

Conference Overview

Updated 21/10/25 – Find the full programme on www.literacyireland.com/conference

1975-2025



Literacy Association of Ireland
Cumann Litearthachta na hÉireann

Annual Conference *Comhdháil Bhliantúil*

50 Years of
Literacy Learning
*Celebrating the Past,
Inspiring the Future*

50 Bliain d'Fhoghlaim
na Litearthachta:
*An t-am atá thart a
cheiliúradh agus an t-am atá
le teacht a spreagadh*

Forbhreathnú ar an gComhdháil
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FRIDAY EVENING SCHEDULE

Note that this schedule is subject to change

From 4:30PM - Pre-Conference Event: Book Launch (E205)

Teaching and Assessing Writing in the Primary School - A Whole School Approach

This new and innovative book focused on writing pedagogy is written by Prof. Eithne Kennedy (DCU) and Dr Gerry Shiel (ERC). The book will be launched by Prof. Kathy Hall (UCC).

Time	Conference Events	Location
5:30 - 5:55 pm	Registration; Tea & Coffee – E Block Atrium	E214 DCU St. Patrick's Campus
6:00 - 6:15 pm	Welcomes and Conference Opening – Room E214 Dr Anna Logan, <i>Interim Executive Dean, DCU Institute of Education</i> Dr Patrick Burke, <i>LAI President</i>	
6:15 - 6:45 pm	Literacy in 1975 and literacy today: From RAI to LAI Dr Vincent Greaney (First President of RAI) in conversation with Dr Patrick Burke (Current LAI president)	
6:45 - 7:30 pm	Literacy through the decades: Progress and Possibilities In this discussion chaired by Dr Clara Fiorentini, panellists will reflect on the progress we have made and the progress we have yet to make in supporting literacy development in Ireland and further afield. Our panellists will include the following LAI presidents: - 2020s: Regina Dunne - 2010s: Dr Gene Mehigan - 2000s: Dr Tina Hickey - 1990s: Dr Finian O'Shea	
7:30 - 8:15 pm	TeachMeet/OidePhlé: Innovative Practices Taking Place in 2025 Chaired by: Dr Susan Nic Reamoinn <i>See presentations below.</i>	
8:15 - 9:00 pm	Reception and Research/Practice Posters Join conference attendees for a social gathering; take the opportunity to talk to presenters sharing their research posters (see below).	

Research/Practice Posters

- Pixelated Pedagogies. **Brandon J. Watkins**, *University of South Carolina Upstate*
- From Friday Tests to Full Inclusion: Rethinking Spelling in Irish Classrooms. **Sarah O'Farrell**, *Mary Immaculate College/Kilmagner NS*
- Teachers' and Children's Experiences and Attitudes Towards the Use of Read Alouds in Senior Primary Classrooms. **Michelle McNamara**, *Marino Institute of Education*
- Digital Use and Declining Reading Attitudes: Insights from PIRLS 2016 and 2021. **Jasmine Byrne**, *Educational Research Centre*.
- Attention Please - moving high frequency word instruction from whole word to graphophonemic analysis, to improve word recognition in the infant classroom. **Yvonne Comaskey**, *Grace Park Educate Together NS*
- Cultivating Comhrá: the quest for meaningful mentoring processes across the continuum of teacher education in Ireland. **Caoimhe Uí Nioclás**, *Mary Immaculate College*
- An investigation of the uptake, implementation and impact of the Gaelbhratach scheme in English Medium Primary Schools in Ireland. **Eibhlín Fitzgerald**, *Mary Immaculate College*
- Fifteen years since the Peter Effect in the Preparation of Reading Teachers: What have we learned, and have we progressed? **Emily Binks-Cantrell, Taylor Seymour, Ramona Pittman, Malt Joshie**; *Texas A&M University*
- From Vision to Impact: A Collaborative Leadership Model for Advancing Literacy at Primary Level. **Cillian O'Sullivan**
- MDLI-G - Measúnú agus Diagnóisic Litearthachta don Iar-bhunscoil, Gaeilge - Ag foghlaim ón gcaighdeánú. **Helena Ní Rócháin, Muireann Bergin, Conall Ó Duibhir**, *Educational Research Centre*

TeachMeet/OidePhlé Presentations

- "I don't get it": How "Get Ready, Do, Done" has transformed literacy learning and executive function in my classroom. **Sophie Donegan**
- Supporting Autistic Pupils Writing Skills Development. **Carol Ann Ó Sioráin**, *DCU Institute of Education*
- Oracy and the Word-Conscious Classroom – strategies to help close the vocabulary gap. **Roisin McNeill**, *St Paul's Primary and Nursery School*.
- Diverse books reflecting reality. **Kirsten Barrett**
- Perspectives on Handwriting. **Ann-Sofie Selin**, *Federation of European Literacy Associations/Finnish Reading Association*.
- Promoting Reading for Pleasure in the Classroom. **Sarah Quirke**, *St. John the Baptist Girls School*.
- Beyond "What's the Answer?": Empowering Students Through Math Talk. **Martina Ronan**, *DCU Institute of Education*.

***More TeachMeet presentations will be confirmed in the coming weeks!**

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SATURDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Note that this schedule is subject to change

8:30-8:55am	Registration E Block Atrium								
9:00-10:00am	E214 Keynote: Prof Catherine Snow, <i>Harvard Graduate School of Education</i>		KEYNOTE ADDRESS Starting in the classroom: <i>How advances in literacy research can improve literacy outcomes</i>			VENDORS Visit our vendors throughout the day. You'll find them just off the E Block Atrium.			
	A1: Oral Language Pedagogy (Symposium)	A2: Attitudes towards Reading (Symposium)	A3: Workshops	A4: Literacy Learning for All: Multi-tiered System of Supports (Paper Session)	A5: Reading for pleasure: The Role of Libraries and Librarians (Paper Session)	A6: Language in the Curriculum (Paper Session)	A7: Literacy in Initial Teacher Education (Paper Session)	A8: Literacy, Diversity & Citizenship (Paper Session)	A9: Home Literacy Environments (Paper Session)
	E214 Chair: Gerry Shiel	E201 Chair: Emma Farragher	E203 Chair: Susan Nic Réamoinn	E205 Chair: Clara Fiorentini	E206 Chair: Máirín Wilson	E303 Chair: Jacqueline de Brún	E305 Chair: Gene Mehigan	E401 Chair: Sylvaine Ní Aogáin	E403 Chair: Cillian O'Sullivan
Parallel Sessions A 10:15 - 10:45am	This symposium will run from 10:15- 11:15 Innovative Approaches to Developing Oral Language Across the Curriculum at Early Childhood and Primary Levels in Diverse Contexts Gerry Shiel, Geraldine French, Frances Murphy, Patti Roche, Bridget Flanagan, Sylwia Kazmierczak-Murray, <i>DCU Centre for Literacy Research, Policy & Practice</i>	This symposium will run from 10:15- 11:15 'I Don't Like Reading, but I Love Books': Reframing Learners' Attitudes Towards Reading. Emma Farragher, Tina Ronan, Amy McLoughlin, <i>DCU Institute of Education</i>	This workshop will run from 10:15 - 11:00 Workshop Vocabulary – A Wonder of Words. Máire O Dea & Sinéad McGourty, <i>Oide</i>	Targeted Support for Early Readers: Key Components of Effective Tier 2 Interventions Within an MTSS Framework Christina Hannify, <i>DCU Institute of Education</i>	Reading for pleasure and teens: Why it matters and the role school librarians play in fostering it Martina Boyle, <i>North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School</i>	Developing Academic Language Through Argument Speaking and Writing: Phase 1 Findings from a Classroom-Based Intervention Shane Leonard, <i>DCU Institute of Education</i>	Exploring Pre-Service Teachers' Perception of Generative AI in Content Area-Literacy Instructional Planning: A focus on Accuracy, Quality, and Developmental Appropriateness Tonia Bauer, <i>University of South Carolina Upstate</i>	Identity-Affirming Literacies in Schools: A Practitioner Study of LGBTQ+ YA Book Clubs Jen McLaughlin Cahill, <i>Graduate School of Education - University of Pennsylvania</i>	Parents' and Teacher's Beliefs of Preschool Literacy Instruction and the Home Literacy Environment Lou Ann Roberto & John Strong, <i>University at Buffalo</i>
10:45 – 11:15 am			This workshop will run from 11:00 - 11:45 Workshop Is a picture worth a thousand words? Exploring picturebooks for vocabulary development. Lorraine Lawrance, <i>Hibernia College</i>	Tier 3 intervention produces significant effects on pseudoword decoding and set for variability even after impactful tier 2. Robert Savage, <i>York University,</i> Kristy Dunn, <i>University of Alberta,</i> Georgiou, <i>University of Alberta & Rauno Parrila,</i> <i>Australian Catholic University</i>	Placing book and library access at the heart of a primary school: A teacher – librarian collaboration to develop a culture of reading for pleasure. Niamh Savage, <i>Mary Immaculate College/ Réalt na Mara NS, & Sinéad O'Higgins,</i> <i>Waterford Libraries</i>	From Language Insecurity to Language Integration: Exploring Teacher Language Competence in Post-Primary Immersion Education Sarah Ní Dhuinnín, <i>Mary Immaculate College, & TJ Ó Ceallaigh,</i> <i>University College Cork</i>	Assessing Pre-Service Teachers' Knowledge of Children's Literature Siobhán Morrissey, <i>University of Galway, & Becky Long,</i> <i>Children's Books Ireland</i>	Decolonising literacy: Integrating Irish Traveller pedagogical principles into the teaching of literacy Anne Marie Kavanagh, <i>DCU Institute of Education</i>	Critically and Collaboratively Engaging Pupils, Parents and Teachers with Literacy in a Designated Disadvantaged Primary School Ciara Barry, <i>University College Cork</i>
11:15 – 11:45 am				An Investigation into Multi-grade Teachers' Lived Experiences and Their Approaches to Providing Inclusive Reading Instruction. Amie Hickey, <i>Mary Immaculate College</i>	Powerful Partnerships: Boosting Reading Motivation Through School-Library Collaboration Promoting equity and access to reading for all learners. Laura Williams, <i>Mary Immaculate College, & Ian Mc Arthur,</i> <i>Rathkeale Library</i>	Feasacht Teanga an Mhúinteora mar Bhonn agus mar Thaca don Teagasc san Fhoghlaim Chomhtháite Ábhar agus Teanga (FCÁT) sa Bhunscoil a fheidhmíonn trí mheán an Bhéarla Nóra Ní Bheaglaioich, <i>Bunscoil na Cathrach, An Chathair & TJ Ó Ceallaigh,</i> <i>Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh</i>	Rage, rage against the dying of literacy: the endeavours of the student teacher to integrate pedagogy, skills, words and wisdom in the inclusive post-primary classroom Claire Redmond, <i>Maryfield College</i>	From Empathy to Action: Empowering Early Childhood and Primary Students to Create Change Through Reading, Writing, and Research Chris Hass, James Madison University & Katie Kelly, <i>Furman University</i>	Trends in Home Literacy Environment of Low-and High-Achieving Pupils in Ireland: PIRLS 2016 & 2021 Sarah McAtteer, <i>Educational Research Centre</i>
11:45-12:15	Tea/Coffee – E Block Atrium								

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SATURDAY EARLY AFTERNOON SCHEDULE

Note that this schedule is subject to change

	B1: Children's Writing (Symposium)	B2: Ceardlann – Léitheoireacht sa Ghaeilge	B3: Workshop – Science of Reading	B4: Perspectives on Literacy Practice (Paper Session)	B5: Perspectives on Language in the Curriculum (Paper Session)	B6: Early Literacy Development (Paper Session)	B7: Assessment in Post-primary Literacy (Paper Session)	B8: Perspectives on Immersion Education/ Peirspictíochtaí ar an Tumoideachas (Paper Session)	B9: Literacy Skill Development (Paper Session)
	E214 Chair: Eithne Kennedy	E201 Chair: Róisín Ní Mhulláin	E203 Chair: Cillian O'Sullivan	E205 Chair: Gene Mehigan	E206 Chair: Sylvaine Ní Aogáin	E303 Chair: Clara Fiorentini	E305 Chair: Amy McLoughlin	E401 Chair: Claire Dunne	E403 Chair: Patrick Burke
Parallel Sessions B 12:15-12:45	This symposium will run from 12:15 - 1:15 Symposium on Children's Writing: Implementing Evidence-based Approaches in Diverse Primary School Contexts Eithne Kennedy , DCU Institute of Education; Vera Busse , Universität Münster, Pia Christin Sieveke , Universität Münster, Gerry Shiel , Educational Research Centre	This workshop will run from 12:15 -1:15 Ceacht léitheoireachta Gaeilge: Léitheoireacht Ghrúpa le <i>In Ord agus in Eagar</i> sa Seomra Ranga Jacqueline de Brún , Institiúid Oideachais OCBÁC & Róisín Ní Mhulláin , COGG	This workshop will run from 12:15 - 1:15 Beliefs, Best Practices and Common Questions: A Science of Reading Story and Framework from the Perspective of One American University Cillian O'Sullivan , Kevin Flanagan , Aideen O'Flynn , & Chiara Sheahan , West Chester University	Literacy practices in The National Assessments of Mathematics and English Reading (NAMER) 2021. Joanne Kiniry & Sharon Nelis , Educational Research Centre	Language teachers of Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) in mainstream primary schools – what can they learn from Irish-Medium (IM) practitioners? Thomas Rogan , St Mary's University College, Belfast	Developing babies' and toddlers' oral language development through a slow relational pedagogy Geraldine French , DCU Institute of Education	Literacy as the foundation of 3rd Year Post-Primary students: What the PPAD-E 2024 Pilot reveals about literacy among an older cohort Theresa Walsh , Educational Research Centre	Iniúchadh ar Fheidhmíú an Trasteangaithe i gComhthéacs an Tumoideachais: Dearcadh an Mhúinteora Bunscoile Helena Nic an Fhailí & TJ Ó Ceallaigh , Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh	"I take out the textbook and they all say 'Aghh!': Insights on the teaching of Irish reading and writing in English-medium schools Aisling Ní Dhiorbháin & Patrick Burke , DCU Institute of Education
12:45 – 1:15				International Perspectives How might we improve reading across the whole of Europe? The EC report, Effective Practices for Literacy Teaching, has some answers- and puts a fresh emphasis on the importance of talk, reading aloud, and small group work- from pre-school to further education. Colin Harrison , University of Nottingham	MFL in the Irish Primary Classroom: How does a CLIL-based approach integrating French and Music through 'CeolLingua' support multimodal literacy and cross-linguistic awareness? Mairéad Ní Bhriain , Mary Immaculate College, Francis Ward , DCU Institute of Education, & Orfhlaith Ní Bhriain , Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick	Locating Preschool Literacy Practices Clara Fiorentini , Marino Institute of Education	Comparing Literacy Outcomes in Irish and English Among Post-Primary Students in Irish-Medium Schools Brenda Donohue , Muireann Bergin & Helena Ní Rócháin , Educational Research Centre	Cur Chuige Scoile Uile mar Thaca le Comhtháthú Teagaisc Foirim-Dhírthe i gComhthéacs an Tumoideachais: Tionchar na Forbartha Gairmiúla Leanúnaí Caitríona Ní Mhurchú & TJ Ó Ceallaigh , Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh	Transforming English Spelling Pedagogy in an Irish-Medium School Riona Uí Cheallaigh , Gaelscoil Sáirséal / Mary Immaculate College
1:15 – 1:45				Big Bang from Small Groups Virginia Quinn Mooney , Goyen Foundation	Cleachtas teanga na n-ábhar oidi i mbunscoileanna lán-Ghaeilge san OSI/Language practices of student teachers in Irish medium primary schools in SEE Sarah Murray , Marino Institute of Education	Conceptualising a Vocabulary Learning Continuum for Children Aged 3-6: A Thematic Literature Review Alison Nulty , DCU Institute of Education		Croí na Ceiste: Inniúlachtaí don Tumoideachas in Éirinn TJ Ó Ceallaigh , Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh & Dr Gabrielle Nig Uidhir , Coláiste Ollscoile Naomh Muire, Béal Feirste	Developing Oral Reading Fluency in second and additional languages Gráinne O'Callaghan , DCU Institute of Education/ Gaelscoil Cholaíste Mhuire
1:45-2:45	Lunch (Dining Hall)								

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SATURDAY AFTERNOON SCHEDULE

Note that this schedule is subject to change

		C1: Peer Assisted Reading (Symposium)	C2: Parental, Home and Adult Engagement in Literacy (Paper Session)	C3: Engaging Pedagogy & Alternative Perspectives (Paper Session)	C4: Supporting Literacy Learning for All (Paper Session)	C5: Perspectives on Literacy in DEIS Settings (Paper Session)	C6: Evolving Literacy Policy in Ireland (Paper Session)	C7: Linguistic Diversity (Paper Session)	C8: Technology and Literacy (Paper Session)
		E201 Chair: Gene Mehigan	E203 Chair: Maureen Colleran	E205 Chair: Jacqueline de Brún	E206 Chair: Cillian O'Sullivan	E303 Chair: Alison Nulty	E305 Chair: Patrick Burke	E401 Chair: Claire Dunne	E403 Chair: Susan Nic Réamoinn
Parallel Sessions C 2:45 – 3:15 pm		This symposium will run from 2:45 – 3:45 Peer-Assisted Reading to Support Every Child's Literacy Journey: Research and practice from England and Iceland Emma Vardy , Nottingham Trent University; Aaron Jordan , Millfield LEAD Trust; Auður Soffiu Björgvinsdóttir , University of Iceland; Sólveig Edda , University of Iceland	Effective parental engagement - the dance of engagement Lána McCarthy , South East Technological University	Can we mention the "D" word! : Exploring how a playful methodology such as drama can facilitate key principles of the Primary Language Curriculum. Patti Roche , DCU Institute of Education	Empowering Educators: Addressing Reading Disabilities and Dyslexia in the Classroom Janet Foor , Wilson College	Vegan Seagulls and Second Minds: An Investigation into How Self-Regulation Skills can be Developed to Improve Reading Comprehension, Metacognition and Motivation in Disadvantaged Settings Katie Cullen , Scoil Mhuire Ogh 1, Crumlin	Reading in the Years: Tracing Changes in the National Curriculum for Literacy since the Foundation of the State Conall Ó Breacháin & Patrick Burke , DCU Institute of Education	Raising awareness of Plurilingualism and Language Awareness in primary language education: An exploration of key concepts and classroom practice Déirdre Kirwan , formerly Scoil Bhride Cailíní, Dublin 15, & Jane O'Toole , Scoil Chránáin SNS Swords; CARN	Digital Critical Literacy: Supporting Student Development in the Age of Misinformation Katherine Buck , Evanston Township High School
3:15 – 3:45 pm			Get Ready with Teddy: An Early Intervention Transition Programme Shairi O'Donnell & Loraine Burke , Trinity Primary School	Attainment and Engagement: Balancing the Goals of Reading Instruction in Irish Primary Classrooms Art Ó Neachtain , University of Galway	Building Collaborative Capacity: An Implementation Study of Online Interprofessional Learning Between Teachers and SLTs in Ireland Christina Hannify, Sylwia Kazmierczak-Murray & Paula Lehane , DCU Institute of Education	Exploring the Lived Experiences of Students and Teachers Navigating Educational Trajectories Through DEIS Primary and Post-Primary Schools Aoife Joy Keogh , University College Dublin	Mixing Oil and Water? Examining Balanced Literacy in the Irish Context Jennifer O'Sullivan , Marino Institute of Education	A Tale of Two Languages: connecting with families through storytime in bilingual households. Chiara Sheahan , Mary Immaculate College	Storytelling with Bee-Bot: How a programmable floor robot can support second language learning in the early years of Primary Susan Nic Réamoinn , Marino Institute of Education
3:45 – 4:15 pm			Telling Our Stories: Creative Writing for Adult Literacy Eleanor Neff , Literacy Development Centre at South East Technological University & Paula Tiller , Kerry Education and Training Board	When is Cinderella (aka nonverbal communication) going to be asked to the language and literacy ball? Insights on the nonverbal origins of language and by corollary literacy. John White , DCU Institute of Education, & David B. Givens , Gonzaga University, USA	Celebrating Past Practice, Inspiring Inclusive Futures: A Community of Practice Approach to Supporting Students with SLCD Clara Concannon , Mary Immaculate College	An investigation into the children's literature choices of primary school students and teachers in a newly established DEIS setting. Sarah Quirke , St. John the Baptist Girls School	PIRLS, PISA and Performance: Painting the Post-box Green and the Alphabet Blue, White and Red: Irish Literacy Policy- Implications for DEIS Niamh Watkins , DCU Institute of Education	Supporting EAL: No Fancy Buzz Words - Just Practical Strategies Kirsten Barrett	"It Opened the World": Digital Literacy and Transformation for Older Adults in Community Education Matthew Hutnik , Atlas Education/Maynooth University
4:20 - 5:00 pm	LAI Book Awards								
5:15 - 6:00 pm	AGM								

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The full conference programme, including abstract and biographies is also available on our website.

Register before Friday 24 October, 2025 at:

www.literacyireland.com/conference