

# CALL FOR PROGRAM PROPOSALS



## Story as the Landscape of Knowing

Story is the landscape within which we map the significance of experience and build towers of knowledge. Stories saturate our lives, woven so tightly into the fabric of the everyday that it's easy to overlook their value as a way of knowing the world. We work at understanding the chaotic "stuff" of daily life by constructing stories to interpret and bring order and coherence to what is occurring around us. Each story carries a multiplicity of meanings that capture the richness and nuances of life and accommodate the ambiguity and complexity of experience. The webs of interconnected stories constructed in our minds become an interpretive lens to filter new experiences. They are the glue that creates community and binds us together around common purposes and values.

These powerful roles of story are often discounted as standing in opposition to scientific rigor; creating the belief that story inhibits knowing. Instead, story facilitates knowing by creating bridges between the English language arts and other disciplines, fact and fiction, written/oral literacy and media literacies, literary and social discourse, and public and private interaction. These bridges challenge the dichotomies that cause confusion and pendulum swings. Currently, educators face policies that artificially separate informational and literary texts; a separation that ignores the use of narrative structures to engage readers with both types of texts. Scientists and historians constantly use story to construct theories that provide coherent explanations of known facts. Both change their stories as new information and perspectives become available. A story is thus a theory of something, what we tell and how we tell it reveals what we believe at a particular moment in time.

Stories of the past are significant in framing our thinking about the world and providing a sense of our humanity. Without these stories of our past, we are adrift, unable to compare and contrast our current experiences with those of the past. We are locked in the current moment, deprived of memory, unable to see ourselves as part of the larger continuum of life that stretches far behind and ahead. Stories of the past allow us to locate ourselves and to envision the possibilities for taking action to create social change.

The ways in which we create and tell stories are culturally-based. Our human need to story our experiences may be universal but there is no one way to tell stories. Our stories are always intertextualized and interwoven with the stories that exist within families, communities

and cultural traditions. Inviting stories across multiple cultures and languages into classrooms is essential to a curriculum that values difference as resource. For the current generation of students, this diversity recognizes that stories are told and accessed through a wide range of literacies and technologies as well as through oral and written language.

Story is the landscape within which we live as teachers and researchers—our knowledge is ordered by story and understood by story. Our rich stockpiles of storied knowledge about literacy, curriculum, instruction, and students construct teaching as narrative in action. Stories are the touchstones and metaphors by which we conduct our professional lives, telling us who we are and who we can, or cannot, become. They constrain and position our identities and roles as well as provide a way of knowing and of creating community among ourselves and with our students.

Given the convention location in Washington DC, we must also recognize that story is always political. Story can be used to distort, marginalize and misrepresent particular groups and to determine who gets to tell their stories and whose reality is accepted as the norm. Because all stories are ideological, they produce a way to see the world that privileges particular interests over others. Those in positions of power often use story to legitimate and dominate, to spin their version of "truth," but story can also be used as counter-narratives to resist and challenge. NCTE is actively engaged in re-authoring stories about teachers and professional organizations, challenging deficit views by telling stories of teacher agency and collaborative inquiry through the National Center for Literacy Education.

At the 2014 NCTE Convention, proposals that explore the many dimensions of story as the landscape of knowing are invited—story as literary and informational text, story as cross-disciplinary collaborations, story as multiple literacies and genres, story as memory and identity, story as teacher knowledge and research, story as community and culture, story as marginalization, and story as resistance. Our gathering in Washington DC is an opportunity to take back the right to tell our stories, to create our own landscapes, and to "talk story" with each other.

Kathy G. Short

# Submitting Proposals

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All proposals must be submitted online at <http://www.ncte.org/annual/call>

The NCTE online proposal system will close at 11:59 pm PST, Wednesday, January 15, 2014.

Incomplete proposals will not be considered.

To promote the participation of newcomers to the profession, NCTE wishes to include early-career teachers in as many sessions as possible. Please check the “Early Career” box beside the name of any individual who has taught fewer than five years.

To promote the participation of urban teachers, program planners find it helpful when the students and teachers considered in a session are from public school districts in large cities. If the content is especially attentive to the interests of teachers and students in big cities, please check the “Urban Teacher” box beside the presenter’s name.

To promote new involvement by people from historically under-represented groups, NCTE’s Conference on English Education invites applications for Cultural Diversity grants of \$500 to help defray the costs of travel and registration for the NCTE Convention. Applicants should check the “CEE Cultural Diversity Grant” box on the proposal form and visit the website (<http://www.ncte.org/cee/awards/culturaldiversity>) to submit an application. The application deadline is Sunday, May 18. Direct all questions about the process to [conventions@ncte.org](mailto:conventions@ncte.org).

## Criteria for Program Selection

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The NCTE Convention Planning Committee is comprised of representatives from the college, middle, secondary, and elementary sections. Committee members from the section indicated on the proposal read, rate, and comment on each proposal before assigning a preliminary score. The proposal is reviewed a second time by two other committee members during a face-to-face planning meeting in the spring. These evaluations are shared with the Program Chair, who makes the final decision on convention programming. Though the criteria for excellence vary to some extent among these groups, some common values are listed here:

*Clarity and thoughtfulness of proposal*—Reviewers will favor proposals that are very clear about their content and about what the presenters will do in the session and are thoughtful in providing a rationale for the content and organization of the session.

To promote involvement of two-year college faculty, we encourage proposals that explore the unique learning environment of the community college.

Proposals designed to advertise or disseminate information about books, materials, or services for sale will not be accepted.

***NCTE policy limits each participant to one speaking appearance per convention.***

***All speakers are required to pay registration fees for the convention. Speakers are encouraged to be members of NCTE. NCTE does not reimburse program speakers for travel or hotel expenses.***

Session proposers should advise all involved in their proposal that submission of a proposal does not constitute an invitation to appear on the program. Individual invitations are mailed in late spring following the planning committee’s review meeting.

Proposers must secure approval from the publisher prior to the proposal deadline to secure funding for trade book authors appearing on the program. Sessions are accepted with the expectation that the panelists listed will present at the convention; changes to the presenter list after acceptance may result in the session being removed from the program.

*Appropriate and engaging method of presentation*—The method of presenting the content should be described and fit with the purpose of the session. Reviewers particularly look for opportunities for participants to participate actively and interact with presenters and other participants, not just listen to presenters talk.

*Content and issues are timely and critical to the field*—Reviewers want to know how a proposal fits within broader conversations of theory, research, and/or practice in the field and the significance of the presenter’s work to current issues. Make explicit the influences on your work and the connections to important debates or concerns in the field.

*Strong fit with NCTE mission and intended NCTE audience*—Reviewers look for proposals that connect with the mission of NCTE at a deep fundamental level and that address the interests and concerns of the intended audience at the NCTE convention.

## Online Coaches

Online coaches can help you revise your proposal! Send a draft of your proposal to a coach no later than three weeks prior to the proposal deadline. Coaches will read the proposal and respond with suggestions for improvement. For more details, visit <http://www.ncte.org/annual>.

# Call for Research Presentation Proposals

The NCTE Standing Committee on Research invites proposals for sessions discussing new research that advances the mission of the NCTE: “to promote the development of literacy, the use of language to construct personal and public worlds, and to achieve full participation in society, through the learning and teaching of English and the related arts and sciences of language.”

All proposals must be submitted online through the NCTE proposal system. Submissions should include a clear theoretical framework, research design, and anticipated or completed results. Proposals are evaluated through a blind-review process based on the contribution to the field, soundness of argument and/or research design, appropriateness of conclusions, and clarity. Research Strand proposals may be panel presentations or symposia. Individuals are encouraged to submit single-topic proposals that will be combined with others to form complete sessions or roundtables.

## Convention Strands

Proposals may be selected for inclusion in special program strands. Inclusion in these strands is determined by convention planning committee reviewers representing committees, caucuses, or conferences within NCTE. A brief description of each strand is provided below. Check the appropriate box on the proposal form if you believe your proposal should be highlighted in one of the convention strands.

**CEE Strand** proposals focus on issues, research, and practices pertaining to teacher development, professional development, and teacher education programs, including preservice and induction programs. Successful proposals highlight the practice of those who prepare literacy educators or support their continued development through courses, workshops, and inquiry.

**Early Childhood Education Strand** proposals focus on issues pertaining to the education of children from birth to age eight, their families, and their teachers. Early literacy is a key concept in identifying Early Childhood Education Strand proposals. Reviewers look for proposals that address diversities in early childhood, and highlight practices and processes that are situated in social, historical, and cultural contexts.

**LGBT Strand** proposals focus on issues pertaining to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students, their families, and their teachers. When selecting LGBT Strand sessions, reviewers look for proposals that address representations of sexual and affectional difference, a broad understanding of diversity, free inquiry and expression, critical pedagogy, democratic teaching practices, and for proposals that encourage the creation of safer, more inclusive schools.

**NCLE Strand** proposals highlight the remarkable efforts underway to invest students with the literacy skills needed to innovate, solve problems, and meet unprecedented challenges. Reviewers look for proposals that highlight the benefits of cross-discipline collaboration, address ways to teach the elements of literacy in all content areas, and provide examples of schools that are using a team approach to to remodel literacy education.

**Rainbow Strand** proposals focus on issues and strategies related to teaching and affirming culturally and linguistically diverse students. Affirming people of color is the key concept in identifying Rainbow Strand proposals. Reviewers look for proposals that affirm African Americans, Latinos/Latinas, American Indians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders.

**WLU Strand** proposals focus on whole language theory and practice, to be reviewed by the Whole Language Umbrella. Reviewers look for proposals that push understandings of critical literacy, inquiry, and collaborative learning, and that integrate literacy with other sign systems and knowledge systems, situated in social, historical, political, and cultural contexts.

## Session Formats

### Panel presentations

Seventy-five-minute presentations in which two or four individuals speak, with time for audience questions and responses.

### Roundtables

Seventy-five-minute sessions in which a series of small-group discussions about related aspects of a specific topic or theme are led by round table leaders at individual round tables. Roundtables may be created by the convention planning committee from individual proposals.

### Poster sessions

Seventy-five-minute sessions in which a number of presenters display posters, or other artifacts of their research or teaching practices, standing nearby to explain and discuss, informally, their displayed work. Posters are most often submitted by one speaker. Individual proposals may be assigned to poster sessions by the planning committee.

### Classroom demonstrations

Seventy-five-minute sessions with three or four presenters who engage participants, as if they were students, in promising teaching practices.

### Individual proposals

Proposals submitted by one speaker. These proposals will be combined by the NCTE Convention Planning Committee with other individual proposals to make full sessions or roundtables. Committee members may also assign individual proposals to poster sessions.

### Day-long workshops

Workshops take place Monday, November 24. Proposals must be explicit about the activities in which participants will engage and the apportionment of time to various activities throughout the day. Only proposals with more than one presenter will be considered. Proposals cannot include planned meal functions.

## Topics of Emphasis

Topics of Emphasis are used by the planning committee and are searchable in the online program.

### Topics are:

Argumentation, Assessment, Close Reading, Content Area Literacies, Composition/Writing, Digital and Media Literacies, Early Literacies, Equity and Social Justice Issues, Informational Text, Language and Multilingualism, Literature, Reading, Teacher Education and Professional Development

Call for Program  
Proposals Enclosed

National Council of  
Teachers of English  
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1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801-1096  
**NCTE**  
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## NCTE 2014 WASHINGTON, D.C.

You are invited to submit  
a proposal for the  
**104th NCTE Annual Convention**  
November 20–23, 2014

**NCTE** National Council of  
Teachers of English

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