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From the MRA President's Desk

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From the MRA President's Desk: Share Your Ideas!

BY JULIA REYNOLDS

If you are reading this, then you must have an interest in what people write in the *Michigan Reading Journal*. Have you ever thought, as you read someone else's article, that you would love to share a successful idea that you tried in your classroom? Perhaps an idea challenged you in a graduate course or while reading a professional book. Or have you ever learned something at a conference and shared with a group of teachers who then gave you their stories to share? I continually encourage teachers to share their ideas and thoughts through professional writing; this is a venue where your voices can be heard and considered by your colleagues. The *Michigan Reading Journal* is a phenomenal forum and opportunity to share information with other teachers and to help teachers consider their own thoughts and perspectives.

I am honored to be the president of the Michigan Reading Association, an

organization that has always stood behind teachers and encouraged them to have their own opinions, ideas, and voices. Yes, we have state mandates, state assessments, and state expectations, but those do not take away the voices of teachers. One beautiful thing about being a teacher and being able to work with students is that you can go beyond the mandates and bring your own creativity and passion to your instruction. MRA will continue to support teachers as they do their best work for the children, adolescents, and adults in our state, especially when it comes to reading, writing, and thinking.

Don't be afraid to share your ideas. Many teachers tell me that they don't think anyone would be interested in what they do with their students. This amazes me, especially since I am mesmerized within the first 5 minutes that I spend in their classrooms. Others tell me that they are uncertain about their abilities to write professionally. If you're not sure if



you have written your ideas clearly or if you are wondering whether anyone would be interested, feel free to send a draft to me, to one of the *Michigan Reading Journal* editors, or even to a college or university instructor whom you know. Many people would be willing to mentor you as you take your first steps in sharing your ideas with a bigger audience than your students. Remember—having your voice be heard and sharing your successes is one of the best ways to support both your students and your colleagues.

Good luck!

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Julia" followed by a small smiley face ":)".

Julia Reynolds :)
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