



International Reading Association

A membership organization of literacy professionals

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Janice F. Almasi

Janice F. Almasi, the Carol Lee Robertson Endowed Professor of Literacy Education at the University of Kentucky, will serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association until 2011. She has served on several IRA committees including the Teacher as Researcher, Outstanding Dissertation Award, and Research Implementation committees, and the Urban Diversity Commission. She has also served on the editorial review board of *Reading Research Quarterly*. She received the IRA Outstanding Dissertation Award in 1994 and the National Reading Conference Outstanding Student Research Award in 1993.



Janice Almasi received her Ph.D. and M.Ed. from the University of Maryland, and her B.S. in Ed. from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. She was also a postdoctoral fellow at the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh. She began her career as a fourth grade classroom teacher and reading specialist at Kent Island Elementary School in Queen Anne's County, Maryland. She became active in IRA as a graduate student at the University of Maryland and was editor of the State of Maryland International Reading Association Council's journal from 1993-1995. As an assistant and associate professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo she served as president of the New York State Reading Association (2002-2003) and the Niagara Frontier Reading Council (1999-2000) and edited the New York State Reading Association's journal from 1997-2000. She is currently a member of the Kentucky Reading Association and the New York State Reading Association.

Her research has examined the contexts in which children learn from text, particularly in peer discussion environments. Her research interests also include comprehension strategy instruction and learning environments that foster engagement. She is currently working toward a developmental model of peer discussion for children in the primary grades and is also working as a co-principal investigator on the evaluation of Kentucky's Striving Readers grant for middle and high school students under the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. She has authored or co-authored several books (*Teaching Literacy in Third Grade*, *Teaching Strategic Processes in Reading*, and *Lively Discussions: Fostering Engaged Readers*), and her research has been published in journals such as *Reading Research Quarterly*, *The Journal of Literacy Research*, *Elementary School Journal*, and *Educational Psychologist*.

Statement of Philosophy

IRA has a tremendous impact on literacy worldwide. IRA can extend its mission by assisting education professionals, including those outside of reading, by expanding professional development/coaching offerings and encouraging sound research from diverse perspectives.

Second, IRA can foster new ways to teach, assess, and promote access to literacy in a world where society has brought about new literacies and technologies. Finally, IRA can advocate for institutional, political, and societal change to bring about equitable literacy environments for all learners.

Presentation Topics

Using peer discussion of text to promote comprehension, motivation, and social skills
Facilitating productive talk about texts and higher level comprehension through peer discussion
Comprehension strategies instruction
Creating engaging literacy learning environments

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