

# THE FAITHFUL READER

## PD in your PJs (or Swimsuit!)

You have worked tirelessly for the past 180 school days. That doesn't count the Sunday evenings, Saturday mornings, holidays and other times you spent working. Now it is summer! It is time for you to drink a cup of coffee while it is still hot! Eat lunch when you are hungry (although your body is programmed to eat at 11:40 and finish by 12:00!)

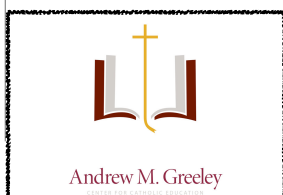
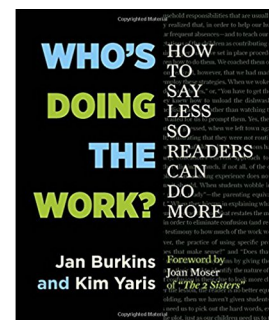
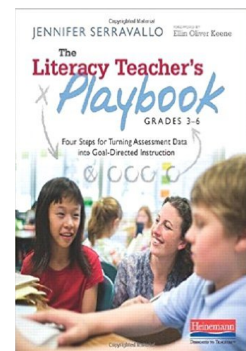
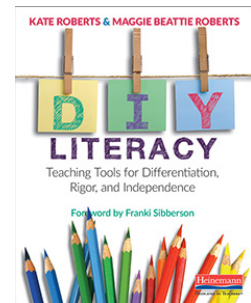
After a few days (or weeks) of taking a breather, you will be ready to start thinking again about your goals for next school year. Here are some professional resources to get you going.

One of my favorite recent professional books is *DIY Literacy*. This book talks about keeping a demonstration notebook that compiles all of the models you create to teach your students. So when you draw an example of what making an inference looks like (speech bubbles above your head asking, what does the text say? what do I know?) you can keep it in the demonstration notebook when you will need it again - and you will need it again!

*The Literacy Teachers' Playbook* is another favorite. This book is more for those who are new to using data (information) to adjust their instruction. Teachers often get freaked out at the word data, but data is just information: what do I know about this student that I need to consider as we make progress in his reading? This book carefully and simply shares how you go about doing this in the classroom. There are two versions, K-2 and 3-6.

*Who's Doing the Work? How to Say Less So Readers Can Do More* is on my list this summer to finish. This book focuses on making sure that students are the ones wrestling with text and meaning. That is where rigor lies - not in the amount of work that is assigned or how much homework you send home, but rather who's asking the questions? Who's talking? Who's writing? The first chapters have made me think a lot about my own teaching.

Of course, don't forget to read some children's and YA books that you share with your class next year. Some teachers challenge themselves to a #PictureBookADay. If you are already heading to the public library with your own kids, read over their shoulders while they pick out books!



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## How Do I Build a Classroom Library?

Over the summer, you might find yourself at a garage sale, Half-Price Books, the sale bin at a bookstore, or cleaning out your own bookshelves. Here are some tips for building a classroom library.

- Choose books that your students will want to read - not necessarily that you want to read. Don't leave out *Captain Underpants* or graphic novels like *Roller Girl*. If the kids will read them, put them in the library.
- Don't forget nonfiction. Show me a student who doesn't love to read about dinosaurs, sharks, or puppies!
- Make sure that the protagonists in the books are varied. Boys, girls, Black, Latino, White, typically developing, with autism, in a wheelchair, etc. Students need to see themselves in books, but they also need to see others. That is how we build empathy.
- Be sure to include poetry, graphic novels, picture books, and wordless picture books, regardless of the age. These books make for great mentor texts when students are writing.
- Choose books at many different reading levels. Some days, students will choose a book they have read many times that is too easy for them. That is okay every once in a while.

# Book Recommendations

## *I Wish You More* by Amy Krouse Rosenthal

This beautiful book is sweet and lovely. It would make a great picture book for the start of the school year when you are teaching students how important kindness is. Check out the author's other books like *Exclamation Mark*.

**Read Aloud** for all ages

**Independent Reading Level:** grade 2

**Genre** realistic fiction

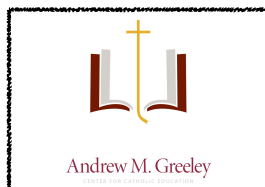
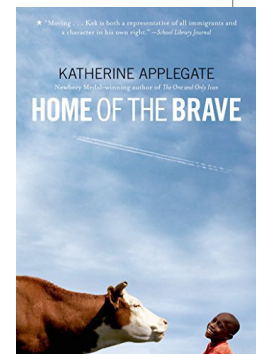
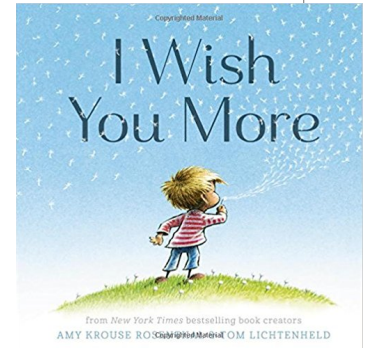
## *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate

Kek is from the Sudan. His father and brother were killed there, and he and his mother have moved to Minnesota to get away from the war. This heartwarming story tells of how Kek tries so hard to be a good son to his hardworking mom while they both mourn the loss of their loved ones. The kindness of volunteers and strangers is wonderful. If you haven't read *The One and Only Ivan* also by Katherine Applegate, add that to the top of your to-read list.

**Reading Level** grade 5

**Appropriate for** grades 3-8

**Genre** realistic fiction written in free verse



### Greeley Center Mission

We are Catholic educators who challenge Catholic schools to be excellent because they are essential in preparing students for the future.