In March 2020, the world abruptly catapulted from fast-paced and noisy to still and quiet. As I struggled to make sense of my new environment, devoid of familiar sounds and voices, I recalled a long-forgotten memory of an evening at a friend’s house. Sitting on her back porch, I listened to the symphony of night sounds made by tree frogs, crickets, and owls. As I heard the animals and insects communicate, I realized the most prevalent sounds from my house, which is parallel to Interstate 75, were different. Later that night, I sat on my own porch and listened carefully. In the stillness between passing trucks and cars, I heard the night sounds clearly. When I shifted my focus away from the traffic and began to listen with intention, I realized that I could hear them, once again. Why? What was it about the interstate noise that captured my attention so singularly? Perhaps, it was simply louder, more insistent, more omnipresent. I wonder, now, if this analogy applies to the noise of our school lives. Although the sounds of school are many and varied, do we give more attention to the loudest, most insistent; namely standards, policies, protocols, assessments, and the myriad of other tasks on our insurmountable to-do lists? More importantly, is it possible that the less audible, less insistent sounds obscured by this noise are the stories and, within them, the needs of our children?

COVID-19 abruptly changed the way we engaged with our children. Much like the experience on my friend’s porch, we suddenly had a different perspective, one with new sounds, not dominated by the literal and figurative noise of school. For the first time, school was situated within the child’s world; we entered their space, their home, their life. This unfamiliar context left us confused and anxious about how to teach our children. As we searched for an island of certainty, we kept returning to conversation with children as a critical instructional process. Over and over teachers recounted how in this space, they were giving children more time to talk, and they were spending much more time listening. Dr. Clay (1998) suggested, “Too often school becomes a place where children write language down and teachers do the talking” (p. 28). As our teachers reflected, together, they acknowledged that too often, we talk and children listen. Even when we are side by side. But in the virtual space, authentic, multidirectional, and extended conversations with children became elevated in priority. When teachers began to listen to their children in an open, less goal-directed way, they realized how much they were learning about them, and they gained insight into their identity as people and learners. They found children who rarely talked at school suddenly eager to share their thoughts and ideas. Dr. Clay (2004) reminds us that for many children, school is a “confronting” environment from which they withdraw and “remain very quiet” (p. 8). It stands to reason that learning from the security of their homes contributed to their willingness to talk a little more, in a louder voice. Perhaps this willingness also derived from the fact that our teachers simply gave their children more opportunity to be heard. And in doing so, gave them confidence and agency to tell their stories.

Children were not the only ones who needed us during this crisis. Parents shared virtual spaces with their children; we needed to see and hear them, too. For the first time, it was the parent sitting beside their child, while we, the teachers, were the ones at a distance. Parents became our partners, giving us a rare opportunity to talk and listen to one another. Our conversations generated new insights into how we, as teachers, inadvertently neglect parents as essential members of our team. Far too often, we allow the pace and noise of school life to limit

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Far too often, we allow the pace and noise of school life to limit our contact with parents.
our contact with parents. Moreover, when we do contact them, we dictate the terms and boundaries of the communication, sometimes resulting in exchanges that are unidirectional. In essence, we talk, and parents listen. Is it possible that school can become a “confronting” environment, for parents as well, rendering them silent, mirroring the experience of their children (Clay, 1998)? But, just as they had with children, teachers began to communicate with parents in more informal, prolonged, and authentic ways. As we engaged in genuine conversation with children and parents, they began to share their stories with us. And us with them. We began to listen to each other. And our collective stories fostered multidirectional, reciprocal, and mutual understanding. It is sobering to realize that those stories were always there, but maybe, like still, we began to listen to these stories of struggle, disenfranchisement, and injustice with greater focus and intention. And, we realized, these stories are those of our children, parents, and communities. Charlotte Huck (1999) reminds us, “Every person’s life is a story” (p. 113). And many are less audible, even silenced by the noise, so we must listen intently in order to hear them. These stories are neither distant nor separate from our work, even if they differ from, or conflict with, our own world views. If we ignore them, or worse, allow them to be muted, we are limiting what is possible for the children and families we serve.

We have learned a great deal about our children, our work, our communities, and ourselves from this experience. What matters, now, is what we do with that learning. As we move back into the noise, do we carry what we’ve learned forward, or do we leave it all behind? Had I simply listened to the night sounds from my friend’s porch and left them there, I would have robbed myself of the opportunity to hear them from my house. Instead, when I returned to my own space with a new perspective, I was able to tune out the more insistent noises and, once again, hear the sounds that were the soundtrack of my childhood in Eastern Kentucky. Those sounds were always there, in my backyard, but I had stopped listening for them. As an education community, we cannot stop listening. We must be vigilant, listening carefully for the softer voices, those that are muted by the cacophony of school noise. Because ultimately, those voices tell the stories of our collective humanity.

References
JRR Begins 20th Year

Marsha Studebaker, former RRCNA Director of Communications

In The Beginning …

As The Journal of Reading Recovery begins its 20th year of publication, most readers may be surprised to learn that in the beginning, there was controversy. The idea was so controversial, in fact, that a small RRCNA commit-tee meeting attracted more than 30 people to hear results of member research about whether the Council should establish a Reading Recovery practitioner’s journal. After all, we already had multiple newsletters and a research journal:

• The Running Record, a review of Reading Recovery theory and practice for the teaching community, launched in October 1988. Mary Fried was editor for 8 years until Judith Neal took over in 1996.

• Network News, for the teacher leader and trainer community, also launched in 1988, with Mary Fried and OSU colleagues serving as editorial staff.

• Council Connections debuted in the spring of 1995, soon after RRCNA was incorporated, with Janet Bufalino as editor.

• Literacy, Teaching and Learning, an international scholarly research journal, launched in 1994, with Adria Klein and Stanley Swartz as editors.

Should teachers and teacher leaders have the same information? Would school administrators have time to read teaching information? And, most importantly, who would review and edit articles to ensure fidelity to Marie Clay’s work? University training centers had been entrusted with that responsibility. How could RRCNA, with no Reading Recovery-trained staff, ensure accuracy and fidelity?

The meeting adjourned with a recommendation that the decision be referred to the RRCNA Board of Trustees. Council Connections notes in the spring 2001 issue that the board deferred a proposal to “combine all 3 newsletters into one quarterly publication until consultation with NATG” at its February 2001 meeting. Then weeks of behind the scenes discussion began.

Not everyone was convinced, but eventually the concept of The Journal of Reading Recovery was approved, and the semi-annual publication launched in the fall of 2001.

To this day, I believe seeing the prototype journal with an actual Reading Recovery student on the cover is what tipped the scale in favor. Since that very first issue, the students, families, and teachers in their “Where Are They Now” and “Parent Voices” stories have been a living reminder of Reading Recovery’s success in North America!

Many editorial meetings occurred over dinner when editors could relax and talk about what they were seeing in the field, and where clarification might be helpful. I marveled at the degree of consensus they shared when articles were out for editorial review. Editors were constantly on the lookout for anything that might be misinterpreted!

Watching the editorial teams work over my 15 years as RRCNA communications director, I admired their shared knowledge, their respect for each other, and their loyalty.
to teachers and children. They were thoroughly grounded in Marie Clay’s research, and each had experienced the wonder of seeing children and teachers learning behind the glass. They were eager to help their colleagues support children who were having great difficulty with reading and writing. When I retired, I had no qualms about leaving the JRR staff responsibility with Vicki Fox, who has continued to support the editorial team even after her own retirement.

Mary Anne Doyle played a key role in the creation of JRR and on the editorial team from the beginning. As the original editor of the teaching section, she had responsibility for securing articles, overseeing their review, and working with authors to edit those accepted for publication. She knew the needs of teachers and teacher leaders. And, she was trusted to make content decisions based on years of experience and a deep knowledge of research.

Mary Anne is the longest-serving editor to date, with 9 years as editor-in-chief and 5 years editing the teaching section. She is loved, respected, and trusted throughout the Reading Recovery community. I am grateful to have worked with Mary Anne, the entire editorial team, and the Reading Recovery community. The Journal of Reading Recovery is proof of the excellence of your work!

In Tribute to Dr. Mary Anne Doyle

RRCNA wishes to thank all the Reading Recovery trainers who have served as editors and editorial review board members for the past 19 years. A special thanks goes to Dr. Mary Anne Doyle who has played a pivotal role on the editorial team for 14 years and as an editorial reviewer and author since the first issue through today.

Mary Anne’s work as editor was guided by the desire to help JRR readers delve into Clay’s contributions to literacy teaching and learning and deepen their understandings of Reading Recovery theory and practice. The main criterion for accepting articles for publication in the teaching section was the grounding in Clay’s theory of literacy processing.

Mary Anne served as JRR editor-in-chief while also performing a range of significant leadership roles on behalf of Reading Recovery, including chair of the International Reading Recovery Trainers Organization Executive Board and president of the Reading Recovery Council of North America.

In fall 2007, Mary Anne led the effort to produce an issue of the journal in tribute to Marie Clay, following her passing earlier that year. This issue not only provided a fitting tribute, but was successful in creating an archive of seminal pieces that Dr. Clay had written; many requiring special permission to reprint. Mary Anne was uniquely equipped with the knowledge to guide the editorial team and produce a truly international issue, a powerful tribute to Marie Clay’s influence around the world.

In addition to her work for JRR, Mary Anne has also undertaken many additional high-profile editor roles with distinction, including consulting editor of the Marie M. Clay Literacy Trust and area editor for The Journal of Literacy Research. She has also contributed numerous books, scholarly articles, and book chapters, including her 2019 chapter, “Marie M. Clay’s Theoretical Perspective: A Literacy Processing Theory,” in the 7th edition of Theoretical Models and Processes of Literacy.
Journal Editors Share Reflections

Judith Chibante Neal
In those early years, every issue was a ‘pioneer’ effort, and each of us as editors did our creative and intellectual best to meet the evolving needs of our readership. Mary Anne was a steadying influence simply by her faithful work for each issue. But I could also say that of each one of us. After all, we were all Reading Recovery practitioners!

Salli Forbes
I was the implementation section editor when Mary Anne Doyle was editor of the teaching section and also during the first few years she was editor-in-chief of The Journal of Reading Recovery. From the beginning, Mary Anne contributed to a clear vision of what the journal could be. She grasped the importance of including outstanding articles in all of the sections and presenting Reading Recovery in a highly professional, informative format. As the teaching section editor, she worked tirelessly to solicit submissions which would contribute to the knowledge and skills of the teachers and teacher leaders in the Reading Recovery network. She was extremely collaborative in working with the other section editors. When Mary Anne became the editor-in-chief, she carried the vision of the journal forward and created a collaborative working environment with the section editors. She listened sensitively to the section editors’ ideas and encouraged us to support each other’s work. All section editors met with her on a regular basis to discuss ideas and work through challenges. Mary Anne’s contributions to The Journal of Reading Recovery are immeasurable and have provided the Reading Recovery community with an outstanding journal that we treasure and admire.

Robert Schwartz
A community needs communication. Mary Anne fostered the Reading Recovery community by her extraordinary efforts to bring us the highest quality information on teaching, implementation, and research. She polished these communications through a rigorous review and revision process. Her decades of dedication have enriched all of our lives by providing the stimulus for so much discussion and learning.

Connie Briggs
Mary Anne Doyle is the person you want as a colleague and friend. It has been my privilege to work with her on many special Reading Recovery projects over the years and as a member of the IRRTO Board of Directors. Someone who doesn’t know Mary Anne may first see her kindness and quiet demeanor, which is admirable. However, there is so much more to this woman once you get to know her. Mary Anne is a solid academic, an incredible writer, and a strategic thinker. As a leader, she is collegial, organized, professional, and straightforward (which I appreciate). She is highly respected as a contributing member of the NATG and IRRTO membership because of her wisdom and her ability to get things done. Mary Anne Doyle is someone you can count on, and I am blessed to count her as a colleague and friend.

Patricia Scharer
Reading Recovery professionals have learned much during the tenure of Dr. Mary Anne Doyle as editor of The Journal of Reading Recovery. First, we learned about professionalism. Mary Anne approached every element of JRR work with dedication and talent. Under her guidance, the publication emerged from a newsletter to a scholarly journal. She understood the importance of supporting Reading Recovery by providing access to a range of well-written articles about teaching, implementation, and research. We have also learned about the power of collaboration. I first worked as a section editor under her editorship and watched first-hand how she set up contexts for generating ideas which would influence the journal. Some of our favorite contexts would be dinner the night before the conference in the little room at the Hyatt or meeting at a restaurant after an NATG meeting. These times deepened our friendships and strengthened our camaraderie resulting in a consistently high-quality journal. Finally, she is a model for dedicating time and effort for Reading Recovery. Editing the journal was not the only national and international work she has led; the list of responsibilities she has had is long but each was completed with both enthusiasm and kindness. I’m appreciative of each of these gifts she has given to all of us, especially now that I serve as editor-in-chief of the journal. I only hope I can serve in ways that honor her efforts and continue her legacy.

Anne Simpson
The Journal of Reading Recovery continues to be an exemplary source of ongoing professional learning for Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, site coordinators, and university trainers. An editor’s role is critical in setting the vision and attending closely to the details to ensure
the relevance and content validity of each manuscript. The consistent quality and usefulness of each publication in the journal reflects Mary Anne Doyle’s expertise and commitment to Reading Recovery in addition to her deep understanding of Clay’s theoretical perspectives. Having served as a section editor for the journal and a trainer who relies on the journal as a resource for in-training and ongoing training classes, I want to express my deepest appreciation and admiration for Mary Anne’s leadership as editor of the journal. What a gift of learning she has provided for us all and the children we serve!

Mary Lose
It has been my honor to work as a section editor since 2011 for The Journal of Reading Recovery, and for most of those years with Dr. Mary Anne Doyle. My memories of Mary Anne’s contributions to the success of JRR include not only her skill as a gifted editor but also her interactions with me as a member of the editorial team. Mary Anne always focused on bringing out the very best in every author’s work. She would often take a modest piece of writing, polish it to bring forward its gems, while always staying true to the writer’s voice and message. She ensured that every issue of JRR would reflect Marie Clay’s theory and wisdom, be a trusted resource for readers, and deliver the very best in Reading Recovery teaching, research, and implementation. Mary Anne devoted extraordinary time and effort to the quality of every issue and always expressed gratitude to her editorial team for their work, even though, in my experience, the quality of each issue was the direct result of her meticulous editing and thoughtful guidance to the editorial team. Indeed, RRCNA members rate JRR as their most highly coveted member benefit, a fact that I believe can be attributed to Mary Anne’s editorial leadership. On a personal note, Mary Anne is an esteemed colleague who is always a joy to work with. I am forever grateful to Mary Anne Doyle for her legacy and lasting contributions to the success of JRR.

Eva Konstantellou
I was fortunate to serve as teaching section editor for The Journal of Reading Recovery for 6 years under editor-in-chief Mary Anne Doyle. When Mary Anne had asked me to assume this role, I was a bit reluctant that I would be succeeding her as teaching section editor for the first 5 years of the journal. As a relatively new trainer I was in awe of her many accomplishments in so many aspects of Reading Recovery; hers were very big shoes to fill. However, I was also very intrigued by the prospect of joining a talented group of colleagues on the editorial team to support Reading Recovery through the dissemination of the writings of talented authors. I consider the 6 years I worked with Mary Anne on JRR as among the most rewarding of my professional career in Reading Recovery. Soliciting manuscripts, working with reviewers, participating in meetings and conference calls, editing a few manuscripts simultaneously — it was busy and hard work and yet it all seemed manageable because we had an editor who was genuine, kind, flexible, tentative, a good listener, and above all, respectful of her colleagues’ professional judgment. How lucky were we on the editorial team to confer regularly with someone who was so dedicated to the preservation of the integrity and quality of Clay’s work! I came out of my 6-year service on JRR a better thinker and a better trainer, largely because of the conditions for learning and collaborative inquiry that Mary Anne had established as editor-in-chief.
Betsy Kaye
I am enormously grateful for Mary Anne Doyle’s countless contributions to our international Reading Recovery network! Year after year, RRCNA member surveys reveal that our members highly value *The Journal of Reading Recovery*, and Mary Anne Doyle’s leadership has been a critical factor in the journal’s success. Her vast knowledge of Reading Recovery ensures that the journal addresses important issues related to our implementation and teaching practice in addition to pertinent research and policy in the field. As a journal reader, I have always appreciated the quality and relevance of the articles. As a former section editor, I appreciated Mary Anne’s planning, guidance, and thoughtful feedback. I respect her high standards for excellence and appreciate that she has tirelessly served the Reading Recovery community in a way that continues to positively impact our work with children, teachers, and the broader educational community.

Lori Taylor
When I was invited by Mary Anne Doyle to serve as a section editor on the journal, I immediately agreed. You don’t say no to someone you have idolized for years. As a “new kid on the block” among Reading Recovery trainers, however, I was a bit intimidated with the weight of the task and assured by Mary Anne that there would be support. As editor-in-chief, she warmly welcomed me to the team, providing guidance and trust as she mentored me. Thank you, Mary Anne, for both your kindness and dedication to the journal, colleagues, and children of Reading Recovery.

Jim Schnug
I always looked forward to our editorial meetings two or three times each year, when Mary Anne presided over a cacophony of ideas, pitches, and subject matter that she expertly shepherded toward a final issue.

Mary Ann Poprad
Anything I put into words seems too minimal to tribute the great mind and professional contributions of Mary Anne Doyle. To me she is an outstanding example, writer, communicator, mentor, and most of all, a trusted colleague. In the brief time I served as a section editor, she supported, encouraged, nudged, and guided us to our best possible selves in all aspects of our work.

Vicki Fox
Thoughtful, considerate, mindful, supportive, caring, collaborative, influential, dedicated, persistent, giving, admired, gently persuasive, fun … all describe Mary Anne Doyle. Her willingness to share her wisdom and vast knowledge has—in so many ways—given support to me, to this journal, to RRCNA, and to the broader Reading Recovery community. She is a talented and gracious leader, and a truly wonderful person. I am blessed to have shared this journey with her as a trusted guide and to call her my friend. Mary Anne is, indeed, a bright spot in my Reading Recovery adventure!

Support the Foundation for Struggling Readers with a Facebook Fundraiser

Launch a fundraiser for your birthday, in memory or honor of someone, or for any special occasion. You’ll be able to set a goal, keep track of your progress, thank your supporters, and share the news on your timeline. Facebook covers all fees for nonprofits, so 100% of your tax-deductible donation goes to RRCNA’s Foundation for Struggling Readers.
Teacher Leader Awards
Support Training for 3

Three teacher leaders are in training thanks to generous donations to the Linda Dorn Reading Recovery Legacy Fund. These awards are funded to school districts that have demonstrated a commitment to Reading Recovery and selected a suitable teacher leader candidate.

Union County Schools, Union, SC
Crystal Bryant brings 25 years of teaching to her training as a teacher leader and has a master's degree in literacy from Converse College. Crystal is looking forward to explaining professional development to teachers in Union County Schools and reimplmenting Reading Recovery in the district. Crystal is training at Clemson University.

District 47, Crystal Lake, IL
Kerin Kuechel brings 17 years of teaching experience to her training as a teacher leader and has a master's degree in reading from Concordia University. District 47 has been fully implemented since 1992 and serves students in both Reading Recovery and Descubriendo la Lectura. Kerin looks forward to continuing to be an advocate for Reading Recovery and providing professional development to other literacy professionals in her district. Kerin is training at National Louis University.

District 196 Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, Rosemount, MN
Nicole Tschohl brings 24 years of teaching experience and a master's degree in education from the College of St. Catherine. She has a strong passion for teaching children of all backgrounds and is looking forward to bringing in stakeholders to observe the impact of Reading Recovery in action. Nicole is training at National Louis University.
Professional Development Awards Help Fund LitCon 2021 Registration

Generous donors have contributed over 30 awards of up to $500 each to help offset the cost of registration for LitCon 2021. Awards will be given to Reading Recovery teachers, teachers-in-training, teacher leaders, university trainers, or administrators who support the implementation of Reading Recovery. Applicants must be current members of RRCNA to qualify. More information can be found on the RRCNA website under Foundation for Struggling Readers.

Geri Stone Memorial Fund awards will also be awarded to help offset the cost of attendance, teaching supplies, and more.

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