

# Literacy Leaders

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## Crib Sheets are not Cheat Sheets!

In the February issue of *Faculty Focus*, Dr. Maryellen Weimer discussed the use of Crib Sheets by students as they negotiate quizzes, tests, and/or exams.

You may have heard Crib Sheets called Cheat Sheets. Cheat Sheets are notes that students bring into a testing situation of which the teacher is *unaware* (e.g., notes written on hands, on watch bands, inside of book covers, etc.). On the other hand, Crib Sheets are teacher-approved devices! Teachers allow students to bring in an index card or sheet of paper that contains notes that will help students answer questions/problems on a quiz, test, or exam. Weimer argued that Crib Sheets are extremely helpful devices as they get students actively involved in content. Students have to prioritize and organize content as they figure out what material is critical to their success in negotiating test items.

Weimer reported that students view the Crib Sheets as “stress reducers.” Students are confident that they know some material for the test.

Teachers can use student-generated Crib Sheets to determine student understanding of

covered content. If students attach their Crib Sheets to the quiz/test/exam, the teacher could figure out if the student included key content and if the student was unable to apply that content to specific test items.

Small groups could be utilized to generate Crib Sheets. The lively discussions on which content to include/exclude would be rich and content-focused.

Rather than risk Cheat Sheets being sneaked into tests, try student-created Crib Sheets!



[http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3550/3309638195\\_bdf111d724.jpg](http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3550/3309638195_bdf111d724.jpg)

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## Reserve your place today!

The Chautauqua County Reading Council’s annual banquet will take place on May 1st at Webb’s in Mayville. Children’s author Kate Messner will be presenting the keynote address. Limited copies of Ms. Messner’s books will be available for sale.

View posters of SUNY Fredonia’s Literacy Program students during our meet and greet time. Peruse the offerings of National Geographic as well as other companies in the Reynells’ product displays.

You can reserve your place at our banquet by contacting Karen Kondrick, Emily Gollnitz, or Lisa Sabella (see page 4 for email addresses).



<http://www.katemessner.com/>

VV **edTPA**

Beginning in May 2014, candidates applying for certification in New York State will have to pass the edTPA, an assessment of teaching that is student-centered and contains multiple measures. Based on the work of Stanford University faculty and staff, the edTPA exams required for initial certification in NYS have been revised. New tests are being developed for some certification credentials. Supposedly the revised/new tests are more rigorous than current tests. Additionally, the new tests are aligned to the Common Core State Standards in ELA and Literacy (P-12). Teacher candidates will have to and demonstrate competency in reading and writing to sources. And a video of teaching is required as part of the documents used in the edTPA assessment!



<http://www.englishonline.org.ca/files/>

For more information about edTPA and how it affects teachers in our state, please consult the NYSED website at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/pdf/certexamfaq.pdf>.

## Executive Board Member Feature: Marsha Sullivan



Ms. Marsha Sullivan, Corresponding Secretary, is the featured CCRC Board Member this month. Ms. Sullivan has always called western New York State home. Originally from Cheektowaga, Marsha earned a

Bachelor's Degree from SUNY Fredonia. Armed with Nursery through grade six certification in elementary education and certification in English grades seven through nine, Ms. Sullivan entered the teaching profession at Cas-sadaga Valley Central School District. There she taught first grade for six years before moving on to a first grade position in the Fredonia Central School District. What is quite unique about Marsha's teaching career is her experience in first grade. Ms. Sullivan has been a first grade teacher for all of her professional life, with the exception of one year as a second grade teacher. She "looped" into second grade with her former first graders. One could not argue that Ms. Sullivan is

well aware of first grade curriculum and first graders. Her graduate degree in reading has helped her deal with beginning readers in her classes.

In her time outside of the classroom, Marsha is an avid quilter, creating quilts by hand and partaking in quilt activities in our area. She also enjoys spending time with her grandchildren. And Ms. Sullivan is an avid reader of mysteries. She identifies Anna Quindlen and Jodi Picoult as two of her favorite authors.



Microsoft Office, 2007

## We were "Right-on"



Amazon.com

While CCRC members were reading the two books selected for our Hot Reads session in March, one book was selected for a prestigious award. *The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate was awarded the Newbery Medal this year.

The Newbery Medal recognizes distinguished contributions to

children's literature. The story of Ivan, a silverback ape displayed in a cage in a small American shopping mall, captivates its readers.

If you haven't read *The One and Only Ivan* yet, put it on your summer reading list. The complete list of Newbery Honor Books can be found at <http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/newberymedal/newberymedal>.

## Word Knowledge Checks

The National Reading Panel (2000) reported that vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in reading skill development. Vacca, Vacca, and Mraz (2010) state that a strong connection exists between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. In fact, limited vocabulary has been identified as a cause and effect of poor reading achievement (Gunning, 1998). And the gap between student vocabulary differences grows as grade level increases (Bos & Vaughn, 2006).

Literary professionals are well aware of the importance of vocabulary. Content teachers would agree that vocabulary specific to their subject areas is critical to students understanding of the content.

Norman Unrau developed a strategy by which teachers could check student understanding of key vocabulary. Using a grid, such as the one that appears below, students determine how well they know key words.

Teachers could simplify the Word Knowledge Check by using fewer words to note student awareness and understanding of key vocabulary. The sample that follows uses both fewer key vocabulary terms and simpler language to identify student knowledge of vocabulary critical to a mathematics lesson.

	A lot!	Some	Not much
binomial			√
ratio	√		
exponent		√	

Primary students, non-readers, English learners, and/or students with disabilities may need more concrete devices to help them identify how much they know key vocabulary words critical to a unit of study. Images of three glasses (one empty of liquid, one half full of liquid, and one full of liquid) can be used to assist these individuals with determining how much they know a word.



I know the word well



I sort of know the word



I don't know the word

Regardless of which method one uses, teachers should assess student knowledge of critical vocabulary prior to the introduction of units of study. Naturally, teaching the words unfamiliar to students would follow.

	I never saw it before	I heard it but don't know what it means	I recognize it in context as related to something I know	I know it well	I can use it in a sentence
polis					
politics					
culture					
philosophy					
systems of thought					
adhere					
tragedy					
comedy					

# Chautauqua County Reading Council

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If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact one of the CCRC Executive Board Members:

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<http://chautauquareading.weebly.com>

## Professional Development

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### 2012-2013 Calendar of Events:

#### Executive Board Meetings

For summer 2013 and next year -  
TBA

#### Scheduled Activities

**May 1, 2013:** *Annual Spring Banquet*

Presentation by author Kate Messner  
Webb's, Mayville, NY

Reservation required:

contact Karen Kondrick, Emily Gollnitz,  
or Lisa Sabella (see email addresses  
above)