



asilomar 71
LANGUAGE ARTS CONFERENCE

*BRINGING JOY BACK
INTO THE CLASSROOM
OCTOBER 3-5, 2025*

BRINGING JOY BACK INTO THE CLASSROOM

THIS YEAR'S THEME FOCUSES ON
JOY AS A TRANSFORMATIVE FORCE
IN EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ALIKE.

JOY CAN INSPIRE. IT CAN INCREASE CREATIVITY, REDUCE STRESS, AND CREATE A RIDDLE EFFECT OF POSITIVITY. IT CAN CARRY US THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES. JOY CAN EVEN TRANSCEND THE CLASSROOM.

JOY CAN CONNECT WITH STUDENTS. IT CAN MAKE THEM FEEL WELCOME, INCLUDED, AND SAFE.

AT ASILOMAR 71, WE WILL CELEBRATE JOY AS A GUIDING FORCE IN REDISCOVERING OUR PASSION FOR TEACHING, CREATING INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS WHERE EVERY VOICE IS VALUED, EMPOWERING STUDENTS THROUGH EQUITY AND SELF-DETERMINATION, ENGAGING DEEPLY WITH LITERATURE, LANGUAGE, AND WRITING, AND REIMAGINING EDUCATION AS A PURSUIT OF JUSTICE AND HOPE. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHARING THIS JOY WITH YOU!

SESSIONS

SELECT A FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD CHOICE FROM THE GROUP SESSIONS BELOW. WE ASK FOR A SECOND AND THIRD CHOICE IN CASE YOUR FIRST CHOICE IS FULL OR CANCELLED. EXPANDED DESCRIPTIONS AND ADDITIONAL SESSION INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT: CURRICULUMSTUDY.ORG

1. A Joyful Journey: Guiding Striving Readers to Success

GRADES 6-12

Join us as we joyfully journey and explore the fundamentals of reading comprehension and word recognition to effectively support ALL readers. Learn strategies to create a dynamic and engaging reading environment for secondary classrooms.

2. Joyful, Contemporary Texts

GRADES 6-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

Gholdy Muhammad, in *Unearthing Joy*, argues students need access to lessons that affirm identity, skill development, intellectualism, criticality, and joy. Educators want students to read relevant, timely, and diverse texts, but it takes time. This workshop will provide current, relevant texts and strategies to share them with joy.

3. Unlocking Joy Through Universal Access: Multi-Sensory Storytelling for All Learners

GRADES K-6, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

Transform your literacy instruction through the power of multi-sensory storytelling! Experience firsthand how layering visual supports, movement, and tactile elements can make texts accessible and engaging for all learners. Leave with practical strategies to reignite the joy of reading in your classroom while supporting students across ability levels.

4. Author Study: Wonder and Joy in the Writing of Aimee Nezhukumatathil

GRADES 9-12

Feed your literature-loving soul by diving deep into the non-fiction essays and poetry of Aimee Nezhukumatathil. Read and analyze excerpts from *World of Wonders*, a collection of essays in which she finds inspiration and joy in nature. Time to write and to discuss applications for the classroom will be provided.

5. Postmodern Picture Books as Mentor Texts for Critical Writing Pedagogy

GRADES K-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

Using the framework of critical writing pedagogy, these sessions will support teachers in analyzing the craft moves from postmodern picture books. Then, we will use this analysis to explore how we can support students engaging in critical literacy and writing the stories they want to see in the world. **PRECONFERENCE READING:** Online reading links available at curriculumstudy.org

6. Turning Pages Together: A Classroom-Library Partnership for Joyful Learning

GRADES 9-12

This session highlights the partnership between librarians and English teachers to foster a culture of reading through an independent reading program. Attendees will learn how to design engaging mini-lessons, genre deep dives, and book recommendations to inspire both reluctant and avid readers, creating a thriving, joyful reading culture.

7. Using Theater and Drama to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension

GRADES K-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

Reading strategies borrowed from the world of the theater can teach students how to see beyond written words and discover what is between, beneath, and around them. Learn the reading strategies of actors, directors, and set designers who interact with text to build characters' lives, construct context, and generate the action that brings text to life.

8. Romantic Poetry: The Spontaneous Overflow of Powerful Feelings

GRADES 9-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

Romantic poet William Wordsworth defined poetry at the turn of the 18th century in his Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* as a joyful endeavor! He challenged readers to let go of stodgy expectations about rhyme scheme and meter imposed during the Age of Reason, and instead appreciate the natural cadence of the human voice, nature, common folk and "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings . . . recollected in tranquility." **PRECONFERENCE READING:** Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*

9. To Teach Well We Must BE Well

GRADES K-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

Reflect on the demands of teaching and the many roles you play beyond the classroom. Engage in meaningful conversations with yourself and others to discover and sustain the joy and energy needed to teach.

10. Turn Up the Sunshine: Creating a Classroom for Everyone with Universal Design, Integrated ELD, Class Branding ... and even AI

GRADES 9-12

Join this interactive multimedia session to build inclusive high school English classrooms using Universal Design principles. Learn to integrate ELD standards, create a classroom brand with core values, songs, and logos, and explore the potential and challenges of AI in education.

11. Joy: An Integral Part of Teaching for Social Justice

GRADES 6-12

In this session, teachers will explore how educators in one district are integrating joy (as conceptualized by Gholdy Mohammad) into social justice curriculum. Participants will learn how adding a "Joy" domain to the Learning for Justice standards can balance difficult themes of injustice and human struggle in texts like *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *Stamped*. **PRECONFERENCE READING:** Online reading links available at curriculumstudy.org

12. We Flourish Together: Cultivating Collective Resilience & Wellbeing

GRADES K-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

We'll consider our strengths, our passions, and our dreams, moving from "me" to "we" as we consider both individual and collective approaches that can help us shape the lives and the world we most want to live in, together.

13. Pop Culture Pedagogy: How Using Pop Culture Can Help Educators Connect Content, Build Positive Relationships, and Foster Social Emotional Learning

GRADES 6-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

Students' lives are rich with narrative through pop culture and over the past few years they have used it more than ever to express themselves. Learn differentiated instruction techniques to use pop culture and content while creating a classroom full of bold discussion, creativity, and opportunities for building positive relationships leading to SEL experiences.

14. The Joy of Handwriting: Exploring the Way We Write

GRADES K-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

Sessions will explore the different ways we write, look at the research on the physical act of writing, analyze and reflect on how that writing "feels" in terms of thinking, and the impact writing has on fluency, the brain, communication, effectiveness. How can calligraphy, block printing, voice to text and artistic practices enhance writing joy. Explore a variety of creative visual arts practices students can use to "write" and show their understanding.

15. Creating Shared Linguistic Spaces of Joy

GRADES 6-12, COLLEGE

Teachers will explore how to create shared linguistic spaces which nurture the many sounds of a literate life, where we can teach the recursive practices of reading and writing for something bigger than ourselves—our future. Today's English classroom is a place where students read, write, think, and create as an engaged community of learners. It is a place built on trust that values the gifts each of us bring. It is a place of joy.

16. Student Agency: Empowering Joyful Learners

GRADES 9-12

Empower your students to take ownership of their learning journey! This interactive session explores practical strategies to foster student autonomy, self-direction, and metacognition in the classroom. Learn how to create environments where students set meaningful goals, make informed decisions, and develop the confidence to drive their own educational experience.

17. Shifting our Perspectives to Talk about and Value Students' Complex Funds of Knowledge

GRADES 6-12

This session will incorporate the asset-based theory of "complex funds of knowledge" using Craft's (2019) text, *New Kid*, to demonstrate how to engage and positively reframe the cultural and linguistic knowledge of marginalized students. Through activities and discussion, participants will learn how to connect to students' funds of identity in an ELA classroom, 9-12 and preservice teacher education.

18. Bringing Joy to the Classroom Using Relational Capacity Fostering Connection, Engagement, and Positivity

GRADES K-12, COLLEGE

This session explores how relational capacity—building strong, positive relationships between students and teachers—can bring joy into the classroom. By fostering trust, inclusivity, and emotional connection, educators can create an environment that enhances student engagement, motivation, and well-being, ultimately leading to a more joyful and productive learning experience.

19. The Joy of the Socratic Seminar

GRADES 9-12, COLLEGE

Discover The Joy of the Socratic Seminar—learn how to spark meaningful discussions using texts from Shakespeare to Angie Thomas. Explore seminar structures, questioning strategies, and reflection techniques to engage students in diverse, relevant topics and empower them to share their voices on important issues.

20. Teaching Argument to ninth graders can be joyful, right?

GRADES 9-12

Join us to discuss teaching Argument and controversial topics in today's classrooms. I'll share my eight-week program focusing on writing, reading, and speaking skills through student-driven research. Bring your ideas, assignments, and sample essays. Let's collaborate, tweak, and make Argumentation engaging for grades 9 and beyond!

21. 100-Word Stories: A Short Form for Joyful Writing

GRADES 6-12, COLLEGE

What can 100-Word Stories teach your students about reading and writing? Short answer: everything! Using techniques from her book *100-Word Stories: A Short Form for Expansive Writing*, Kim will demonstrate how this flash-fiction form can efficiently (and joyfully) teach reading and writing skills while empowering student voice and personal agency.

22. Tapping into Rhetoric to Build Confident Writers

GRADES 9-12

This session will describe a framework for supporting novice writers in understanding the rhetorical situation, so they can more intentionally write with purpose and power. Participants will learn the framework firsthand as writers, better preparing them to implement it with their students.

23. Making Stuff and Doing Things: Inspiring Students Through Experiential Media Learning Opportunities

GRADES 9-12, COLLEGE

Journalism offers students unique opportunities to collaborate on media projects for student and professional outlets. This session explores SF State Journalism's successful curriculum and provides insights into replicating these experiences, which foster a sense of pride and joy through published work, in other areas of study. **PRECONFERENCE READING:** Online reading links available at curriculumstudy.org

24. Critical Analysis with Purpose 101: John Prine and Common Core Standards

GENERAL ENRICHMENT

A John Prine song and the CCSS will be our main texts for analysis in discussion based in the rhetorical theory of James Moffett. Activities will allow us to experience the dynamics of a language rich classroom environment, the kind that aids growth in both critical thinking and rhetorical facility in reading and writing in all grades.

25. Writing on the Road

GRADES K-12, COLLEGE, GENERAL ENRICHMENT

In learning to harness the power of writing, we gain the ability to understand our lives and find our place in the world. This session provides time to write: personal essays, memoir, fiction, poetry. We respond to one another's drafts using a rewarding classroom-ready Writing Project protocol.

26. Do Your Own Thing—Team Planning Session

School or district teams can use conference time to plan their own projects, and find inspiration from the keynote and Around the Hearth sessions.

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LANGUAGE ARTS CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE:

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3

3:30-9:00 pm Registration (Chapel)
 4:30-5:30 pm Reception (Scripps Patio)
 6:00-7:00 pm Dinner
 7:15-8:30 pm Opening Session: "Building and Sustaining the Joyful Classroom"
 8:45-9:45 pm GROUP SESSION #1

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4

7:30-8:45 am Breakfast
 8:00-5:45 pm Bookstore Open (Scripps)
 9:00-10:30 am GROUP SESSION #2
 10:30-10:50 am Coffee Break
 10:50-12:00 pm GROUP SESSION #3
 12:00-1:00 pm Lunch
 1:30-3:00 pm GROUP SESSION #4
 3:30-4:30 pm AFTERNOON ACTIVITY: YOGA & MINDFULNESS
 4:00-5:30 pm Reception and Book Signing
 6:00-7:00 pm Dinner
 7:15-10:00 pm Around the Hearth A - Joyful Dance
 7:15-8:30 pm Around the Hearth B: Poetry Open Mic
 8:45-10:00 pm Around the Hearth C - Finding Joy in Resistance

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5

7:30-9:00 am Breakfast *Pick up boxed lunch orders after breakfast
 8:00-9:30 am Bookstore Open
 9:15-11:15 am GROUP SESSION #5
 12:00-1:00 pm Lunch

"I CONSIDER JOY A PURSUIT — LIKE IDENTITY, SKILLS, INTELLECT, AND CRITICALITY — BECAUSE IT SHOULD CHANGE AND EVOLVE OVER TIME, AND BE STUDENT-CENTERED. UNLIKE STANDARDS, PURSUITS MOVE STUDENTS TOWARD THE ULTIMATE GOALS OF SELF-DETERMINATION, SELF-EMPOWERMENT, AND SELF-LIBERATION, AND NOT JUST SUCCESS ON A STANDARDIZED TEST."

— GHOLLY MUHAMMAD, UNEARTHING JOY

"WE CAN'T SELF-CARE OUR WAY OUT OF TOXIC SYSTEMS, AND WE CAN'T RELATIONSHIP BUILD OUR WAY OUT OF A TOXIC SCHOOL CULTURE. BUT TEACHERS DO HAVE AGENCY! THE CLASSROOM CAN BECOME ITS OWN LITTLE ECOSYSTEM—A SEMI-AUTONOMOUS ZONE WHERE WE REIMAGINE WHAT JOY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE. FINDING YOUR AGENCY AND OWNING YOUR POWER AND INFLUENCE IN THE CLASSROOM WILL LEAD TO BETTER OUTCOMES FOR YOUR STUDENTS — AND HELP YOU RECONNECT TO THE JOY OF TEACHING."

— DEONNA SMITH, ROOTED IN JOY

CURRICULUMSTUDY.ORG

FOR MORE INFO & CONFERENCE UPDATES

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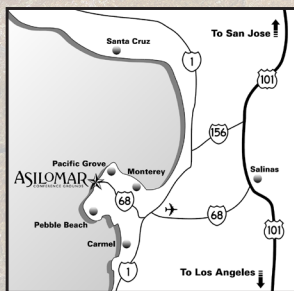
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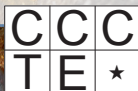
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