



Reading, Writing and Agriculture:  
A Powerful Partnership

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for Agricultural Engagement  
Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom, Illinois  
Farm Families

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Council Founder and Chair of Illinois Reads



# The Illinois Reading Council

- The Illinois Reading Council is a not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) professional educational literacy organization.
- IRC's current membership consists of 4,000+ teachers, school librarians, college and university professors of pre-service teachers, as well as administrators.
- IRC has 36 Councils under its umbrella. Four Councils are state-wide, the others are "local."
- IRC has an Executive Director and three part-time office staff members. Interns from Illinois State University and Illinois Wesleyan are often hired for their expertise, and a group of dedicated volunteers help out on a regular basis.

# The Illinois Reading Council

Membership

Local Councils

Conference

Illinois Reads



## ILLINOIS READS reflects the IRC mission:

The mission of the Illinois Reading Council is to provide support and leadership to all who promote and teach lifelong literacy.



# What does ILLINOIS READS hope to accomplish?

## MISSION

The mission of ILLINOIS READS is to promote life-long reading for the people of Illinois.

## VISION

Our vision is that from December, to the ILLINOIS READS Book Festival in March, to Family Reading Night in November, individuals of all ages from across the state will be reading from a selected list of text, and engaging in activities in which they share their reading experiences with one another.



Jesse White  
Honorary Chair, Illinois Reads  
Illinois Secretary of State  
State Librarian





## *The focus on Illinois authors (The thinking)*

- If books by Illinois authors are chosen, there is a better chance of those authors visiting schools and public libraries around the state.
- It is no surprise that schools and libraries outside of the Chicagoland area, do not have the same access to authors.
- We have A LOT of great authors in Illinois!





# Target audiences for **ILLINOIS READS!**

Birth-4 Years

Grades K-2

Grades 3-5

Grades 6-8

High School



**Adults Too!**

## Objectives of Illinois Reads

The main objectives of the campaign are:

- to promote read alouds (research)
- to promote the reading of good (fun) literature in Illinois classrooms
- to provide choices of good books for recreational reading by all age groups (adult book clubs)
- to provide resources and activities for classroom teachers and librarians that reflect the books chosen
- to highlight Illinois authors
- to promote the Illinois Reading Council

# BOOK (choosing) GROUP WOW!

Independent Book Store Owner  
Independent Book Store  
Children's Services Directors

School library-media specialists and  
public librarian

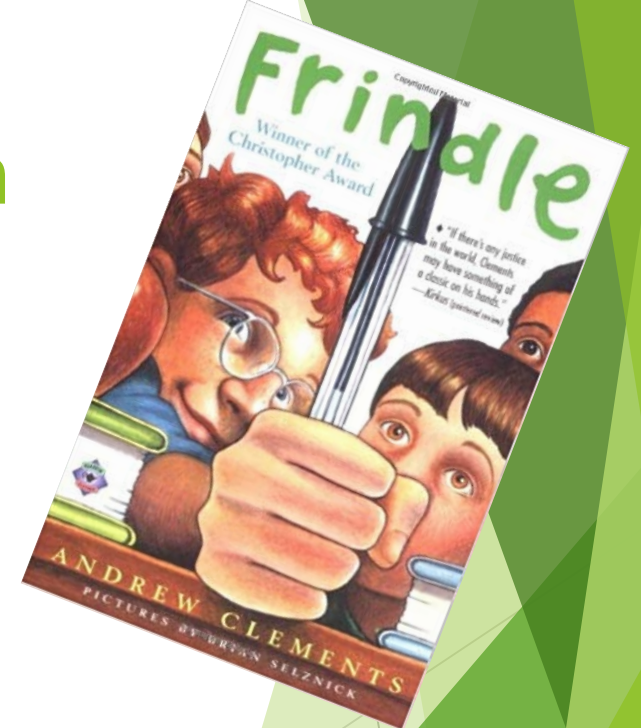
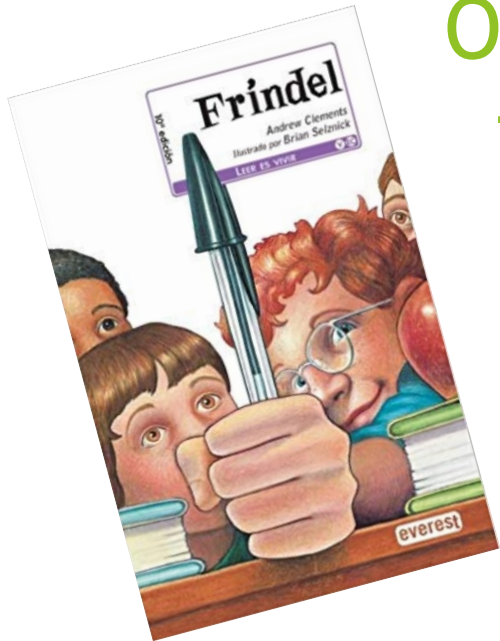
Director, The Center for the Book  
Illinois State Library

# Guidelines for choosing books

- Six books in each age/grade band
- Books by Illinois authors
- (became books by authors with TIES to Illinois)
- One S.T.E.A.M. book in each age/grade band
- One book with an Illinois agricultural connection

Our goal is to have books written  
in both English and in Spanish.

*FRINDLE*



Authors willing to support  
the idea and the project!



# MARKETING AND MEDIA

One representative from each of the  
36 IRC Councils  
IRC Members  
iCommunicate  
Communicator  
Local Press

900+ Ambassadors  
IRC Technology Consultants





## Time Line

**November**

**FAMILY READING NIGHT**

**December**

**SNEAK PEAK**

**(new list)**

**March**

**BOOK FESTIVAL**

**October**

**CONFERENCE ACTIVITY**

# ACTIVITIES!

Book Festival (formerly known as the Launch)

Essay Contest: “I Love to Read” Grades 2-12

Public library events around the state

Family Reading Night events

Local IRC Council events: parades, book talks, etc.

Sneak Peak sponsored by  
Illinois Agriculture In the Classroom  
and  
Prairie Area Reading Council





Our commitment is to move the spring event around the state.

We want ALL Illinois students to have the opportunity to meet the authors of some terrific books!



## Illinois AITC and Illinois Reads

Watched the Evolution.....

*‘Why Not’?*

In Kind Donations

Our Network of IAITC County Coordinators, Social Media and  
Web Presence

Reaching out with AITC Friendly Activities.





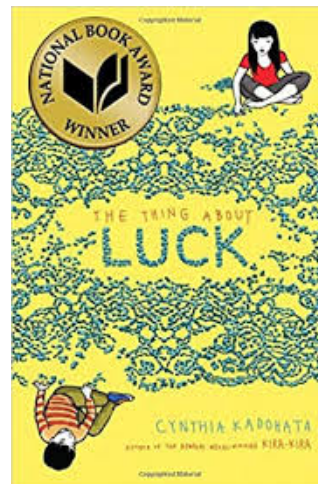
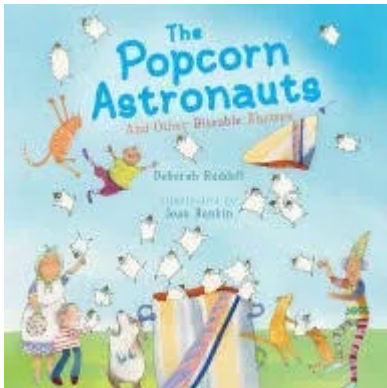


## IAITC Selections

2017--The Inventor's Secret

2018—The Popcorn Astronaut/  
The Thing About Luck/Flip the  
Bird

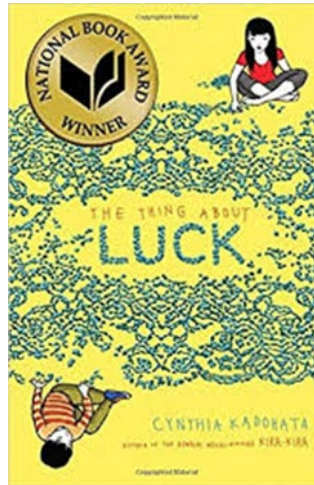
2019--Auntie Yang's Great  
Soybean Picnic



## Ag Connections?



STEM-  
Soybean Car



Wheat Harvest  
Farm  
Implements



Soybeans



Specialty  
Crops and  
Seasons



Animal Agriculture



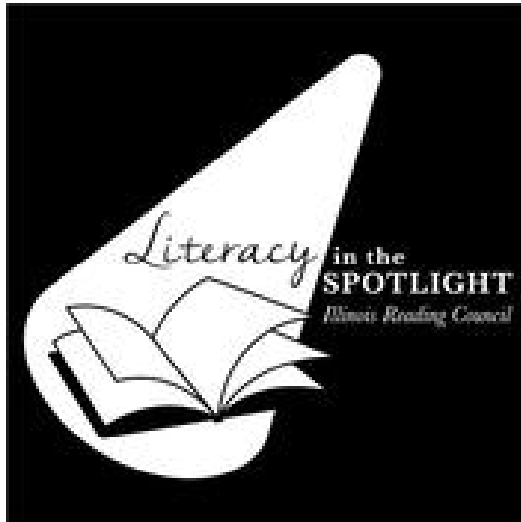
2020??

hmmmm





# 2019 Illinois Reading Council Conference



## LITERACY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

October 3 - 4, 2019

Peoria, Illinois

Thousands of literacy advocates, educators, and researchers will gather from October 3 - 4, 2019 for the 52nd Annual IRC Conference, Literacy in the Spotlight, at the Peoria Civic Center and Peoria Marriott Pere Marquette Hotel in Peoria, Illinois.

IAITC and the Conference


Booth and Exhibits since 1998.

Now: 3-5 Workshop Sessions  
Interactive Booth

Samples



- Reaching out to Reading Teachers is a **PRIORITY** for the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom Program.
- IRC is the primary statewide Professional Development Activity for Elementary Teachers
- IAITC uses IRC to focus on the our Teacher Grants and Book Grants
- Don't overlook the opportunity to partner with your Statewide and Local Reading Council/Reading Groups.

A photograph of a person riding a bicycle in a park, with a large black rectangular overlay containing a quote. The background shows trees and a building.

*“Books are meat and medicine and flame  
and flight and flower steel, stitch, cloud  
and clout, and drumbeats on the air.”*

*Gwendolyn Brooks*

TheFamousPeople.com

