

Special Collection of *The Reading Teacher*: LGBTQ+ Literacies: Affirming Identities, Advancing Justice With Pre-K–6 Learners

Full manuscripts due: April 1, 2026

The Reading Teacher invites scholars, educators, and practitioners to submit manuscripts for a special collection centered on **LGBTQIA+ Literacies**. We invite manuscripts that explore queerness in literacy teaching and learning from a range of perspectives. There are multiple ways to define what queer is. However, for our purposes, we are focused both on queer and transness as descriptive markers and as actions and ways of knowing that include pushing back on normative identities and standing in the way of those who insist upon gender and sexuality as strident. Queer literacies, broadly defined, include how literacy learners are encouraged to notice the ways that expectations and norms of gender and sexuality are constructed and maintained, and centering the ways that queer and/or trans identities disrupt these norms in all kinds of texts (Potter, 2022; Ryan & Hermann-Wilmarth, 2018; Schey & Blackburn, 2019; Smith & Wargo, 2025). Queer of Color Critique (i.e., Brockenbrough, 2015; Johnson, 2017; Reid, 2022) challenges white notions of queerness, calling into question the historical and contemporary cultural forces that decenter Blackness and people of color and that help maintain a homonormativity (Duggan, 2002), which defines acceptable gayness as white, wealthy, and striving towards marriage. Scholars have employed queer theory (Butler, 1999; Jagose, 1997; Luhmann, 1998) to examine the relationship between sexuality, gender, power, and lived experiences. In alignment with *The Reading Teacher*'s ongoing commitment to educational dignity, diversity, and inclusion, we are hopeful that those writing for this collection will focus on the both/and or either/or of queer literacies. That is, we hope this collection will foreground research and practices that affirm LGBTQIA+ identities, support inclusive education, and/or expand our collective understanding of literacy in diverse contexts.

Literacy classrooms are powerful spaces where identities are shaped, stories are told, and community is built. Nonetheless, while scholars, including the editors of this collection, have laid a foundation for queer literacies in K–6 education for several decades, the current moment demands new language and new actions. As pundits and policymakers find new ways to exclude LGBTQIA+ books and topics from K–8 classrooms, how can educators and researchers learn from the past decades of work and enact new resistance to old bigotry? For LGBTQIA+ students and families, literacy instruction can be both a site of affirmation and a space where challenges are encountered. For this special collection, we seek contributions that challenge deficit perspectives and instead highlight the power of LGBTQIA+ literacies to promote belonging, critical thinking, and joy in PK–8 settings. Manuscripts may, for example, interrogate the following questions:

- How are queer- and transphobic policies shaping literacy education in the early years, and how are educators resisting these policies in their pedagogy?
- How do queer and/or trans literacy practices create space for literacy learning for neurodivergent readers?
- How do these laws about who can be read/talked about interrupt the construction of community? How do students and teachers use literacy practices to, instead, build community?
- How do we resist homonormativity to bring a range of queer and trans literacy practices into both racially diverse and mostly white classrooms?
- Whose fear is recognized in the literacy curriculum with regard to queer and transness?

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In response to these queries, among others, we welcome submissions that may include, but are not limited to:

- Classroom practices that center LGBTQIA+ texts, authors, or histories
- Critical analysis of existing curricula and recommendations for more inclusive literacy instruction
- Examples of teacher preparation and/or professional development focused on forwarding gender justice
- Explorations of intersectional justice and how it informs the literacy experiences of LGBTQIA+ students, teachers, and families
- Firsthand accounts from educators and students engaging in LGBTQIA+-affirming literacy work
- Reviews and examples of instruction that leverage children's and middle-grade literature featuring LGBTQIA+ characters or themes
- Practitioner inquiry that examines the impact of LGBTQIA+ literacies on school and classroom communities?

As co-editors, we seek intersectional, antiracist, queer practice-oriented studies and approaches to literacy that center LGBTQIA-inclusion in literacy. We seek a broad range of submissions from teachers, teacher educators, researchers, literacy coaches, community members, and partnerships between them. Queer studies scholars, critical social theorists, and practitioners who consider the intersection of gender and sexuality with literacy instruction are welcome in this conversation. Lastly, we encourage writers to be reflexive when composing their manuscripts, noting how their own positionality and relationship to queerness shape the work and writing.

When **submitting your manuscript**, select either Research in Action or Teaching and Learning in Practice as your article type, and select this special issue in the Additional Information section.

References

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