly separated from their parents, are sent to be educated. It is also home to Odie O'Banion, a lively orphan boy whose exploits constantly earn him the superintendent's wrath. Odie and his brother, Albert, are the only white faces among the hundreds of Native American children at the school.

After committing a terrible crime, Odie and Albert are forced to flee for their lives along with their best friend, Mose, a mute young man of Sioux heritage. Out of pity, they also take with them a brokenhearted little girl named Emmy. Together, they steal away in a canoe, heading for the mighty Mississippi in search for a place to call home.” ~ Goodreads



**Jennifer Moody
Mount Mary
University**

She Came by It Natural: Dolly Parton and the Women Who Lived Her Songs by Sarah Smarsh

“Smarsh combines research on Dolly Parton with memories from her rural, working class upbringing. The result is an insightful exploration of feminism in both Southern and rural cultures. This book is small, easy to carry around for reading, and divided into digestible chapters.” ~ Jennifer Moody



**Sarah Rowse-Borelli
Eisenhower HS,
New Berlin**

Upgrade by Blake Crouch

“This is a science fiction novel that was recommended by my psychology teacher BFF. It is a mental thriller using gene and DNA mutations and what happens when an FBI-like character, Logan, experiences various mutations and the impact it has in the ever changing futuristic world. It is shaping up to be a very eventful psychological thriller.” ~Sarah Rowse-Borelli

“Logan Ramsay is about to get the brain he always dreamed of. But will he be transformed into something more than human... or something less? When the SWAT team gives the all-clear and Logan Ramsay steps into the basement, he has no idea that everything's about to change. Then there's the hiss of aerosol. The explosion. The shrapnel that punctures his hazmat gear. Logan wakes up to find himself in a hospital bed, attended by doctors in their own hazmat suits, his wife and daughter looking on from behind the glass.

The doctors say he's been infected by a virus - one designed not to make him sick, but to modify his very genetic structure. In a world where the next-generation gene-editing tool known as Scythe is widely available - and has already reaped disastrous consequences - the possibilities are too many and terrifying to count.” ~ Goodreads



**Lynn Aprill
CESA 8 and 9**

Mississippi Trial, 1955 by Chris Crowe

“Great novelized first-person account of the Emmett Till murder for middle/high school.” ~Lynn Aprill

“Winner of the 2003 International Reading Association Award for Young Adult Novel. This gripping read is based on the true events of the murder of

Emmett Till, one of the nation's most notorious crimes that helped spark the Civil Rights Movement .

At first Hiram is excited to visit his hometown in Mississippi. But soon after he arrives, he crosses paths with Emmett Till, a black teenager from Chicago who is also visiting for the summer. Hiram sees firsthand how the local whites mistreat blacks who refuse to "know their place." When Emmett's tortured dead body is found floating in a river, Hiram is determined to find out who could do such a thing. But what will it cost him to know? ~ Goodreads





Wisconsin English Teachers' Calendar of Events and Deadlines



#NCTE Chat 8 p.m EDT. Third Sunday of each month. More information here: <https://ncte.org/blog/2017/06/join-nctechat/>

September

Sept. 30 Deadline for advance registration for the Kettle Moraine Press Association Fall Scholastic Journalism Conference. More information at www.KEMPAjournalism.org.

October

- Oct. 1-7** **Banned Books Week:** Theme: Let Freedom Read <https://bannedbooksweek.org/>
- Oct. 6** **Fall Scholastic Journalism Conference,** UW-Whitewater
- Oct. 12** **WCTE Pre-Convention workshops,** Jefferson Street Inn, Wausau
- Oct. 13** **WCTE Convention,** featuring **Penny Kittle,** Jefferson Street Inn, Wausau. **Theme:** Centering Joy in Learning.

November

- Nov. 2-5** **Journalism Education Association/National Scholastic Press Association High School Journalism Convention** in Boston, **Theme:** Spotlight on Journalism More information: <http://fall.journalismconvention.org/>
- Nov. 16-19** **NCTE Annual Convention:** Conexiones 2023 COMMUNICATE, COLLABORATE, CREATE, in Columbus, OH. Register by Oct. 11 for discounted rate: <https://convention.ncte.org/registration/>
- Nov. 19-21** **CEL Convention** in Columbus, OH, **Theme:** Literacy Communities as Sites of Reckoning and Repair. Register by Oct. 11 for discounted rate.

July

July 31, 2024 Mailing deadline for **Recognizing Excellence in Art and Literary Magazines (REALM) Award.** More information at NCTE website: <http://www2.ncte.org/awards/program-to-recognize-in-student-literary-magazines/>

WCTE Update August 2023

President Sarah Rowse-Borelli	2nd Vice President Trista Owczarzak	Treasurer Tom Scott
1st Vice-President Tanya Sponholz	Secretary Jennifer Kieren	Update Editor Linda Barrington

Dungeon Crawl activity

The 23-24 school year is fast approaching, and as August begins, teachers are blowing dust off their lesson planners. One of my favorite parts of a new school year is the first days. I love seeing a new group of students come through my doors, the kids are excited to see each other, and the staff are even more excited to see each other. The one thing no one is excited about? The Work that is school. I'm a firm believer in the idea that no time should be wasted and kids should be building skills at all times. At the same time, I make sure to reserve the first 2-3 days of the year to focus on relationship building skills.

I use Bruce Tuckman's Group Development Model during these few days and want to share my favorite activity that brings my classes to the Performing level. After a couple days of activities promoting both individual and group success, a selected time to review and create expectations, I'm ready to take a step back as the Clear Leader and let my students work together with little intervention from me. That's where the Dungeon Crawl comes in. Now, you may have heard of this activity referred to as 64 Tiles, but I've adapted it to fit with a huge part of my identity: a nerdy Dungeons and Dragons player. I've also taken some liberties with some of the rules and expectations. Take this activity and adapt it to your own means!



Shannon Lagore teaches English at Oakfield Middle/High School. ✉ slagore@oakfield.k12.wi.us

MATERIALS:

Desired number of tiles (I use 56, and I have my tiles drawn out on a twin top sheet, but 56/64 sheets of paper work just as well)

Directions visible on the board for those who are better visual learners than auditory

An answer key for you: Green for safe tiles, gray for trap doors, red for Goblins

Cards or a symbol to indicate those who are fighting Goblins

An **introduction to the game** to get your students invested and in the mood

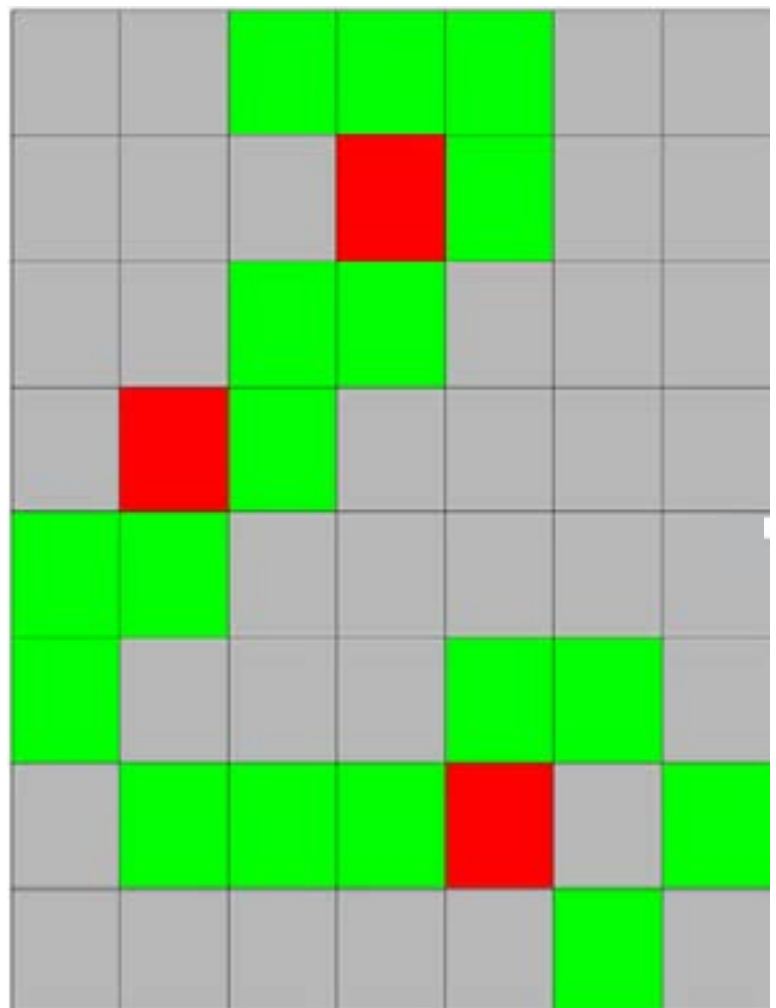
I like a **good vantage point** so I usually stand on a chair or table.

The Loot (Every adventure ends with good loot. Candy is my go to.)

A **timer**, if desired

1 Explain the rules of the game. It's best to physically show students which tiles they can step on. (See directions in graphic on next page.)

2 Have students line up and engage them with the introduction. Mine says the following: "Welcome mighty adventurers! You've heard tales about these caverns before, but have never stepped foot in them yourself. The danger is obvious, what with the hand made "Turn back now!" signs, the unidentifiable pile of bones greeting you at the entrance. But you, mighty adventurers. You are absolutely positive that you have found yourself a party--THE party--to conquer the danger that lies within. Together you must forage through the dark caverns, avoiding traps and fighting monsters. And at the end? The best loot you can possibly dream of awaits."



An addition to this step, if you're inclined and worried about time constraints, make up a "record time" that the dungeon has been traversed in, or time them and make a competition between class periods, grade levels, etc. The "record time" would depend on the number of students you have.

Continued on next page



Dungeon Crawl

- ☆ There are 56 tiles in our dungeon
- ☆ There is one safe passage to get across
- ☆ One at a time, you will try to find that safe passage by choosing a tile that is touching the tile you are currently standing on (sideways, forwards, backwards, diagonal)
- ☆ Some tiles are safe, but most are not
 - ☆ **Trap doors** send you back to the beginning of the dungeon
 - ☆ **Monsters** send you back to the beginning and you lose your next turn (you're a little busy fighting a goblin)
- ☆ Once you've made it across, you've completed your quest, and you cannot help your party members
- ☆ Everyone has to make it across before the party defeats the Big Boss and gets the loot!

3

With your answer key in hand, have the first student take the first step. Tell them whether they are safe, they've hit a trap door, or a monster. If this student is safe, they keep going until they hit a trap door or a monster.

If they hit a monster, give them a card that indicates so, have them get back into line, but skip their next turn. Repeat this step with each student until they all pass through. Reward them with your choice of loot, have them describe how they defeated the Boss, or describe it for them.

THINGS TO REMIND THEM ABOUT:

- Only one adventurer on the tiles at a time
- Once they've gotten across, they're busy fighting the Big Boss and finding loot, therefore they can't help those at the beginning of the dungeon

THINGS YOU'LL NOTICE:

- Someone(s) will take a clear leadership position. They might be the one(s) to watch carefully and keep the correct path in mind, they might decide to draw a map, they might get out on purpose in order to be the last person to go, ensuring their whole party gets across with someone who knows the map by heart still able to help.
- Your more shy students may get out on purpose because they're nervous, but there's almost always someone to help them through the tiles.
- You're going to want to remind them that certain tiles are unsafe if they've already stepped on them. Don't! Have faith that they'll figure it out eventually.

ADAPTATIONS:

- Decrease or increase the number of tiles
- Change up the theme! D&D not your thing? Make it space themed, animal themed, something that matches your style/personality/classroom or school theme!
- The monster traps/turn skips aren't necessary and definitely extend the time it takes. Depending on the time that you have with kids, you may want to lose this aspect.

At semester, I like to play this again, but I change up the rules to challenge them a little more. Instead of everyone getting to speak at the beginning of the dungeon, only two students can speak. Everyone else has been hit by a silencing spell!

Flip the map to be two different maps for different class periods.

By the end of this activity, your class will be working together as a team, problem solving, and you'll have a clear idea of the leadership dynamics in the class!