

NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.

MARCH 2020

NEWSLETTER



Dear Sorors:

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Is it important to celebrate Women's History Month? If all things were equal, fair, just, timely, truthful, ethical, moral, or principled, there would be no need for Black History, Women's History, Hispanic American History, or Native American History, etc. There would be no need for the films "Harriett" and "Just Mercy" or the play "Black Wall Street" or the trials of Harvey Weinstein and Bill Cosby. But we know that all is not fair and therefore the history that has been suppressed and left out of history books remains to be told by those who care. This unwritten history is left to those who know that it we don't, then WHO?

It is important for women to celebrate by deliberate actions **Women's History Month**. It is important for women, especially Black women, to see themselves possessing great self-worth, with abilities equal to or greater than any men and not to see themselves as limited to, or subservient to, anyone. Most importantly, it is crucial for girls to see themselves as future successful contributors in this world with no limit to the heights they will achieve; for boys and men to grow up with and build a sense of respect and admiration for girls and women, not ownership.

Recently I researched **Women's History Month**. I was surprised when I read on Google.com that 2020 is the first year since 2008 when President Jimmy Carter declared the first national celebration of Women's History, that a United States President has not presented a declaration of celebration of **Women's History Month**. I think this speaks volumes to the current climate of this country. It also speaks to us as teachers in an organization that carries the mantra **Youth, Education, and Service**, and it demands for us to continue to fill the void with truth in every area of our missing History. Our youth needs us, and we can't let them down!

As I look ahead, I encourage you to write your History! You will be amazed at the work you do and the lives you touch on a daily basis, because you have caring hearts and willing spirits.

Be blessed!

Etta F. Carter, Ph.D.

26th Supreme Basileus


nspdksupreme@gmail.com

917-566-9499




On a personal note: Thank you to all Sorors, Regions and Members of the National Executive Council , individually and collectively, for your prayers, gifts, presence, and support of the Living Legends Scholarship Gala sponsored by Philander Smith College on Thursday, February 20, 2020. I am sincerely appreciative for the honor and humbled to have been named as one of the 2020 Living Legends Honorees. I thank you for your overwhelming support and encouragement. Your contributions will financially support the Religious Life Programs and Christian Scholars of Philander Smith College.

— 2020 LIVING LEGENDS AWARD —
HONORING



Dr. Etta F. Carter

CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR
SUPREME BASILEUS



— NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL —

[Click here to access the Living Legends Program](#)



Sorors, please do not forget Nashville: As I view the devastating news of the tornado damage that was levied on the city of Nashville this past week, once again, it is evident that we MUST write our history. National news has focused on the news from a different vantage point than the news relevant to us. The areas around Tennessee State University, Fisk University, Meharry Medical Center and North Nashville, predominantly African American areas, were all severely damaged. This is not the image I see flashing on my television. Therefore, please reach out to inquire of the needs in these communities and what we can do to help these areas.

Etta F. Carter, Ph.D.

26th Supreme Basileus



The Board of Trustees announces the hiring of **Ms. Patricia A. Turner** as Assistant Office Manager (part time) at NSPDK Headquarters, 8233 South King Drive, Chicago, IL 60619. Ms. Turner brings a wealth of 21st century technology expertise and knowledge. She will work alongside Ms. Leatha Brooks, Headquarters Office Manager since 2013. We sincerely welcome Ms. Turner to this team and wish her much success in her new position.

Ms. Charlotte M. Williams, President

NSPDK, Inc., Board of Trustees, 2019-2021

NSPDK Sisters of Substance... Living Legends...



Celebrating our amazing Supreme Basileus, Dr. Etta F. Carter, who has been named a 2020 Philander Smith College, Living Legend!
Dr. Etta Carter was supported by Sorors near and far!
Congratulations,
Madam Supreme!

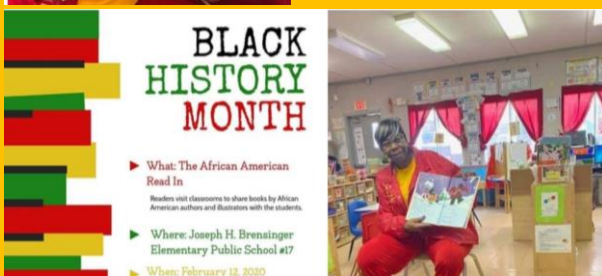
Congratulations, Dr. Gladys M. Glover who was honored for her "leadership and commitment towards the education of children, parents, and teachers both nationally and internationally" by Dr. Ross Ufberg and the staff of Wilmington's Pain and Rehabilitation Center with the naming of a treatment room after her, January 31, 2020. (Rho Chapter)



Delta Phi wishes to thank all who attended their African American Luncheon



Alpha Chapter members Soror Perry, Soror JoAnn and Soror Mary visit PS 17 in Jersey City, NJ to read to students for Black History Month



Dr. Clara Young

Alpha Beta Chapter of Nashville, TN hosted a Teach-A-Rama workshop entitled, "Understanding and Accessing Learning Styles." Workshop presenter and facilitator was Dr. Clara Young, current Chairman of the Department of Teaching and Learning at Tennessee State University. The participants left the workshop empowered with renewed interest in the importance of diagnosing and teaching to individual student learning styles.



**Eastern Regional Director,
Dr. Patsy Squire at Eastern
Regional's February Executive
Planning Meeting, Newark, DE
Moving NSPDK Forward...**



**Dr. Doreatha Atkins, Eta
Chapter, read to Kdg
class, talked about how
special everyone was and
made mirror fans so they
could see themselves.
Woodburv. NJ.**



ΦΔΚ



DELTA PI SORORS



**Alpha Chi Chapter Sorors hosting and enjoying their African American
History Program. At Lakeview Elementary School in Portsmouth, Virginia.
Theme: "The Black Vote", attendees were given history of the black vote,
presidential candidates, a mock voting ballot, Bingo using voting terms.
Informational segment followed by "soul food" dinner. Fun, food, friends
focused on Black History was enjoyed by all.**



**Gamma Delta stays on the
move giving back to the
community. Catholic Charities
were blessed with over 100
pairs of socks for families in
the Flint, Michigan community.**



African American History Program
Mu Chapter-Chicago, IL Leatha A. Brooks, Basileus
Crete-Monee High School, Crete, IL Marjorie Triche, Principal

Sorors of Mu Chapter-Chicago, IL in partnership with Soror Marjorie Triche, Principal of Crete-Monee High School (CMHS) in Crete, IL, presented an African American History Program entitled “African-Americans in the Military”, on February 4, 2020. The focus of the program was to increase knowledge about the role of African Americans in the military. Mu Chapter Sorors, community members, students, and staff joined together in presenting the program highlighting the Buffalo Soldiers, the 54th Regiment and the Tuskegee Airmen.

The most dynamic part of the program was the appearance of one of the original Tuskegee Airmen, 95-year-old, Pilot 2nd Lt. Lawton Wilkerson. He was presented with a plaque in appreciation for his service. The NJROTC Drill Team and the CMHS Flag Team performed in honor of the US Military.

Mu Chapter Sorors served light refreshments before and after the program. The program was inspirational and stressed the importance of learning and maintaining knowledge of our history.



DID YOU KNOW?...

Jersey City Public Schools has 2 schools named after two of NSPDK Founders!

Julia A Barnes PS 12-91 Astor Place
Gladys Nunery PS29-123 Claremont Ave.

Commission on Civil Rights Presenters



L-R: Valerie Fruge, Eleanor Thompson, Judge Yvonne Williams, Chapter President Estelle Brooks and Coordinator Ramona Jones.



Delta Beta Chapter MLK Day Pledge to Read Campaign on Huston-Tillotson University campus.

DELTA BETA CHAPTER

“BOLD” at 96th ANNIVERSARY CONCLAVE

The Delta Beta Chapter (Austin, Texas) of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. participated in its Biennial 96th Anniversary Conclave on July 15-18, 2019 at the St. Louis Union Station Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri. The host chapter for this prestigious event was the Alpha Nu Chapter (Midwest Region) of St. Louis, Missouri. The conference theme was ***“Bold 21st Century Education: Cultural Relevancy.”*** According to Chapter President Estelle Brooks, “Culturally relevant education (teaching) is the ability of teachers to challenge and motivate the needs of a diverse student population! A welcoming environment is created for all students.” Today’s educators must be game changers, teaching boldly in the 21st century classroom.



DELTA BETA CHAPTER

Commission on Civil Rights and MLK Day Reading Campaign

The Delta Beta Chapter (Austin, Texas) of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. (NSPDK) held its annual civil rights presentation on January 25, 2020 at the University Hills Library, Austin, Texas. The national objectives for NSPDK include keeping its membership aware of matters and issues involving the civil rights of children and youth, and to keep abreast of legislation, on local, state, and national levels which affects education, educators, and students.

Precinct 1 Judge Yvonne Williams; Ms. Eleanor Thompson, Senior Planner; and Mrs. Valerie Fruge, Juvenile Case Manager, guests of Delta Beta Chapter of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. presented information concerning ***“The Role of Justice Courts to Address Truancy and Other Student Behavioral Infractions.”***

Each presenter shared information concerning her role as it relates to the following objectives:

- Philosophy of Precinct 1 designed to disrupt school to prison pipeline
- Procedures and processes Precinct 1 incorporate in adjudication of juveniles
- Explain trauma informed court interventions
- Status of children in the court system with behavioral and mental health needs

Their presentation allowed Delta Beta members to review practices at many schools and determine how we can incorporate some of their plans/objectives, collaborating with parent partners, in order to positively impact/reduce truancy.

In January 2020 Delta Beta Chapter sorors started their annual reading campaign, and on January 20, 2020, on the campus of Huston-Tillotson University, members collected signatures from pledgees to read for one hour to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and support the Read Across America Program. Thanks to the participation of students, parents, faculty, Greater Austin community and members of Delta Beta Chapter, the chapter was able to collect 2,413 pledge signatures fulfilling another national educational initiative of this dynamic organization.

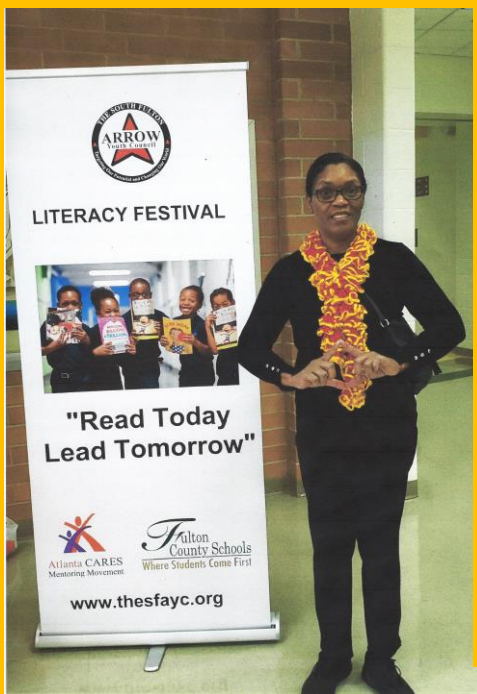


Epsilon Chi Chapter Sorors supporting Soror Drusilla Kinzonzi in the play "The Death of King Shotaway" at the RAMAPO Cultural Arts Center, Spring Valley, NY! What an outstanding performance Soror Kinzonzi!

DELTA BETA CHAPTER INDUCTS SIX DAZZLING DIAMONDS



Standing left to right: Niya Roberts-Berrios, Shaneka McFarland, Mariann Bokako, Nicole Miller, Kwita Carrington and Tona Jasper.








Soror Patricia Griffin-Greenhow, Eta Chapter, volunteered at the South Fulton Learning Community Literacy Festival 2020. Literacy Festival was hosted by the Award-winning South Fulton Arrow Youth Council, in partnership with Langston Hughes High School. The event had youth, parents, vendors, participants, and stakeholders from the Atlanta metropolitan area.

NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.
Eastern Region

Dr. Etta Carter
Supreme Basileus

Dr. Patsy Squire
Eastern Region Director

2020 Contestants

 Audra Fields-Chisolm ALPHA	 Mary Payne XI	 Sherrie Sudler RHO	 Evelyn West ALPHA CHI	 Tammy Sneed BETA ZETA
 Valeria Edwards BETA LAMBDA				 Leona Fowler BETA OMICRON
 Lois Wilburn BETA TAU				 Shirley A. McClinton Watson DELTA PI

Miss NSPDK Eastern Region
Who will wear the CROWN?

OUR HISTORY IS OUR STRENGTH...
NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY





As Founder, Dr. Florence Steele Hunt stated in an interview remember to...
“Pass on the Hugs”

**It's wondrous what a hug can do,
A hug can cheer you when you're blue.
A hug can say, "I love you so,"
Or, "Gee! I hate to see you go."**

**The hug! There's just no doubt about it,
We scarcely could survive without it.
A hug delights and warms and charms.
It must be why God gave us arms.**

**Hugs are great for fathers and mothers,
Sweet for sisters, swell for brothers,
And chances are some favorite aunts
Love them more than potted plants.**

**Kittens crave them. Puppies love them.
Heads of state are not above them.
A hug can break the language barrier,
And make the dullest day seem merrier.**

**A hug can sooth a small child's pain,
And bring a rainbow after rain.
So stretch those arms without delay
And give someone a hug today.**

(Compliments of Pastoral Care)



**GOOD FOR
ONE HUG**



Moments...

Dr. Seuss's Birthday – March 2, 2020

Books, Children, Family

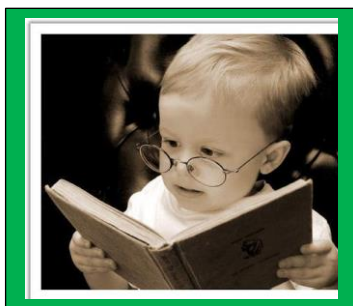
*"Today you are you! That is truer than true!
There is no one alive who is you-er than you!"*



March 2 is the birthday of Theodore Seuss Geisel, an American author who, under the pen name Dr. Seuss, wrote and illustrated some of the world's most iconic children's books. His sales eventually topped 600 million. Geisel's first book, "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street," came in 1937. "Green Eggs and Ham," "Horton Hears a Who," and "The Cat in the Hat" would soon follow. He passed away in 1991 at the age of 87.

National Read Across America Day – March 2, 2020

Activities, Books, Children, Educational



March 2 is National Read Across America Day, a day to celebrate our favorite activity. The day was established by the National Education Association (NEA) in 1998 to help get kids excited about reading. The day occurs each year on the birthday of beloved children's book author Dr. Seuss, so a perfect way to celebrate is to don a Seussian hat and read one of his famous tales, like *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*. On National Read Across America Day, students, teachers, parents, and community members around the nation come together to read books and celebrate the joy of reading — join us!

World Wildlife Day – March 3, 2020

Environment, Wildlife



What do the orangutans of Borneo, the elephants of Sumatra, and the Black Rhino all have in common? Aside from all being totally cool animals that we watch on YouTube, the more sobering truth about these creatures is that they're all critically endangered species. But on *World Wildlife Day*, the UN and its partners are planning to raise awareness of the gravity of this dire situation.

An animal is only placed on the critically endangered species list if the International Union for Conservation of Nature believes the animal faces a very high risk for extinction – extinction as in going the way of the dinosaurs and dodo. So what does critically endangered look like? Current estimates put the number of living Black Rhinos at around 2,500 in the entire world. Russia's Amur Leopard, found in the far eastern recesses of the country, is on the verge of extinction, with only about 40 left in the world. Unfortunately, this list goes on and on.

To raise awareness of endangered species and what we all can do, the UN is celebrating *World Wildlife Day* on March 3, marking the day the group signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

National Grammar Day – March 4, 2020

Activities



On March 4, we let our inner nerd out for National Grammar Day! The day was established in 2008 by Martha Brockenbrough, the founder of the Society for the Promotion of Good Grammar. The day's motto is: "It's not only a date, it's an imperative: March forth on March 4 to speak well, write well, and help others do the same!" We take that imperative seriously, so this National Grammar Day, we are celebrating the idiosyncrasies of the English language by studying up on common grammar mistakes, proofreading our correspondence, and thanking our editors!

National Dentist's Day – March 6, 2020

Careers, Health



March 6 is National Dentist's Day, a day to celebrate the men and women who keep our chompers chomping, our gnashers gnashing, and our whites pearly. Dentists are doctors who specialize in oral health. It's their job to prevent, diagnose, and treat oral diseases, monitor the growth of our teeth and jaws, and perform surgical procedures on our teeth and mouths! Dental health is integral to our overall health, so today we salute them not just for keeping our teeth looking good, but keeping our bodies in tip-top shape.

National Hug a G.I. Day – March 4, 2020

Family, Friendship, Military



March 4 is the only day on the calendar that's also a military command — march forth! — so it's only appropriate that this be the day that we celebrate the servicemen and servicewomen in our lives with National G.I. Day. Soldiers in the U.S. military — including members of the Army, Air Forces, and Marines — have been referred to as G.I.s since 1940, and today is the day that we celebrate everything they do for us with a big hug, either literal or metaphorical.

International Women's Day – March 8, 2020

Awareness, Careers, Women



International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the historical, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also is a day of action in support of taking action against gender inequality around the world. We all know the world couldn't run without women (we mean, just listen to Beyoncé). This is the day to appreciate their efforts! Organizations large and small come together to show women just how valuable they are in today's society.

National Pi Day – March 14, 2020

Activities



3.14159265359.... need we go on? Celebrated on March 14 each (yes, that's 3-14), National Pi Day not only commemorates a very special number, but also celebrates the birthday of the great scientist and mathematician Albert Einstein. Pi was first calculated by Archimedes of Syracuse (287–212 BC), one of the greatest mathematicians of the ancient world. National Pi Day has become a day to celebrate numbers and math, and celebrations are held across the country in honor of this very special number. These days, all of the numerical fun is sometimes accompanied by delicious food items such as pizza pie, fruit pie, and even pot pies! So please channel your inner math geek and get ready to calculate, eat, and celebrate everybody's favorite never-ending number.

St. Patrick's Day – March 17, 2020

Ethnic, Festivities, Historical



We're giving you the green light to celebrate St. Patrick's Day this March 17! We know you've commemorated this holiday in the past, but have you ever learned about why it exists? Today's your lucky day, because we're about to tell you. (We're trying to fit as many St. Patty's puns in here as possible. Can you tell?) St. Patrick's Day is both a cultural and religious celebration. It falls on the date of the death of St. Patrick, who was a patron saint of Ireland. In the early 17th century, it was even made an official Christian feast! But now, people celebrate it all kinds of ways.

Spring Equinox – March 20, 2020

Meteorological



The Spring Equinox, also known as the vernal equinox, is one of the four solar festivals of the year. The equinox — which translates roughly in Latin to “equal night” — is when the sun sits vertically above the equator, making day and night equal across the planet. The Spring Equinox officially marks the beginning of spring in the Northern Hemisphere, and there are celebrations around the world to usher in longer days and springtime. In some cultures, this day also marks the beginning of the new year, which in Iranian culture is called Nowruz. The Spring Equinox is a brilliant time for new beginnings, no matter how you celebrate on March 20.

Absolutely Incredible Kid Day® – March 21, 2020

Children, Parents



A thought for Absolutely Incredible Kid Day®:

“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

— **Nelson Mandela**

Kids are the future. Camp Fire stands ready to help. This organization, born as Camp Fire Girls in 1910, has embarked on a mission to “guide young people on their journey to self-discovery.” What can we do to help? It’s simple, really. Absolutely Incredible Kid Day®, celebrated on March 21 this year, encourages adults to write a young person a note — letting them know just why they’re so amazing! (Verbal messages are fine too.) Our thoughtful words can spark a life-changing journey for a child. Let’s get started.

World Down Syndrome Day – March 21, 2020

Awareness, Educational, Health



Did you know that Down Syndrome—a disorder that occurs when there is a duplication of the twenty-first chromosome—affects approximately 6,000 babies at birth every year? So on March 21—a date chosen to represent the chromosomal defection found in Down Syndrome (the twenty-first day of the third month)—celebrate *World Down Syndrome Day*, an event created to raise public awareness, promote inclusivity, encourage advocacy, and support the wellbeing of those living with Down Syndrome.

World Poetry Day – March 21, 2020

Activities, Cultural



“How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.”

Writer Elizabeth Barrett Browning dedicated this iconic poem to her husband Robert Browning, but her famous sonnet could just as easily declare love for poetry itself. We can all do that March 21 on World Poetry Day.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) founded this day in 1999 to “give fresh recognition and impetus to national, regional and international poetry movements.” The group hoped to inspire the celebration of poetry all over the world, encouraging reading, writing, and teaching.

Poetry uses rhythms and imagery to elicit emotion and the imagination of the reader. Poetry can rhyme, using what are called meters of long and short syllables. Some poetry, written in what’s called “free verse,” doesn’t employ rhyme or meters. Poems are broken into stanzas, which are like paragraphs, and can be up to twelve lines long. We believe the first known poem appeared 4,000 years ago in Babylon. Today countless types of poems are available to enjoy, including haikus, limericks, sonnets, and ballads.

World Water Day – March 22, 2020

Environment



Water is the building block of life. Here in the United States, it's easy to take water for granted — it just comes out of the faucet anytime you want it. Yet, all over the globe there are people who don't have access to clean, safe drinking water. March 22 is World Water Day, a day dedicated to drawing attention to the water related issues that humans in almost every country. Created by the United Nations, the goal of World Water Day is to bring aid to people who truly need it across borders.

World Backup Day – March 31, 2020

Technology



We're fortunate enough to have access to the most powerful computers to date, but what would you do if you lost everything on your computer? Crashes happen more often than you think, data recovery can cost you hundreds of dollars, and recovering everything you've stored on your computer is not guaranteed. We understand, life gets hectic and it's easy to forget to back up your files. Join us on March 31st, as we celebrate World Backup Day.

March Madness – March 2020

Fun, Sports



Brackets. Cinderella Story. Sweet Sixteen. Final Four.

Even people who have absolutely zero interest in sports the other 11 months of the year know these terms. March Madness means everyone has a chance. Well, at least the 68 teams picked for the tournament. Outside of the Super Bowl, it's easily the biggest sporting event on the calendar. Brackets (and office pools) give all of us a chance to take part.

So...who's your pick?

National Kidney Month – March 2020

Awareness, Educational, Health



Kidney failure does not discriminate – it can affect anyone, of any race, at any age with diabetes, high blood pressure, or a family history of kidney disease. More than 2 million people die each year due to kidney failure. This March, National Kidney Month seeks to help raise awareness promoting kidney health for everyone, everywhere. Take on the challenge to fight for better education and treatment for kidney failure and help us move closer to eliminating this terrible disease.

National Women's History Month – March 2020

Educational, Women



During the month of March, we give a little extra attention to all of the amazing accomplishments of strong, determined women. Since 1987, the United States has formally recognized March as National Women's History Month. Every woman has a story to tell and gifts to share with the world. So, get ready, because this month is about honoring magnificent ladies, and we are ready to celebrate it to the fullest.

Magnificent Women! Our Founders



National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated

**Dr. Florence Steele Hunt
Julia Asbury. Barnes
Ella Wells Butler
Marguerite Gross
Edna McConnell
Dr. Gladys Merritt Ross
Dr. Gladys C. Nunery
Mildred Morris Williams**

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

7 Tips for Effective School Leadership

Streamline decision-making and improve communication—and staff buy-in—with these simple strategies. By [Laura Lee](#) February 6, 2020



Enigma / Alamy Stock Photo

For administrators to move beyond operational management to true leadership, they need to understand the capacity of their staff, promote open communication, and provide useful feedback, writes Matthew X. Joseph [in District Administration](#). Joseph, director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment at Leicester Public Schools in Massachusetts, offers

advice for administrators who seek to shift “from a building manager to an instructional leader.” His recommendations include:

Focus on respect rather than popularity. While it can be tempting to make a decision your staff might want, Joseph says to center your decision-making process around student needs. “I’ve found that if you keep students at the core of your decision-making and are consistent, most staffers will accept unpopular decisions, especially if you communicate your reasoning.”

Establish clear goals. In setting objectives, make sure to communicate with your staff so that they understand their roles in accomplishing those shared goals.

Listen to input from your staff. Avoid assuming your solution is the only solution, and intentionally set aside time for interacting with staff and responding to their concerns. Creating a people-first culture shows staff that you value their input and take their concerns seriously. Be strategic about your open-door policy, though: “Block out the times in your daily and weekly calendar to focus on students and your goals as well as being visible through classroom visits,” Joseph advises.

Lead by example. “Model the traits that you would like to see your staff members display,” Joseph writes. Even small actions—like where to eat lunch—can be an opportunity to model behavior you would like to see in your staff.

Provide regular, constructive feedback. Make sure to give your assessments as soon after an encounter as possible and provide examples. Feedback doesn’t have to be negative. Use the opportunity to evaluate staff as a platform for offering praise and boosting confidence, Joseph says.

Delegate. Establish a relationship of trust with your staff such that you can delegate some responsibilities to them and free up your time for other priorities.

Make meetings matter. “Meeting for the sake of having regular meetings—particularly if there is nothing on the agenda—frustrates people,” Joseph writes. Eliminate meetings that aren’t

serving your team by identifying specific outcomes for each meeting and distributing information in other, more time-efficient ways, such as email.

LITERACY

5 Ways to Support Students Who Struggle With Reading Comprehension

These strategies can help students who are able to decode well but have difficulty understanding what they read—and they're beneficial for all students. By [Nina Parrish](#) February 3, 2020



When we think of reading issues, we often imagine children who struggle to decode the letters in text and turn them into spoken language. This type of struggling reader has a very difficult time figuring out what many of the words are and has poor phonological (speech-sound) skills. However, there are also many students who sound like they're reading beautifully but have difficulty with understanding vocabulary and figurative language, inferencing, verbal reasoning, grammatical development, and oral expression.

As children get older, if they are decoding text well, we assume they are reading well. Once a person learns to decode, reading comprehension becomes more about language

comprehension and focus. At this transition, starting around third grade, teachers may begin to notice some students who decode text fluently but are not understanding.

Since this type of struggling reader is less noticeable than ones who have difficulty decoding, they often slip under the radar until they begin to fail standardized state comprehension tests. Even then, their issues may go undetected for a long time, resulting in middle and high school students who sound like they're reading but understand nothing that they have read.

These struggling readers should be targeted for remediation—the earlier the better. However, remediation consisting of practice passages and questions may be ineffective as it focuses too narrowly on text-based skills.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE WITH COMPREHENSION

Here are five strategies to try out with students who read fluently but struggle to comprehend what they're reading.

1. Target overall comprehension of language: Recent research reveals that reading comprehension difficulties [may stem from an underlying oral language weakness](#) that exists from early childhood, before reading is even taught. It turns out that students who have poor reading comprehension also often understand fewer spoken words and less of what they hear and have worse spoken grammar. So, to address reading comprehension deficits effectively, educators may have to use an approach that teaches vocabulary, thinking skills, and comprehension [first in spoken language](#) and then in reading and written language.

2. Teach vocabulary: Because students with poor comprehension often have poor vocabulary skills and understand less of what they hear, it's helpful to teach the meanings of new words through the use of multisensory strategies like graphic organizers, pictures, and mnemonics. Improving their overall language skills increases the likelihood that they will understand the words they encounter in written text. Since it is impossible to know every word one might encounter, students should be taught about the different types of context clues and how to use them to determine the meaning of unknown words.

3. Teach thinking strategies: Once students have the vocabulary to be able to make it through a text, they often struggle with the complex thinking or sustained attention required to keep up with all of the important details and to access information that is implied but not directly stated. Teachers can instruct students on cognitive strategies they can use. Many common text reading strategies—such as annotation, [SQ3R](#), and the [KWL chart](#)—make use of these thinking strategies, including:

- Discussing or activating prior knowledge,
- Developing questions while reading,
- Connecting what they are reading to another text, something they have seen, or something they have experienced,
- Visualizing or picturing what they are reading,
- Making predictions about what will come next in the text,
- Looking back for keywords and rereading in order to clarify or answer questions, and
- [Thinking aloud](#) to model the strategies and thought processes needed for comprehension.

Students can learn and then use the strategies that work best for them depending on the text they're reading. Pulling deeper meaning out of text through the use of thinking strategies can be beneficial not just to reading comprehension but also to writing.

4. Have students practice reciprocal teaching: Once taught, cognitive strategies can be consistently practiced and implemented through the use of [reciprocal teaching](#), which encourages students to take a leadership role in their learning and begin to think about their

thought process while listening or reading. Teachers can use reciprocal teaching during class discussions, with text that is read aloud, and later with text that is read in groups. The students should rotate between the following roles:

- **Questioner**, who poses questions about parts of the lesson, discussion, or text that are unclear or confusing, or to help make connections with previously learned material.
- **Summarizer**, who sums up each important point or detail from the lesson, discussion, or text.
- **Clarifier**, who tries to address the Questioner's issues and make sure that parts they found confusing are clear to others.
- **Predictor**, who makes a prediction about what will happen next based on what was presented, discussed, or read.

•
5. Directly teach comprehension skills: Students should be directly taught comprehension skills such as sequencing, story structure using the plot mountain, how to make an inference and draw a conclusion, and the different types of figurative language. Students should have the opportunity to first use the skills with text that they hear the teacher read aloud, and then later with text that they read independently at their own level.

The comprehension skills and strategies listed above can be used with the whole class, as they closely align with reading and language arts standards for elementary and middle school students. Teachers can help students select reading material with vocabulary that matches their current ability levels so that within a classroom, students are reading text and working on vocabulary at levels that are accessible for each of them.



Borrowing a Literacy Strategy From Band Class

A band teacher explains how a process he uses to train budding musicians' inner voice can be used to help struggling readers improve. By [Brian Campbell](#) February 11, 2020



Bob Daemmrich / Alamy Stock Photo

In band class, we don't spend a lot of time on passages of text, but you might be surprised by how much our rehearsals focus on reading skills. Students are learning a set of symbols we convert to sounds to convey meaning—it's literacy in a different language.

Reading in band has an additional hitch: Students have to read their parts while hearing several other parts at the same time, which requires them to be strong, independent readers—and sheds light on a common weakness in beginners that occurs in the reading of text as well.

Struggling readers who are native English speakers are very familiar with their language, and many of them have used that familiarity to develop coping mechanisms and shortcuts that get them through reading, to a point. When a student starts band, however, the language is often entirely new. Coping mechanisms don't really work—instead they reveal a student's weaknesses in reading music.

While these can take many forms, the most common weakness in my beginners has been in a skill that, in music, we call *audiation*. Audiation is, in part, the skill we use to mentally picture what a passage of music on the page sounds like. In literacy, a similar term is *subvocalization*. With my students, I use the term *inner voice*.

At its core, reading is an auditory process that happens to have some visual steps. We don't get meaning from text—we get it from words, and to our brains, words are sounds. Our inner voice is the bridge between sight and sound. It also bridges sound and meaning, not just decoding the words but adding elements like fluidity and inflection. Just as we had to practice with our outer voice to develop clear speech, our inner voice requires modeling and experience.

SIGNS OF A WEAK OR ABSENT INNER VOICE

As students build this skill, there are telltale signs when it is underdeveloped. In the band classroom, those signs include:

- looking away from the page while playing (relying on memory or outside cues)
- needing to hear how a passage goes before trying to play it,
- getting lost when hearing different parts or others' mistakes,
- mixing up similar spots in the music, and
- playing the same spot differently each time.

The same problems can show up when students read text. Teachers should be on the lookout for students:

- looking at others, or the teacher, for cues when reading or reciting aloud,
- reading without inflection, or ignoring punctuation completely,
- skipping or replacing minor words like *for*, *of*, *a* or *an*, etc.,
- replacing words with those of similar “shape” (strength/straighten, every/very, etc.), and
- reading a word correctly in a familiar passage but differently in a new context.

Many of these signs mimic issues that students with vision problems have, so it’s a good idea to check for those, too. In either case, the student is trying to read with incomplete information and is filling in the gaps with cues, memory, or guesses.

BUILDING THE INNER VOICE

With young readers, a lot of what we do is aimed at developing the quality and “volume” of the inner voice. Here are some of the methods and mantras I use with my band students that may also help students who need more practice with reading text.

Read, reread, and re-reread: As soon as we begin reading music, I work with students to establish a clear, dependable process that I refer to as “the steps.”

First, we read a passage through, focusing on the notes (names and fingerings) until there are no pauses or hitches. Then, we count and clap just the rhythms.

Next, we pair the counting with the fingerings, to combine what we’ve learned from the first two steps, and then check for expressive markings that indicate style or volume and incorporate those into the counting.

Finally, we play through the passage slowly. If there are problems, we revisit the appropriate steps and try again a bit slower. Once we have the accuracy and fluency we need, we can gradually speed up to the appropriate tempo.

Make the internal external: At every opportunity, I have students do these steps out loud. We say the note names out loud, and we have a system of counting syllables for rhythm paired with claps and hand motions. I insist on the counting being loud and clear. Our inner voice can’t say what it hasn’t been taught, and it must hear the information in our own outer voice.

Insist on the steps: Once we have our steps, we always use them—even with easy pieces. Most students will try to make the process go faster by skipping steps, but I don’t let them. Speed comes from fluency, and fluency comes from following the steps more times. Our goal is to learn the process, not the product.

Don’t let students memorize or guess: We’ll often start in different places or change songs so that we’re drilling the steps rather than the songs. Memory is not the inner voice—it’s a recording of someone else’s, and an unreliable one.

Talk about mistakes: As we work on a piece of music, we talk about the most common mistakes and why they happen. Later, I'll ask students to predict the problems they're likely to have with a new piece of music. Building this kind of metacognition is like vocal coaching for the inner voice.

Listen individually and often: I'll give a student a new song and have them walk me through the steps. If they're skipping, flipping, or halting, those are insights into what their inner voice isn't saying yet.

Never tell them how it goes: Students grumble, but I remind them of the steps and then put the work back on them. They can handle it, with time and effort.

Do this with students of all levels: Inner voice problems come from perfectly natural shortcuts all of our brains take, so even the most advanced students aren't safe. If the shortcut works just once, the student can get hooked on it. I can't let the fact that a student sounds fine hide bad habits as they develop—they'll be the ones who pay for the bad habits later.

By explicitly targeting students' inner voice, we can head off so many harmful habits that lead to later failures and frustrations, and we can give students a critical tool for success—in band, in English, and beyond.

HAVE YOU TRIED THESE APPS??

Remind provides communication in the classroom, at home, and anywhere in between. The main purpose of Remind is to help manage parent communication and encourage further community engagement. Part of what makes this app so effective is the ability to easily send messages and reminders to specific individuals, groups, or the entire class.

ClassDojo is designed to keep parents informed about what's happening in their student's school and build an classroom community. Being used in 90% of K-8 schools, it's no wonder teachers enjoy this app. Students can collaborate on projects more easily and teachers can reach parents right through the app, making ClassDojo a great classroom tool.

TalkingPoints allows districts to reach all of their student's families to build stronger relationships. Used in over 2,000 schools, TalkingPoints helps connect schools, teachers, and their students through multilingual messages in one centralized platform.

School Messenger helps to simplify parent and community engagement by combining school notifications, mobile apps, and website content in one easy place. Help save parents and your district time and energy with School Messenger. It's also a preferred **PowerSchool** partner!

Things that principals know about GREAT teachers...

@SteeleThoughts

I have had the privilege of collaborating with many great teachers. These are some things that are true about them:

Great teachers don't always have the best lessons. But they always have the best relationships with kids.

Great teachers understand that developing the right classroom climate is a prerequisite to teaching the right lesson.

When a lesson does not go as planned, great teachers are not looking around the room... they are looking in the mirror.

Great teachers always come to class ready to teach... but they are mindful of the fact that not all students come to class ready to learn.

Great teachers understand the power of human connection, so they are diligent about building relationships with their students. They are even relentless about connecting with the knuckleheads.

Great teachers don't show up for WORK... they show up for KIDS! It's a passion -- not a job.

Great teachers understand the "Golden Rule" for educators: Teach every child the way you would want your own child to be taught.

Great teachers define their success by the success of their students. They understand it's not about the teaching... it's about the learning.

Great teachers are not defined by their lesson plans... they are defined by their passion.

Great teachers are in it for the kids. It's not about the lesson plan, the rules, or the massive paycheck. It's always about the kids.

Great teachers will spend some time this summer thinking about how they can improve their lessons next year. That's just what they do.

Kids leave their class feeling better about themselves... because great teachers understand there is more to teaching than delivering instruction.

Great teachers are never victims of "slacker kids." They refuse to let those students get away without doing the work.

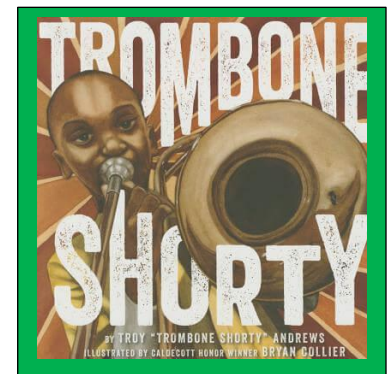
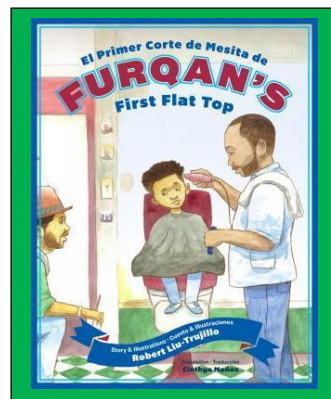
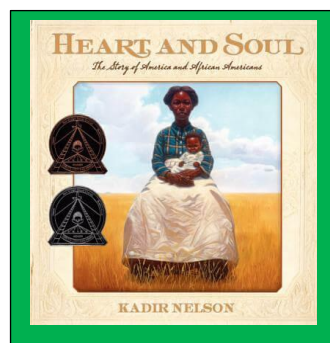
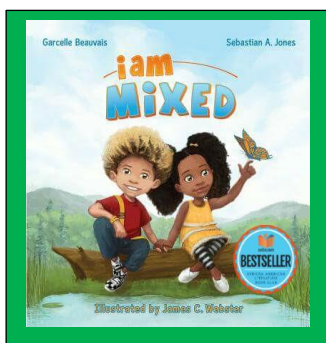
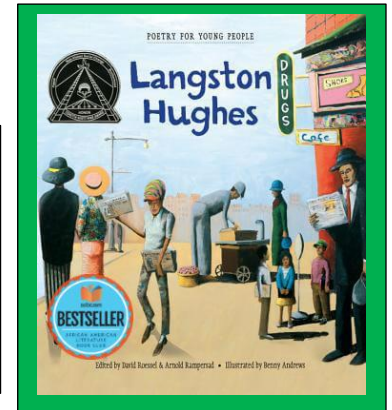
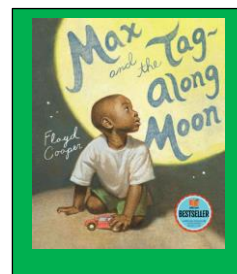
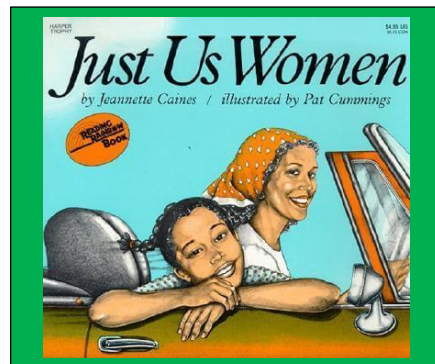
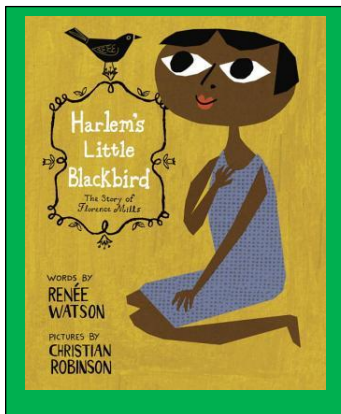
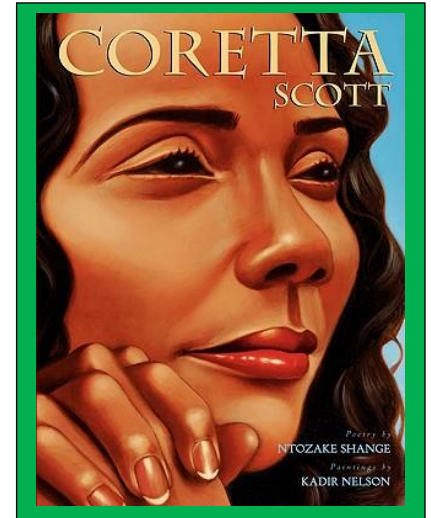
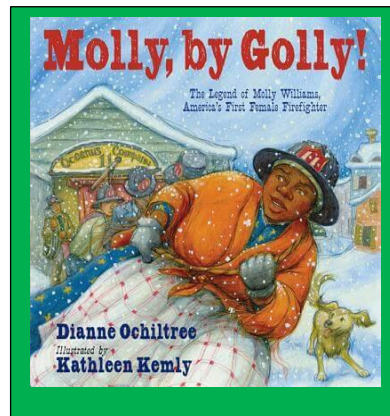
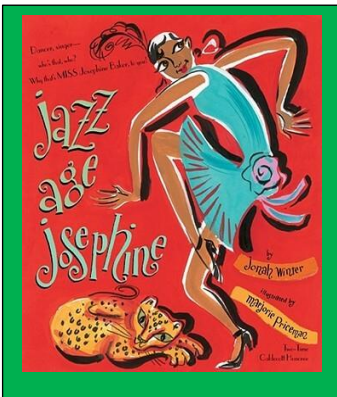
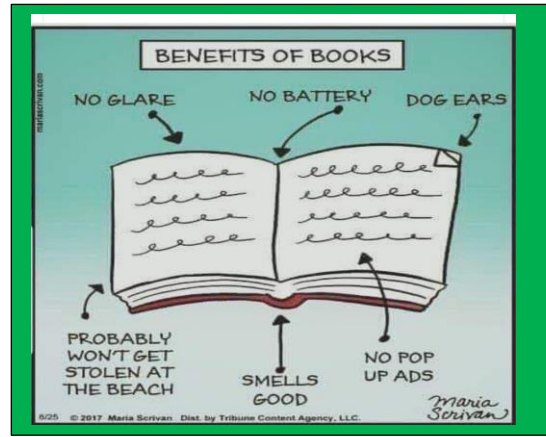
Great teachers are not driven by courses of study... they are driven by the faces in front of them.

Great teachers can look past the bad attitude. They realize there's always something else going on.

Great teachers did not become great by accident. They became great because they made a decision that being "good" was not enough.

Great teachers are always in pursuit of a better lesson. They demand the same excellence of themselves that they work for in their kids.

BOOK NOOK



TEACHERS' LOUNGE...

"The Danger of a Single Story"-by Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche

<https://youtu.be/D9Ihs241zeg>



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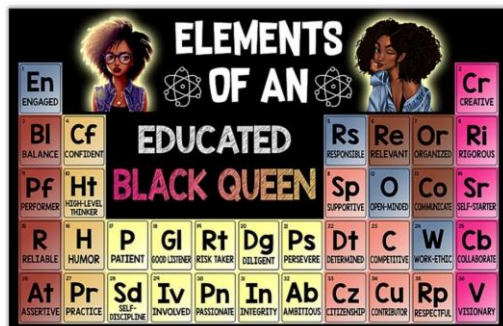
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**PROBLEM-
SOLVING
ISN'T JUST
FOR MATH
CLASS.**



WE.ORG/SEL

**Katherine Johnson,
NASA mathematician
depicted in 'Hidden
Figures,' dies at 101**

Johnson "was an American hero and her
pioneering legacy will never be forgotten."
NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine wrote
on Twitter.

Katherine Johnson, NASA mathematician,
dies at 101



A relatively new program at the University of Chicago allows low-income students to receive free tuition if their household income is \$125,000 per year or less. And more financial assistance is available to students with household incomes \$60,000 per year or less. Those students receive free housing and fees plus tuition as part of their financial aid by the school. And for students who are the first in their families to attend college, they receive a \$20,000 scholarship over four years and a guaranteed paid internship for their first summer. Free housing is a big deal because the university requires all students to live on campus during their first two years



Blessings

Jarian R. Graham, National Public Relations Director

nspdk.pr@gmail.com

