



Ten reasons to attend the 2016 TCTELA Annual Conference

By Kim Pinkerton, President-elect

If you want to be where the action is on January 22-24, 2016, then attend the 51st Annual TCTELA Annual Conference & Exposition. Why is that the place to be? Here are 10 reasons that demonstrate that the 2016 conference will be bigger and better than ever.

1. The 2016 conference is in the beautiful, and always quirky, city of Austin at the Renaissance Hotel, which just happens to be surrounded by some really great restaurants and shopping.
2. Friday's and Saturday's events include over 40 concurrent sessions, offering learning opportunities for teachers of all grade levels with topics ranging from close reading, poetry, writing, best practices in literacy instruction, multicultural literature, digital literacies, early literacy, and much more.
3. For those who want to attend a more in-depth study of literacy, Friday presents participants with the opportunity to choose from two different, two-hour workshops. If interested in middle and secondary level literacy instruction, Jeff Anderson, Linda Urban, and Varian Johnson will share how they craft prose. Or, Karin Perry will work to investigate the importance of mentor texts with those interested in early literacy instruction.

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A call to lead

Brian Bass, Vice-President for Membership and Affiliates

TCTELA's mission is to advance the literacy growth of all Texas students by developing a network of diverse professionals and by providing professional development based on best practices in education. To fulfill this mission, our organization must have members who are willing to contribute their time and talents.

There are many opportunities to become involved within our organization. One way to participate is by joining a committee. TCTELA has nine committees: Adolescent Literacy, Legislative Action, State of the Profession, Special Needs Learner, Early Childhood, Multicultural Awareness, Bilingual English and Second Language Awareness, Technology, and Pre-Service Teacher. As a member of a committee, members have a voice in a specific area of literacy education. Members may also volunteer to serve on the local arrangements committee. This committee helps plan and prepare for the upcoming conference each year.

Members may choose to give of their talents by submitting an article to the *award-winning publications*, the *English in Texas* journal or the *Texas Voices* newsletter. Information regarding how to contribute to TCTELA's award winning publications is available on the TCTELA website. Members may also contribute by presenting at the annual conference. Details regarding presentation proposal can be found on the TCTELA website and in the 2016 conference program. Proposals for the 2017 conference will be accepted beginning in February.

Members of TCTELA may also run for board positions. Although being a TCTELA leader requires a commitment of time, holding office affords members the opportunity to have a direct influence on the direction of the organization and to give of their time and talents to a worthwhile endeavor. Members who want to run for office have the following positions as options: recording secretary, vice president-elect for membership and affiliates, and president-elect. Each position has different responsibilities and time commitments. Recording secretary requires a one-year commitment. Vice president-elect requires a two-year commitment, and president-elect requires three. If you are interested in contributing to this great organization in any capacity, please make plans to join leaders past, present, and future at the TCTELA Meet and Greet in the Renaissance Atrium during the conference. bassb@titsdschools.org

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From the blogosphere...

Check out resources for expository writing and so much more from The Curly Classroom <http://http://thecurlyclassroom.blogspot.com/>

...to the website

Join in the conversation about the ELA/R & SLA/R TEKS on the TEKS Forum at <http://www.tctela.org/about-community>

President's Corner

President's Message

By Cindy Bengé, President

It is hard to believe, but yet another year has passed and the holidays are fast upon us. Your TCTELA representatives have been working throughout the year in the belief that we can live up to the theme of the 2015 conference and continue our *50 Years of Excellence* with 50 more years of excellence.

Over the last year, the board tirelessly advocated on your behalf at the state level to see that teacher and student voices were heard during the legislative session and that they will continue to be heard during the TEKS revision process. We collaborated with other state literacy and leadership organizations to help develop a streamlined eight-strand framework for the ELA/R and SLA/R TEKS-writing committee to use as a starting point for their revision process. Our TCTELA-commissioned research project, which included a teacher survey and follow-up interviews to gauge teacher beliefs about the current ELA/R TEKS, was finalized and shared with the State Board of Education (SBOE) at their meeting on November 18 and is currently available for public viewing on the [TCTELA website](#). Additionally, the TCTELA-sponsored *TEKS Forum project* was launched last week in advance of the release of the first draft of the revised TEKS to give all stake holders an easy way to access and discuss the TEKS revisions when the first draft becomes available.

Authentic research and writing at NCTE 2015

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It is almost as if he becomes the character. The years Burns spends gathering the information necessary for bringing his stories to life really emphasizes the importance of giving our students time (much time) to vicariously live the lives of historical figures before they begin to write their stories.

Attendees left the session with authentic ideas for how to promote research and

For yet another year, TCTELA has produced an excellent program of authors and literacy experts in all grade levels for our conference. Luncheon speakers include Pulitzer Prize winner Sonia Nazario and National Book Award winner Jacqueline Woodson. Keynote speakers include Texas author Varian Johnson and author Linda Urban. Workshop and extended-session speakers are Jeff Anderson, Doug Fisher, Kathy Collins, Kristi Mraz, Karin Perry and Kylee Beers and Bob Probst.

We hope that you will join us in being advocates for our students and advocates for sound ELA/R teaching practices in Texas by *registering for and joining the conversation* about the ELA/R and SLA/R TEKS on the TEKS Forum at [tctela.org](#). Our dialog on the forum will provide valuable feedback to the TEKS revision committee, the Texas Education Agency, and the SBOE so that the TEKS will be a more valuable tool in guiding and planning instruction. Also, please join us at our 51st annual conference in Austin January 22-24 where you will hear and collaborate with award-winning authors, state and national literacy experts, and ELA practitioner experts from across the state. Remember, together *We Can Do It!* clbenge@aldineisd.org

nonfiction writing in their own classrooms. Most importantly, they learned that there is no one right way to conduct research or write the stories that develop from research. Much about nonfiction research and writing is very individualized. The power of teaching based on the methods of those who conduct research and write about it on a daily basis cannot be underestimated. pinkertonk@uhd.edu

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Texas Voices, published four times per year, is a member of the National Council of Teachers of English Affiliate Information Exchange Agreement.

Recap of ALAN breakfast and workshop at NCTE

By Margaret Hale, SLATE/NCTE Liaison



If you are a lover of young adult literature or work with middle and/or high school students, ALAN (the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of NCTE) is a great group to join. Once you join, in addition to receiving three issues of *The ALAN Review* per year, you can also register to attend the ALAN breakfast and/or workshop each year.

This year's ALAN breakfast featured young adult authors Lois Lowry and Chris Crutcher. Lois Lowry received the 2015 ALAN Award and spoke briefly at the breakfast. Crutcher, the 2014 recipient of the ALAN Award, was the featured speaker. He spoke about the young woman who served as his inspiration for *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* and left very few dry eyes in the room.

The two-day ALAN workshop occurs every year the Monday and Tuesday after NCTE Convention. The two days are packed with panels of authors who write young adult literature. This year's workshop featured such well-known authors as Laurie Halse Anderson, Sharon Draper, A.S. King, Margaret Peterson Haddix, and many others. When registrants arrived bright and early Monday morning, they received a large box of books (written by authors participating in the workshop). There were so many books for participants that everyone had to go back through the line to pick up books that wouldn't fit in their boxes!

At that point, the panel discussions began with audience members listening attentively and organizing their books for later autographing opportunities. Ruta Sepetys, author of *Between Shades of Gray*, reminded workshop participants that when we recognize struggle, as she does in her books, human dignity is restored. In a conversation between Laurie Halse Anderson and Sharon Draper, participants realized that both authors are huge advocates for both teachers and students. Draper also told the group that we should let students write from the heart and stop giving them too many restrictions. If you want to see more of what the authors shared with the group, check out the hashtag #alan15 on Twitter!

Interested in becoming a part of this group? You can find more information at www.alan-ya.org or join the group on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/alanyalit/>. There you can find information about the workshop, *The ALAN Review*, and membership information. grithale@aol.com

Authors of nonfiction texts talk authentic research and writing at NCTE 2015

By Kim Pinkerton, President-elect

Thousands of teachers and education professionals gathered in Minneapolis on November 19-22, 2015 to learn and grow together at NCTE's 105th Annual Convention. Newbery winning authors like Kate DiCamillo, Katherine Applegate, and Rebecca Stead shared their thoughts on the significance of the prestigious medal and the impact of their work. Chris Crutcher moved participants with stories of the *real life* Sarah Byrnes. The Nerdy Book Club founders conducted a panel filled by teachers and authors who had added to the profusion of notable postings on this powerful blog. Shanna Peeples imparted her experiences of allowing her Amarillo classroom to be guided by the burning questions held by her students and how her travels as National Teacher of the Year have shown that this need proliferates classrooms around the world. And, these are just a few of hundreds of sessions available to participants this year.

One session worth further elaboration was "Revved for Research: Tips and Tricks You Can Take Back to the Classroom." This panel-style session featured four authors of nonfiction books for children and young adults: Loree Griffin Burns, Sarah Albee, Chris Barton, and Laura Purdie Salas. Each author shared titles of nonfiction texts they had written and talked through the methods that they use to gather the information necessary to compose such works.

Laura Purdie Salas, early grade nonfiction author, and Sarah Albee, middle grade nonfiction author, both conveyed the importance of engaging the senses when conducting research. Whether teachers allow children to investigate high resolution photographs on the Internet or go on location, researchers need to envision and investigate what their research topic would look like, feel like, smell like, taste like, and sound like. Being this engaged with a topic allows the writer to convey the essence of all aspects of the item under investigation.

Loree Griffin Burns, nonfiction author for elementary-level readers, and Chris Barton, nonfiction author for middle-level readers, both iterated the importance of writing nonfiction that has life. Burns talked through her methods for adding main characters to her nonfiction pieces. Often, she follows scientists as she gathers research, so many of her main characters are the scientists with whom she has spent much time. The addition of such characters allows the reader to live in the moment of the topic being shared. Burns talked about learning what his biographical characters would have learned and discovering the moment in time when his characters were transformed. He tries to place himself in their lives, creating timelines, talking to primary sources, visiting locations lived by his characters, etc.

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The at-risk learner revisited through the words and hearts of young adult authors

By Katrina Gonzales, Executive Secretary

Throughout the majority of my 30-year career, I have spent many professional development hours learning about at-risk students. I am quite possibly like a number of veteran teachers who feel as if I have “done that and heard that” a number of times, often without much of a fresh spin.

With a bit of trepidation, I wandered into a session at NCTE in Minneapolis in late November. I’ll admit it: it was not because of the title, “Empowering the Voice of the At-risk Learner.” No, my presence in that room had everything to do with the authors present. To put it bluntly, the panel was filled with Young Adult lit rock stars. Matt de la Pena, Ellen Hopkins, Meg Medina, A.S. King, and newly-discovered (for me), Mathis, Texas native, author of *Fat Angie*, the amazing e.E. Charlton-Trujillo. I took a front row seat and prepared myself to be wowed by these literary geniuses.

What I discovered is that they did, in fact, have some new “spins” on the at-risk narrative. Each one of the authors spoke of his or her personal experiences with at-risk learners. Whether they visit Title I schools with large populations of at-risk students or take the time to answer an email from an emotionally-broken teen, these authors “get” what it means to be at-risk. They write for these teens, the ones we teachers work so hard to engage in the world of learning, the ones who keep us awake at night, the ones we never forget.

A documentary by e.E.Charlton-Trujillo provided a reference point for the panel discussion. Two summers ago, Charlton-Trujillo journeyed throughout the United States working with at-risk youth to instigate a “creative revolution.” Placing her belongings in storage, she contacted fellow young adult and children’s authors across the country and stayed in their homes while filming in the various locations. The documentary is titled “At-Risk Summer”, and the film features a number of young adult authors as well as the teens with whom Charlton-Trujillo worked. A section of the documentary

played, and, then, the authors answered a question posed by the moderator.

Always, the tide of the panel discussion pulled back to the idea that teachers are the change agents for our at-risk students. As A.S. King stated, “I was at-risk because I didn’t care about school...a throwaway kid. Three teachers saved me, and that’s why I’m here today.” Furthermore, knowing the current titles in young adult literature places a teacher in a pivotal spot for a teen who needs to be heard. Ellen Hopkins explained how a simple act of placing that “just right” book in her hands at that “just right” time could lead to a student’s engagement in school and the world around her. She said, “Sometimes, there are no words that have to be exchanged.” The book is enough.

At the end of the session, a bit of time remained for questions and answers. A young pre-service teacher behind me asked how she could manage to put some of these authors’ books on her classroom shelves when she begins teaching next semester. Worried about retaliation from parents because of strong content in some of the books, I could hear in her voice the desire to reach her future at-risk kids with a classroom library that, as Meg Medina said, “represents our students.” Immediately, teachers all over the large room had advice for this young teacher. When the session ended, she was surrounded by mentors she did not know she had until that moment. Those veteran teachers like me who had “been there and heard that” moved into action, sharing the experiences we have gained over our careers teaching at-risk students with a new, eager soul who will be carrying the torch forward. While some might feel the future of education is bleak, witnessing the concern the panel of authors had for our most vulnerable learners, as well as witnessing the desire of our veteran teachers to help our most vulnerable first-year teachers, proves that the future of English language arts education remains strong and resilient. katgonmom@gmail.com

Ten reasons to attend the 2016 TCTELA Annual Conference

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4. In addition to one-hour concurrent sessions on Saturday, attendees once again have the option to select a longer, two-hour workshop. Kylene Beers and Robert Probst will address nonfiction matters with middle and secondary teachers, and Kathy Collins will share ideas for reading to and with the youngest readers.
 5. Pulitzer Prize Winner Sonia Nazario will share her story during a sure-to-be moving lunch on Friday.
 6. Lover of teachers and students, author Linda Urban will bring a powerful keynote address on Friday.
 7. Winner of the 2014 Publishers Weekly Best Summer Book award for *The Great Greene Heist*, Varian Johnson will surely encourage the audience during his keynote address on Saturday morning.
 8. National Book Award Winner, Jacqueline Woodson, will wow attendees with her words during lunch on Saturday.
 9. On Sunday, Kristi Mraz and Doug Fisher will lead two separate workshops for early literacy teachers who want to create joyful classrooms and for middle and secondary teachers who are interested in advancing close reading of complex texts in their classrooms.
 10. Attendees will have two and a half days to laugh and learn with colleagues from all corners of this great state.
- Now you know that there is no place else to be on January 22-24, 2016. For more information and to register for the conference now, go to <http://www.tctela.org/2016-conference/>. pinkertonk@uhd.edu

Who's Who in Twitterverse?

By Kelly Tummy, Recording Secretary

Twitter has exploded lately with educational chats and cutting-edge practitioners to follow, but where does a novice begin? This social media tool has become a place for educators both young in the field and experienced in their craft. Teachers can explore new blogs, follow current trends in education and become part of the conversation themselves. Look at these three categories and see if you are following any of these contributors to the current education discussions happening at the break-neck speed of Twitter.

The Craft of Teaching: Eric Sheninger—a Texas educator who not only has his finger on the pulse of education in Texas, but someone who has been highlighted nationally in both *Scholastic* and *USA Weekend* publications (Twitter handle: @E_Sheninger). **Chris Lehman**—a Heinemann author who started, along with other educators, @TheEdCollab that offers online PD from an incredible array of teachers; he is witty and passionate about strengthening the craft of teaching (Twitter handle: @iChrisLehman)

Blogs and Websites: Mr. Schu Reads—This blog along with the individual is simply staggering in weight and heft of material he tweets. An elementary librarian from Illinois, now Scholastic ambassador, this Tweeter has incredible elementary publishing

insight. (Twitter handle: @MrSchuReads). **Edutopia**—This is a favorite for many educators, for pre-service teachers, even those new to the profession. There are blog posts that run the gamut from classroom management to teaching with electronic media (Twitter handle: @Edutopia).

Chats to Follow: #EdTherapy Chat—This chat refreshes the soul and culls different perspectives from across the country. Matt Mingle (Twitter handle: @mmingle1) is the co-founder of the chat that occurs the first Friday of each month. #TeachWriting Chat—an essential chat for every ELA professional. Dual moderators Ben Khulman, a middle school science/social studies teacher, and Lisa Hughes, an elementary special education teacher, stand confidently at the helm. This chat is the first and third Tuesday of each month (Twitter handles: @bkhul2you, @lisahughes196, @TeachWriting2). #PoetryChat, founded by none other than TCTELA member, Amy Rasmussen, runs the first Monday of each month and serves both poets and teachers of poetry in every aspect. (Twitter handle: @AmyRass). ktummy@crobyisd.org

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Review the submission guidelines at <http://www.tctela.org/english-in-texas/>

Publication: *English in Texas* Volume 46.1 (SPRING/SUMMER 2016)

Theme: We Can Do It

Call for Submissions (Deadline: May 1, 2016):

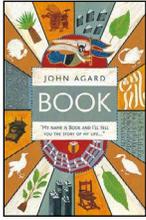
The 2016 TCTELA conference theme is "We Can Do It!" The famed World War II war slogan, "We Can Do It!" was used to boost worker morale, highlight equality for women in the workforce, and bring light to other political issues relevant to the time. We see the theme of "We Can Do It!" as particularly salient in our current era of high-stakes testing, scripted curricula, and educational reform. Considering the World War II slogan, we encourage you to think through your own foray into teaching today, and look to the affordances and constraints placed on the contemporary classroom, and bring to light the methods that allow you to work through these barriers. How do you boost the morale of students who are constantly under high-stakes testing pressure? How do you promote educational opportunities that offer students critical inquiry into their own life worlds?

Furthermore, we encourage you to consider how you have initiated new ways of teaching English language arts in your classroom or in your school. What are the best practices in your classroom that allow you to overcome barriers placed by state-mandated tests and/or policies; how does your definition of these best practices allow for students to engage deeply with learning within the English language arts classroom? How have you worked to overcome social, economic, racial and/or cultural inequalities? How have you worked to bridge in-school and out-of-school literacies within diverse communities? Lastly, how you "Do It?"

We invite interested individuals to submit manuscripts, conceptual, pedagogical, research-based, and theoretical, as related to this topic of "We Can Do It!" Please refer to the English in Texas website for manuscript submission guidelines. Do not hesitate to contact the editorial team at englishintexas@shsu.edu should you have any questions.

Young adult book reviews

By Margaret Hale, SLATE/NCTE Liaison



My Autobiography

translated by John Agard

At a professional development I attended recently with Dr. Joyce Armstrong Carroll, Dr. Carroll mentioned that she had received this book in the mail from the publisher. I had not yet seen it, but her description did more than just pique my interest—I could not wait to get my hands on it!

As an English teacher, a reader, and a writer, I am drawn to articles and books that teach me more about the history of language, of writing and of reading. This delightful little book gave me lots of information - some that I was familiar, some new.

On the second page of the text, Agard writes (in big, bold letters), “**Before Book, there was Breath.**” I love that sentence because it introduces readers to the idea that before we actually wrote stories and information down, we shared those ideas orally. This is knowledge I share with students in my children’s literature courses every semester. Many of those students did not grow up surrounded by books and reading as I did, but I want them to understand that the stories their parents shared with them orally are a part of their literacy heritage. “Before Book, there was breath!”

Later in the book, Book (who actually serves as the narrator) writes about the different things out of which he has been made. Book writes, “As a matter of fact, I’ll have you know that I’ve been made from palm leaves in India, from mulberry leaves in Japan, from banana leaves in the Philippines. And don’t you call my pages leaves? Don’t you speak of leafing through my pages?” I love words and how and why we use them, and this made me think about the leaves of a book and leafing through a book in a whole different way. This book has so much potential as a teaching tool—check it out!



George

by Alex Gino

This book really made me think. The story is about a young boy named George—at least when people look at George, a young boy is what they see. But inside, George knows that she’s a girl.

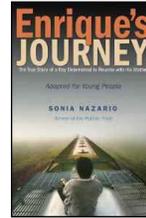
Going in, I knew the book was about a transgender child, but I didn’t realize that the child was as young as George is – 4th grade. I was surprised to learn that early on. Although I know that children that young, and even younger, deal with this issue, to my knowledge I have never met a child dealing with this. But would I even recognize it? I’m not sure. That’s one of the ways this book made me think.

As I read and finished the book, I began thinking about children and our perceptions of them. Of course, we are all going to deal with situations differently, but I was glad that the book pushed me to be reflective about my own perceptions and beliefs.

I would encourage you to read this one and see what you think. It may open your eyes, and adding it to your middle school or high school classroom library may help students who are dealing with issues of which you are not even aware. grithale@aol.com

Nazario’s *Enrique’s Journey* can change hearts

By Cindy Bengel, President



Pulitzer Prize winning author Sonia Nazario did what I did not think could be done: She softened my position on immigration and made me think about the “mass horde” who yearly flood the U.S. border states as individual human beings—individuals who, except for the luck of birth, could be me or any member of my family. She did this not in an editorial or speech but by telling a powerful story—the story of one desperate teenage boy.

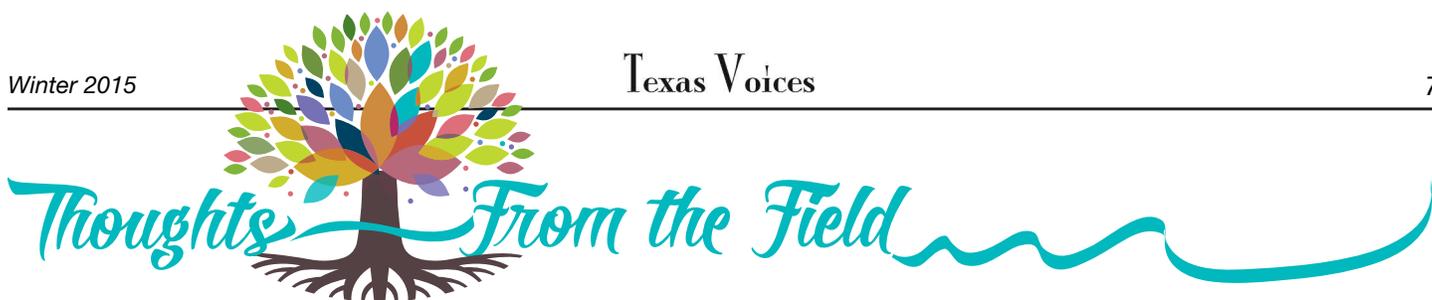
I had no burning desire to read Nazario’s book *Enrique’s Journey*. I did not pick it up in my local Barnes and Noble, search for it on Amazon.com, or download it onto my Nook. However, fate intervened in Washington, D.C. last year at the NCTE Annual Convention while I was on my way to a session and spied a stack of the book on a table, leftovers from the National Writing Project conference. Never one to decline a free book, I snagged a copy and added it to the collection of free books already in my suitcase. Fate intervened again when, as I adjusted my luggage for my return flight so that I did not go over the weight limit, I placed *Enrique’s Journey* in my carry-on bag, and then again when I grabbed it before takeoff to provide my in-flight reading.

During that three-hour flight, my fundamental belief—a firm, long-held belief that, although we are a nation of immigrants, we have laws, and immigrants should follow the laws and wait their turn—waivered. During that three-hour flight, I began to see people like Enrique as individuals—individuals for whom life in their country had become unbearable and hopeless. I began to put my mother’s face, my father’s face, my sisters’ faces, my nieces’ faces, and my nephews’ faces on the countless men, women, and children whose lives are so horrible in their own country that they are willing to risk their lives and the lives of their children to escape to a country that does not want them.

Sonia Nazario did not just recount Enrique’s story in this book, Nazario put herself in Enrique’s place and traveled the same path Enrique took, making herself vulnerable to the same corrupt local government officials and criminals who prey upon the desperate refugees who pass through the countries of South and Central America and Mexico every day. She also recounts the kindness of some of the poor people who live along the tracks and who provide part of their daily subsistence each day to keep refugees alive, people whose poverty was profound and whose willingness to share the little that they had reminded me how much I have and, in comparison, how little I give.

As I read *Enrique’s Journey*, amazed by his resilience in the face of insurmountable obstacles and horrified by the extreme violence he endured to get to the United States, I was repeatedly reminded that, only a blessing of birth kept Enrique’s story from being my story. This book provided a catalyst for personal reflection, and I constantly had to consider what I might do if life in my country had become a daily struggle to survive. I am thankful that I have never had to be in Enrique’s shoes; however, Nazario helped me to see what it would be like to walk in his shoes. His story changed me.

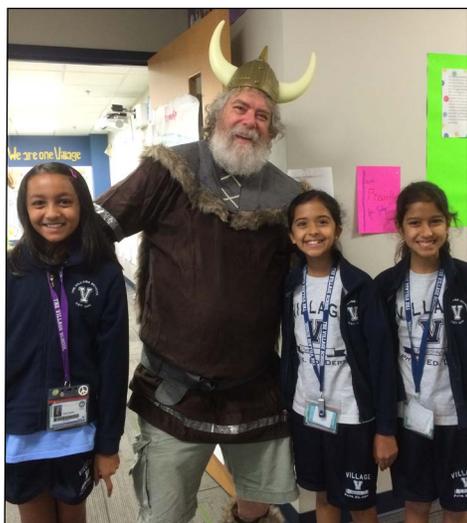
Sonia Nazario is a featured luncheon speaker at the TCTELA conference this year. clbenge@aldineisd.org



Thoughts From the Field

Returning to the classroom

P. Tim Martindell, Ed.D. TCTELA past-president



Minecraft, dress uniforms, advisory, and chromebooks. In September, I returned to the middle school classroom after a thirteen-year hiatus. My sojourn had taken me from a Title I ELA classroom in Aldine ISD to a downtown Houston office before I settled in as a curriculum coordinator in Fort Bend ISD. In the past year, I had felt again that I was at a crossroad – continue to slog on through an exhausting, high stress job leading curriculum revision and overseeing some fifty plus secondary English courses in a large school district where I worried that I was to become a “scapegoat if STAAR scores did not improve” – or start looking for other opportunities. I had tried my hand at adjuncting, enjoyed teaching graduate school, and I yearned to be back in the classroom fulltime.

In late June, I landed my dream job through a contact on Facebook. Fifth. Grade. ELA. Really, almost like online, speed dating. A simple instant message led to an interview the next Friday and an immediate job offer. From that day on I became a Village Viking.

Much was the same as when I left in 2002, but classroom technology had definitely made quite a few leaps in the intervening years. Though somewhat tech savvy, I had never relied much on computers beyond simple word processing or PowerPoint presentations. My new school would be tech heavy. I knew I had a steep learning curve ahead.

I learned quickly that I had to recalibrate my understanding of fifth grade. What could fifth graders be expected to do? How would these students be different – or the same – as my students at Drew Academy? What challenges would teaching in a private, college prep school throw my way?

As a private school, the Village School does not participate in the STAAR test and our instruction is based on the standards and objectives chosen by the English department. We teach a hybrid of international standards and the common core standards, which are in essence, streamlined standards that are very similar to the TEKS. My students are expected to read, write, think, speak and listen.

I find that my current students are much the same as the fifth graders I taught at Drew Academy some fifteen years ago. They are curious, just beginning to see how they fit in the world, and looking for affirmation. They are writers; they are readers; and, they are masters of multiple devices and can easily move between real and virtual life. Unlike my previous students, they are remarkably able to adapt to new situations and ways of learning. They crave relationships with adults who can guide them as learners.

The Village School is a unique place to teach. I am charged daily with making good things happen for the children I teach. To this end I try to see the world through their eyes as I plan for my classroom. As these children tend to be world travelers and from a variety of cultural backgrounds, my best work happens when I model acceptance, tolerance, and a willingness to learn from others.

I found my joy. The majority of my students are avid readers – in fact, one of the main parent concerns is that the students are always reading. My students and I began the school year writing personal narratives, and because my school has reached critical mass in the implementation of writing/reading workshop, most of my students are surprisingly skilled as beginning writers. The majority of my students are more traveled than I, and I enjoy learning from them daily about different cultures and the many places they have lived.

tmartindell@thevillageschool.com



**Texas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts
51ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION**

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Visit tctela.org to book your hotel room. TCTELA Annual Conference sleeping room discount is available on a limited basis until December 18, 2015.

TCTELA MEMBERSHIP

Membership must be active at the time of registration and at the conference to receive the member rate. Membership is active for 12 months from the date of joining or renewing.

REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Terms and Conditions: Refunds before 12/18/15 will be processed with a \$50 cancellation/name change fee and no refunds will be provided after that date. Incomplete registrations will not be processed. Payment is required by the first day of the conference.

Registrants are responsible for submitting invoice to institution before the event.

Registration is also available online at tctela.org.

I am registering as a:

- Current Member
 - Non-Member
 - Student, Parent, or Retired
- * Membership must be current at the time of the conference.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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Phone (H): _____ (W): _____

District Name / ESC / Institution: _____

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Email address must be unique for each registration form. All confirmation information will arrive by email.

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 - Middle
 - High
 - College
 - Administration
- Please check if you require specific aids or services under the Americans with Disabilities Act in order to participate in this conference.

Submit separate forms for each registration.
Check amount can be combined for multiple registrations.

2016 Conference: January 22-24

FULL CONFERENCE PACKAGE

Includes Friday through Sunday workshops, professional development luncheons, membership celebration and poetry reading.

Before 12/18 Current Member \$295 Non-Member \$345

After 12/18 Current Member \$395 Non-Member \$445

Non-Member fee also includes a professional membership for one year.

**ONE-DAY CONFERENCE PASS -
FRIDAY, SATURDAY OR SUNDAY**

Professional development luncheons are not included.

Select one day Friday Pass Saturday Pass

Before 12/18 Current Member \$160 Non-Member \$210

After 12/18 Current Member \$260 Non-Member \$310

Sunday Pass

Before 12/18 Current Member \$85 Non-Member \$135

After 12/18 Current Member \$185 Non-Member \$235

Non-Member fee also includes a professional membership for one year.

THREE-DAY, A LA CARTE CONFERENCE PASS

Professional development luncheons are not included.

Before 12/18 Current Member \$230 Non-Member \$280

After 12/18 Current Member \$330 Non-Member \$380

Non-Member fee also includes a professional membership for one year.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LUNCHEONS

Friday Luncheon with Sonia Nazario \$45

Saturday Luncheon with Jacqueline Woodson \$45

STUDENT, PARENT OR RETIRED

Professional development luncheons are not included.

Before 12/18 Current Member \$175 Non-Member \$200

After 12/18 Current Member \$270 Non-Member \$295

Non-Member fee also includes a student/parent/retired membership for one year.

Printed copy of Program Book - \$5 (limited availability)

Suggested Community Outreach Donation \$1 (include in total)

Grand Total \$ _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Payment is being made by:

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Account Number: _____

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Contact email: _____ Contact phone: _____

The registrant acknowledges that by knowingly submitting a fraudulent PO number or by not following your institution's guidelines in obtaining a PO, the registrant is liable for the full amount of the registration fee.

Complete form and mail with payment by January 18, 2016 to:
TCTELA, 919 Congress Avenue #1400, Austin, Texas, 78701.

2016 Conference: January 22-24

Friday Morning Workshops

TEA Updates

Real Characters: Three Children's Book Authors (Who Are Real Characters Themselves) Share How They Craft Prose

Jeff Anderson, Varian Johnson & Linda Urban

Using Picture Books as Mentor Texts in the Early Childhood Classroom

Karin Perry



Friday Luncheon with Sonia Nazario

Sonia Nazario has 20 years of experience reporting and writing about social issues for U.S. newspapers.

She is best known for *Enrique's Journey*, her story of a Honduran boy's struggle to find his mother in the U.S. Published as a series in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Enrique's Journey* won the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing in 2003. It was turned into a book by Random House that became a national bestseller and is now required reading at hundreds of high schools and colleges across the country. A Young Adult version of *Enrique's Journey* was published in 2013 aimed at middle schoolers and reluctant readers in high school.



Friday General Session

Linda Urban is an award-winning author of novels and picture books for children. Her latest novel, *Milo Speck, Accidental Agent* was published in September by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. The Horn Book called her most recent picture book

Little Red Henry "a laugh-out-loud riff on *The Little Red Hen*." Her novels have been featured on more than 25 state children's choice award lists and her first picture book, *Mouse Was Mad*, was a finalist for the CBC Children's Choice Award. Before becoming a writer, Urban worked for ten years as marketing director for Vroman's Bookstore in Pasadena, California. Now she lives in Central Vermont in a red saltbox house with too many books.



Saturday General Session

Varian Johnson is the author of four novels, including *The Great Greene Heist*, an ALA Notable Children's Book Selection, a Kirkus Reviews Best Book of the Year, and a Texas Library Association Lone Star Reading List

selection. His novels for older readers include *Saving Maddie* and *My Life as a Rhombus*. Johnson holds an MFA degree from the Vermont College of Fine Arts and currently lives outside of Austin, Texas, with his family. His newest Jackson Greene novel, *To Catch a Cheat*, will be released in spring 2016.



Saturday Luncheon with Jacqueline Woodson

Jacqueline Woodson is the 2014 National Book Award Winner for her *New York Times* bestselling memoir, *Brown Girl Dreaming*. The author of more than two dozen books for young readers, she is a four-time Newbery Honor winner, a recipient of the NAACP Image Award, a three-time National Book Award finalist, and a two-time Coretta Scott King Award winner.

Woodson loves speaking to groups of all types—from students to educators to book lovers—and gives stirring and interactive lectures that explore the history and inspiration behind her books and her own journey to becoming an award-winning author.

Saturday Workshop

The Dynamic Pairing of Shared Reading and Close Reading (Grades 1-5)

Kathy Collins

Sunday Workshops



Douglas Fisher is Professor of Educational Leadership at San Diego State University and a teacher leader at Health Sciences High & Middle College. He is a member of the California Reading Hall of Fame and is the recipient of an International Literacy Association Celebrate

Literacy Award, the Farmer Writing Award from the National Council of Teachers of English, as well as a Christa McAuliffe award for excellence in teacher education.



Kristi Mraz is an author and teacher in the New York City Public Schools. She is the coauthor, with Marjorie Martinelli, of the popular books *Smarter Charts*, and *Smarter Charts for Math, Science and Social Studies*.

Their blog *chartchums* keeps teachers in touch with ongoing and relevant classroom issues and ways to use charts as a support. Her most recent book, *A Mindset for Learning: Building Classrooms of Joyful, Independent Growth*, authored with Christine Hertz, provides practical and powerful strategies for cultivating optimism, flexibility and empathy alongside traditional academic skills. In addition to writing and teaching, Mraz consults in schools across the country and as far away as Taiwan. She primarily supports teachers in early literacy, play and inquiry-based learning. On the off chance she has free time, you'll find her reading on a couch in Brooklyn with her dog and her husband.