

# PTA Meeting Minutes 11/1/2018

## Announcements from Co-Presidents Cami Wilcox and Aracelis Vicente

- This coming Tuesday, November 6, there is no school because it is election day.
- Please consider volunteer for the PTA's Election Day Bake Sale. You can contribute baked goods prior to the sale and/or help sell them on Election Day. To sign up, visit [tinyurl.com/RCFvolunteers](http://tinyurl.com/RCFvolunteers)
- There is an NAACP meeting scheduled for November 20. For details, please contact Claudia Yates [cyates@scheerpartners.com](mailto:cyates@scheerpartners.com) or Kevin Blackistone [mckeyvb@yahoo.com](mailto:mckeyvb@yahoo.com)

## RCF Auction Co-Chairs Amy Morath and Heather Helm

- This is our first year as auction co-chairs.
- This will be the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the RCF Auction. It will take place on March 30.
- Last year, the auction raised over \$30,000 to support our students, school, teachers and staff.
- We need volunteers! Why might you volunteer? Here are the top ten reasons:
  1. You're looking for any excuse to skip bedtime routine.
  2. You want to meet new parents and have fun
  3. If you tell people you're working on auction, no one will ask any favors for several months!
  4. We can match your volunteer work to your strengths and interests.
  5. Who doesn't love planning a party?
  6. You want to help your child's school. Money raised from the auction supports students and teachers by providing books, field trips, classroom grants, and more.
  7. You'd like to help strengthen our RCF community.
  8. You have ideas. Tell us all about them! This is your chance to help shape this important event.
  9. Volunteers earn a free ticket to the auction, which is the social event of the year.
  10. What's one more committee to join?

For more details, see the flyer below, or contact the co-chairs at [RCFauction2019@gmail.com](mailto:RCFauction2019@gmail.com).



## **Mrs Lowndes**

Our Book Fair is going on now, ending this Friday, November 2.  
Join us at our Fall Festival this Friday, November 2, at 2:20.

## **Liz Fazulo, RCF Reading Specialist, On Encouraging Your Kids to Read**

Let's talk about what reading can do for your children. Your ability to encourage them to become readers is a power you have to *create* mind in your children.

I'm going to share brain research tonight. We've heard the saying "Practice Makes Perfect." But did you know that in actuality, "Practice Makes Myelin"? [According to the dictionary, Myelin is "a mixture of proteins and phospholipids forming a whitish insulating sheath around many nerve fibers, increasing the speed at which impulses are conducted."]

There are three stages of opportunities to share reading with children:

1. When they are babies and toddlers—these are the "Golden Years" of being able to encourage your children to become readers. They are a captive audience. They will sit on your lap and are often eager to hear you reading or enjoy books. You are developing language for them by singing to them, reading nursery rhymes, and reading books.
2. I call the elementary school age the "Chasing Stage", when you're chasing them around and begging them to read. Unless you have a great reader, and we are not talking about those tonight.
3. In their teens and tweens, you may not have influence over them all the time, but you are probably spending lots of time in the car with them. When they are in the car with you, they are a captive audience again. Take advantage of this time. Play audiobooks for them, put books on their phones, tablets, and other devices. You have influence on them when they're in car seat-belted in. Listening to books together in this way can create some phenomenal family memories.

I am not a neurologist, but I have been reading about gray and white matter for about 20 years.

I want to talk about the importance of repetition and practice and how it positively affects the brain. Here is a great video to get started:

"How to Practice Effectively...For Just About Anything - Annie Bosler and Don Greene"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2O6mQkFiiw>

Repetition and practice makes things deeply automatic, deeply myelinated. So we want the children to become deeply myelinated around the neural pathways for language and literacy.

A study in Baltimore a few years ago, called “The Nun Study”, showed how important language can be to brain function. Nuns from the same convent donated their brains to scientists studying Alzheimer’s. These nuns were cloistered, and ate the same foods every day, spent their time in very similar ways. Yet some of these nuns exhibited symptoms of Alzheimer’s and dementia during aging, and some didn’t. Why? Even more interesting, some of the nuns who had incredibly disabling Alzheimer’s had little plaque on their brains. Conversely, some who were high-functioning had lots of calcifications on their brains. A neural linguist studied the nuns’ writing and discovered that some of the nuns who had complex writing (4 or 5 phrases per sentence) functioned highly despite their brains being full of the physical detriments that cause Alzheimer’s.

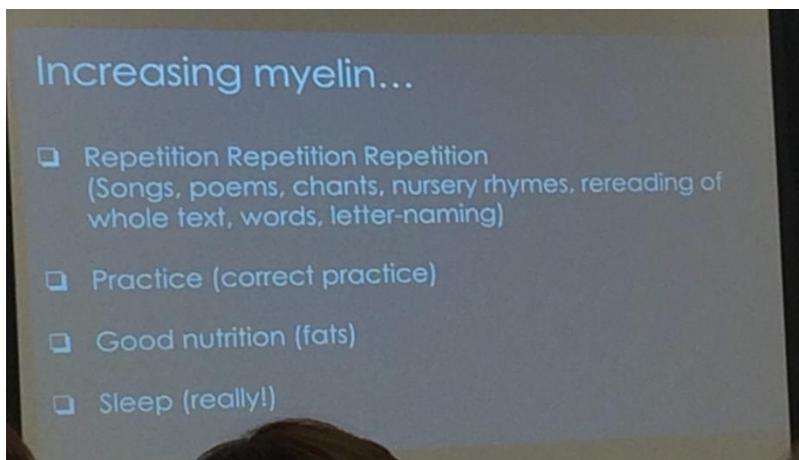
This supports the idea that language creates more “mind”, more gray matter. The nuns who had more neural pathways built by language, conversation, and reading, their neurons and myelin were protected by their capabilities. [For more information on “The Nun Study”, see <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2734290/> and <https://www.wired.com/2009/07/nunstudy/>

Incidentally, myelin is the thing that deteriorates in MS.

We are built to learn. Learning grows neurons and neural pathways (gray matter). Language (singing, chanting, nursery rhyming, repetitive language) builds gray matter. All learning grows neurons. Practice grows myelin. Myelin speeds up and protects the neurons we grow while learning.

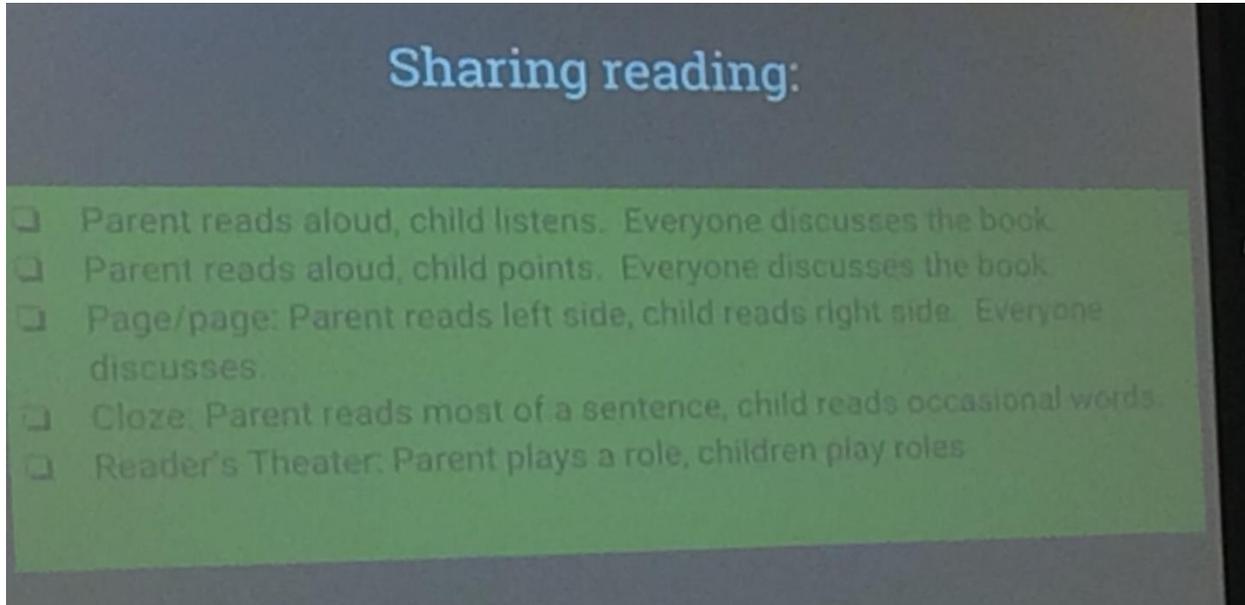
Emerging research suggests what builds myelin:

- Repetition, repetition, repletion. Start slow and get it right. Then speed it up and practice it right. Practice it wrong and you will build the wrong pathway.
- Good nutrition (fats)
- Sleep



We our children to practice reading, but sometimes they don't want to. Let's say they're reluctant. We have to encourage them to read, even if they don't want to. Find ways to push through.

## SHARING READING

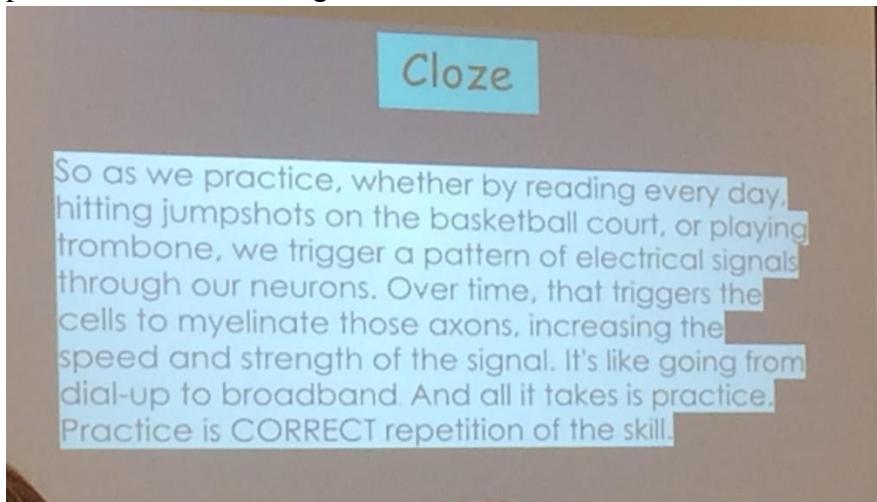


Slide reads:

- Parent reads aloud, child listens. Everyone discusses the book.
- Parent reads aloud, child points. Everyone discusses the book.
- Page/page: Parent reads left side, child reads right side. Everyone discusses.
- Cloze: Parent reads most of a sentence, child reads occasional words.
- Reader's Theater: Parent plays a role, children play roles.

## CLOZE SLIDE

[Ms. Fasulo demonstrated this slide by reading it aloud; she left some of the words out and parents read the "missing" words aloud.]



With Cloze, as you read along, every once in awhile, “not say” a word. Leave out words your child can read, or leave out words that are important, that will draw them in. It is up to you what types of words you leave out.

When your child is a slow (or “disfluent”) reader, the eye is going slowly. The Cloze method makes it easier for them and they feel proud when they read the word you “left out”.

Another method of engaging reluctant readers is to use Reader’s Theatre. To find content, visit the following site or simply Google “Free Reader’s Theater Scripts”.

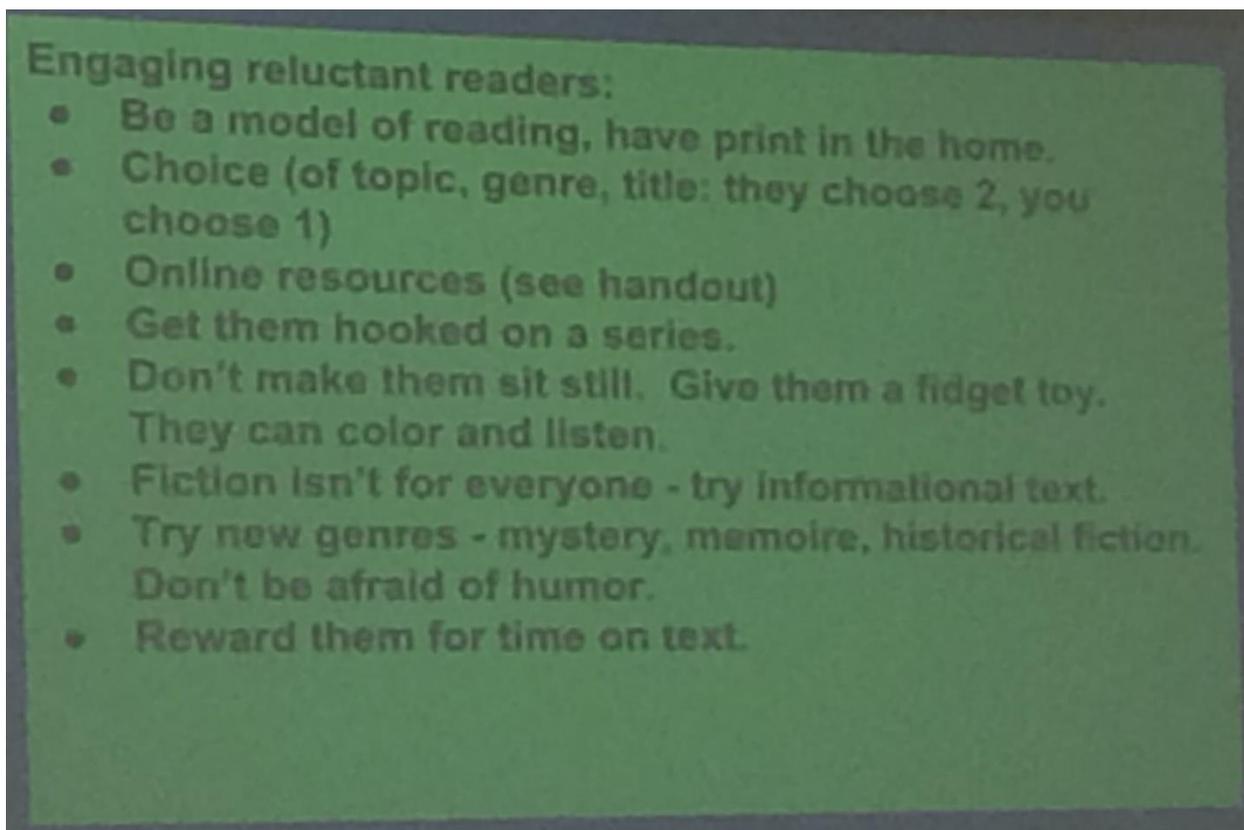
<http://www.thebestclass.org/rtscripts.html>

[Ms. Fasulo demonstrated Reader’s Theater With a script of “Goodnight Moon” ([http://www.thebestclass.org/uploads/5/6/2/4/56249715/goodnight\\_moon.pdf](http://www.thebestclass.org/uploads/5/6/2/4/56249715/goodnight_moon.pdf)). The sentences of the book were broken up into four parts, and each group of parents read their parts in turn.]

## ENGAGING RELUCTANT READERS

Be a model of a reader at home and have print in the home. Many studies correlate the number of books in a home with having readers in the home. It doesn’t mean that every child who grows up in a house with lots of books and reading parents will be readers, but it does correlate.

See the slide and handout below for more resources for engaging reluctant readers. Contact Ms. Fasulo at [Elizabeth\\_Fasulo@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Elizabeth_Fasulo@mcpsmd.org)



### Engaging reluctant readers:

- Choice (of topic, genre, title: they choose 2, you choose 1)
- Online resources (see back)
- Get them hooked on a series.
- Don't make them sit still. Give them a fidget toy or let them color.
- Fiction isn't for everyone - try informational text.
- Try new genres - mystery, memoir, historical fiction. Don't be afraid of humor.
- Reward them for time on text.

### Ways to share reading with your reluctant reader:

- ✓ Parent reads aloud, child listens. Everyone discusses text.
- ✓ Parent reads aloud, child points. Everyone discusses text.
- ✓ Page/page: Parent reads left side, child reads right. Discuss.
- ✓ Cloze: Parent reads most of a sentence, child reads occasional words. Start slow, build speed over repeated readings.
- ✓ Reader's Theater: Parent plays a role, children play role.

### On-line reading resources:

<a href="http://www.storylineonline.net/">http://www.storylineonline.net/</a>	Books for children read aloud by celebrities. Provided for free by the Screen Actor's Guild. Great for all children, and especially for English learners.
<a href="http://teacher.scholastic.com/clifford1/index.htm">http://teacher.scholastic.com/clifford1/index.htm</a>	Interactive books in Spanish and English.
<a href="http://en.childrenslibrary.org">http://en.childrenslibrary.org</a>	International Children's Library: Books to read in English and Spanish. Click on "The Library" and then "Read Books". In partnership with UMCP.
<a href="https://www.storyjumper.com/">https://www.storyjumper.com/</a>	Website that allows children to write and upload their own books. Children can also read or listen to the books other students have written. Free to use, pay for a hard copy of your child's book.
<a href="https://www.thespanishexperiment.com/stories">https://www.thespanishexperiment.com/stories</a>	Stories for children read in Spanish.
<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g11vCMejbD4&amp;list=PLXdNXwA3x-OjIXI8HaojSKcT9nfNPQQ8x">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g11vCMejbD4&amp;list=PLXdNXwA3x-OjIXI8HaojSKcT9nfNPQQ8x</a> (or go to Youtube, and search for "Spanish Childrens' Stories read aloud")	Lots of Youtube videos of children's literature, read aloud. For English, go to Youtube, and search "Children's stories read aloud". It's Youtube, so be near your children or use SafeSearch.
<a href="http://asp.tumblebooks.com/Home.aspx?categoryID=13">http://asp.tumblebooks.com/Home.aspx?categoryID=13</a>	Tumblebooks: Books read aloud in English and Spanish. Words are highlighted.
<a href="http://www.kizclub.com/stories.htm">http://www.kizclub.com/stories.htm</a>	Animated stories read aloud.
<a href="https://www.justbooksreadaloud.com/">https://www.justbooksreadaloud.com/</a>	Books read aloud: A video of a real book that a person reads.
	Google the title of any book – often it will be read aloud on Youtube or a similar channel.
<a href="https://www.starfall.com/">https://www.starfall.com/</a>	Books read aloud, activities for young learners (alphabet, math, etc.)

### Parent Questions and Suggestions:

- For younger kids, make a game where you pick a letter out and look for that letter while reading, or flashlights, making it interactive.
- Read it wrong on purpose, and then the kids love to catch you and correct you.

### **College Savings**

Donna, Ambassador of the Maryland 529, made the following Powerpoint Presentation:

[http://www.greenbeltelementarypta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Maryland-529\\_Presentation\\_Final.pdf](http://www.greenbeltelementarypta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Maryland-529_Presentation_Final.pdf)

Note that, on page 8 of this presentation, enrollment dates are given for last year. Please contact Maryland 529 for updated enrollment dates (see contact info. in the last sentence of this page).

Enrollment packets were handed out to attendees. Enrollment packets can be found online at [https://maryland529.com/Portals/0/Files/cspm\\_enrollment\\_kit.pdf](https://maryland529.com/Portals/0/Files/cspm_enrollment_kit.pdf)

More information can be obtained by visiting <https://maryland529.com/> or by calling 888-373-7888.