



## RAR 106 – Connection, Community, and Confidence: What your homeschool needs this fall

**Sarah:** You're listening to the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. This is the podcast that helps you make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.

Hello, hello, Sarah Mackenzie here. So happy you've tuned in to the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. You've got episode 106. Today is August 8, 2018, and it's a very important day because we've just opened registration for Read-Aloud Revival Premium Membership for the final time this year. We're only open for a week but for the next week you have the chance to join us in Read-Aloud Revival Premium and then we're going to close registration and we won't open up again until 2019. So, what's happening in Premium Membership this fall? Oh my lands! I cannot wait to tell you. We have, basically, an incredible lineup and if you want your kids to fall more in love with books than ever this school year, while also making some beautiful connections in your family and focusing on what matters most, especially if you're a homeschooling family and you want to fall back in love with homeschooling, Read-Aloud Revival Premium is for you. This is where we make all that magic happen. We like to say that in Read-Aloud Revival Premium we know that relationships with your kids matter more than anything else and that's why we focus on giving you a regular dose of connection, community, and confidence.

## 1:54 Book clubs, author events and more

So, let me tell you what you'll experience in Read-Aloud Revival Premium this fall in each of those areas; in connection, community, and confidence. Connection – we offer connection to inspire your kids and ignite their imaginations. We have family Book Clubs, and live online events featuring today's best authors and illustrators and we're not exaggerating when we say we're bringing today's best authors and illustrators. And that is happening this fall. I'm going to tell you who they are in just a second. Let me just explain that every month we have a family Book Club. This means your whole family can enjoy stories together read-aloud or on audio, and then you share experiences around that book – we give you suggestions for what kind of simple, memorable experiences you can share around the book to seal the book in your child's memory as a delightful, meaningful experience, and then you talk about the book. We provide open-ended questions that guide you through a meaningful conversation with your kids about the book and about the ideas in the book. We call it Book Club because it's better than any lit. class you've ever taken and it's a million times better than having your kids do comprehension worksheets or book reports or quizzes. And then here's what happens: after you use that Book Club guide, we invite the author or illustrator (sometimes both) onto Read-Aloud Revival Premium and they do a live video stream, so your kids can ask questions and they get them answered live on screen, and basically what happens is they form a personal connection with the author and the book. What we actually hear from members after these events is that the next time they're at the library their kids run to the section to find more books



by that author or illustrator or the books that that author or illustrator mentioned as their own childhood favorites because they feel like they're seeking out books written by a friend. They have a completely different personal connection with the author, the illustrator, and the work than they've ever had before. So, if you want to help your kids fall in love with books, trust me, this is how you do it.

### 3:50 Upcoming authors

So, which books and authors are we doing this fall? I'm so glad you asked! Next week we're getting a visit from Brandon Mull who's the author of the Fablehaven series and your kids can participate in that video stream. We've been reading Fablehaven this summer. In September, so this fall, we'll be reading *Tops and Bottoms* which is a hilarious picture book fable and we're also going to be reading the *Anansi* picture books, written by Eric Kimmel, illustrated by Janet Stevens. Janet Stevens is an award-winning illustrator – her illustrations are funny and just beautiful and they make you want to gaze at them a little longer than you have to. So, basically for this work by Janet Stevens for *Tops and Bottoms* and the *Anansi* picture books we're going to give you a Book Club guide. There's going to be suggested shared experiences and open-ended questions you can use with your whole family. Yes, I mean for your whole family – from your toddlers all the way up to your teens. I'm even doing this one with my high schoolers. The *Anansi* African folktales are so good for discussions; they can open up some really awesome conversations about some great ideas. When we say “family Book Club” at Read-Aloud Revival we really do mean family. Some books are just a good fit for everybody no matter their

age, and Janet Stevens' books are one of those. Janet Stevens herself is going to be joining us toward the end of September to tell us about how she illustrates books, how she writes books, and to answer your kids' questions. That's September's Book Club and our Author Access Event. Our next one is in October, our Book Club pick is *The Mysterious Benedict Society*. We'll have a family Book Club guide for that as well, and of course, Trenton Lee Stewart himself, author of all *The Benedict Society* books is going to join us for a live video stream to answer your kids' questions, talk about the books.

### 5:32 Kate DiCamillo and Linda Sue Park

Next up is November and we're going to be reading *The Tale of Desperaux* by Kate DiCamillo, this award-winning book that steals so many hearts about a very small mouse with unusually large ears. And yes, you better believe it, Kate DiCamillo herself is coming to Read-Aloud Revival for an Author Access Event in November. You know what? I have been waiting my whole life for this. That's only slightly an exaggeration. Kate DiCamillo is just one of, obviously, the most celebrated children's book authors of our time. She's written *Because of Winn-Dixie*, (I was going to say *Stewart Little* – she did not write *Stewart Little*), *The Tale of Desperaux*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, *The Tiger Rising*, *The Mercy Watson* books. She has a brand new one out this fall called *Louisiana's Way Home* (which I got to read a little early), *Raymie Nightingale* – there's just this whole shelf full of Kate DiCamillo's books in my house – but for our Book Club in Read-Aloud Revival Premium we're reading *The Tale of Desperaux* and making some family memories



and conversations around that one, and then of course, meeting Kate DiCamillo herself. In December, we're going to do a family Book Club combo of sorts. Older kids will read *A Single Shard* – this is a Newbery winner, this one won the Newbery award – it's set in 12th century Korea, it's a beautiful story of a 13 year old orphan named Tree-ear and the master potter he works for. It's such a gorgeous book. And, I would say kids 8 and up will be enjoying that story. Younger kids are also going to read a book by the same author. So, the author's Linda Sue Park. Younger kids are going to be reading a book by her, with another Korean theme, it's called, *Bee-Bim Bop!* and you better believe we're going to be making the Korean dish *Bee-Bim Bop* to share an experience about that, and then you're going to join us and the author, Linda Sue Park, for a live video stream – that's going to make for an awesome December. The wonderful thing about these events, all of these Book Club events, is that you don't just connect your kids with authors and with books, although that's certainly what's happening here, but you also form meaningful and lasting connections with each other in your family – that's the thing I treasure more than anything. They're such inspiring events and they'll stay with you, they'll stay with your kids – there's just nothing else quite like them. I bet you'll be ready to ditch your literature curriculum and do this instead, when you get a taste, it's so much fun it could easily become your children's very favorite part of their school day. That's not all either. We regularly invite professional writers and illustrators, published writers and illustrators, to teach their craft to our kids in Premium. This September, the author Caroline Starr Rose is going to come and teach our kids a young writer's workshop, all about how to create compelling characters. So, if

you have a young writer in your house or if you want to give your kids a taste of writing for the sheer delight of it, this is going to be a workshop for you. It's all about how to create compelling characters. It's going to be a lot of fun, and that's happening in September. Like I said, all about connection. It's also about community.

## 8:39 Fall back in love with homeschooling

And, in Premium we've got that in spades. Our members tell us that Read-Aloud Revival Premium forum, the forum, is easily the most resourceful, helpful, and encouraging place for homeschooling place on the internet. Just dip into our forum for a hot minute and you'll find out why. If you're hungry to connect with like-minded moms and if you really want to fall back in love with homeschooling, the Read-Aloud Revival Premium member forum should be first stop. And I mean that.

## 9:15 Professional development for you

We also give you, not just connection, not just community, confidence. And this happens with our Mama Book Clubs and Master Classes. This fall in Premium members are going to get access to two Master Classes I'm teaching. One is creating a book club culture at home – that one's happening later this month, in fact, in August, and then the next one is *Loving Your Life as a Homeschooling Mom*. These classes are like professional development for homeschooling moms. I think you'll feel like you've attended a conference, but you know, you got to attend in your jammies, with your tea, without spending any money on conference food or parking, it's



kind of a win-win. We have those two live Master Classes happening this fall—Creating a Book Club Culture at Home and Loving Your Life as a Homeschooling Mom. Both of those taught by me, but what you should know about Premium is that when you join you get access to everything we've done before. So, that includes all of the Master Classes in our library – and there are a lot of them – there are Master Classes on how to choose books for your teens, how to homeschool kids under 8, how to teach from rest – there are classes in there on all different kinds of important topics that will relate to you and help you be a better mother and a better homeschooler, and you get access to all of them right away, because they're all recorded and offered as replays. That's also true for all of our Author Access Events that we've done in the past with people like Tomie dePaola and Patricia Polacco, Lois Lowry, and all these amazing authors we've had, you can access all of those Author Access replays when you're a member as well, which means that you can look in our library and see if any of the books that you're already planning on reading in your homeschool, if we've talked to the author. Chances are pretty darn good that we've talked to the author of some of the books you've been reading or are reading in your school year. And this can just be such a wonderful way to add delight and purpose and intention and rest to your homeschool year this coming year.

## 11:05 Mama book clubs

As a community we also really love to read together. We host what we call Mama Book Clubs and this is kind of a way for moms to participate in the great conversation. Right? We cultivate our own intellectual lives. And, more importantly, probably, we model to our children that we're

lifelong learners. We model to our children that reading and talking about books is not something that you just do for school, it's a part of life because we're doing it as well. Actually, these Mama Book Clubs end up also being a really fantastic way to get comfortable with the ins and outs of having meaningful conversations around books because we're doing that in Mama Book Club. We basically show you how to do it and do it with you, and then you get comfortable with it and can then do that in your home. So, it's like training, on-the-job training, but they're so fun. So, this fall we're going to read Wendell Berry's *Jayber Crow* as a community and discuss it in our forum. And you guys, I've never read it – can you believe that? – I've read other books and loved them by Wendell Berry but I've never read *Jayber Crow*. We're going to be reading that as a community this fall, discussing it in our forum for our Mama Book Club, and would love for you to join us.

## 12:10 A 3-step system

I know that if you are anything like me you're short on time and that's why in Premium Membership we really focus on helping you spend your time where it matters most because we know that the best use of your time is any time you're pouring into your kids, connecting with your kids, and teaching from a state of rest, and we want you to fall back in love with homeschooling. We want you to have a peaceful, restful school year that also helps you do the things that matter most and helps your kids fall more in love with books, encounter big ideas, have big meaty discussions, and read, and connect with each other. Read-Aloud Revival Premium can pretty easily take the place of any literature curriculum in your homeschool because



of our simple three step system. I've mentioned it before, kind of, in passing, but basically that three-step system is reading a book aloud (or listening to it on audio), sharing memorable experiences about it, and then talking about it. And, we walk you through those three steps with all of our Book Club picks every single month for the whole family, and so you can really do literature as a family and make this more of a cohesive whole, restful, joyful part of your homeschool. It really helps you dive deep into books, it helps you nurture your family relationships at the same time, and that's such a win. That's so meaningful to me as a busy mother of six, to be able to help my kids fall in love with books and stories and ideas and learn to talk about them at the same time we're nurturing family relationships is such a big win for me. So, that's what we do here in Premium. I really think your kid's relationship with books will never be the same once they engage in books this way and once they meet the authors and illustrators themselves. There is just nothing like it. If you don't want to let another school year get away from you, if you want to delight in your kids in teaching them this year, if you're feeling tired or burned out or stretched too thin, I encourage you to join Read-Aloud Revival Premium Membership to focus on what matters most to your family; to teach from rest, and to make those meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books. Doors are open now and they close August 14, 2018 at 9:00pm Pacific, so head to [RARMembership.com](http://RARMembership.com) to join us. I hope you make this a fabulous year for your kids, for your whole family, become the Premium Member, and we'll help you do it, we'll do it right alongside you. I'm so excited to see you inside. Again, that's [RARMembership.com](http://RARMembership.com). That's it for today's episode. I really wanted to extend a heartfelt

invitation to you to join us where we are making the most progress in our families, as far as nurturing relationships, nurturing that love of reading, connecting our kids with big ideas and with books, we'd love to have you along for the ride. Now, let's hear from the kids. I want to hear from you kids what you are enjoying reading aloud.

## 15:05 Let the kids speak

Now, it's time for Let the Kids Speak. This is my favorite part of the podcast where kids tell us about their favorite stories that have been read-aloud to them.

**Child1:** [Mom: what's your name?] Sam. [Mom: Sam, how old are you?] 3. [Mom: where do you live?] Alabama. [Mom: Alabama. What's your favorite book?] Best Workbook Ever. [Mom: Best Workbook Ever? What's your favorite part of that book?] The elephant page at the end. [Mom: the elephant page at the end?] And the train page. [Mom: and the train page.]

**Child2:** Hi, my name is Caleb. I am 7 years old. I live in North America and my favorite book is Disney Three Little Pigs. And I like it because they each build their different houses but my really, really favorite part is when the wolf tries to blow the third pig's house down but he can't.

**Child3:** I'm 4 years old and I live in South Bridge, Georgia. [Mom: can you tell us your name?] And, I'm Silas, and. [Mom: what's your favorite book?] And my favorite book is The Three Little Pigs when he goes down the chimney and the third little pig gobbles him up. [Mom: gobbles him up?] Yeah, he just does that.

**Child4:** [Mom: what's your name?] Carter. [Mom: where are you from?] Montana. [Mom: what's your favorite book?] Peter Pan. [Mom: the audio



book?] The audio book. [Mom: why is it your favorite?] Because he fights the pirates.

**Child5:** Hi, I'm Avery. I'm 8 years old and I live in Florida. One book that I really like is called The Secret Zoo by Bryan Chick. I like it because it's a mystery and I really like mysteries. Another reason why I like it is because it's fun to read and it's exciting too. I also like fantasy books and The Secret Zoo is a fantasy book. It's one of my favorite books to read.

**Child6:** Hi, I'm Ali, and I'm 8 years old. I live in Omaha, Nebraska. And, my favorite series is The Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis. And, my favorite part is because they all get to go to Aslan's country.

**Child7:** My name is Greg. I'm from Arkansas. I'm 5 years old. My favorite book is Go, Dog. Go! because the dogs talk.

**Child8:** Hi, my name is Grace and I'm 5 years old and I live in Tennessee. And, my favorite book is The Mitten. [Mom: why do you like it?] Because it's so funny and the bear sneezes, and because of the mouse.

**Sarah:** Thank you so much, kids. I always love to hear your recommendations. Next week I'll be back here at the same place and same time with Dr. Michael Gurian from the Gurian Institute. You might remember him from episode 82 of the Read-Aloud Revival, he came and talked to us about the brains of boys and about, I think, one of the things that stuck out to me from that episode is how a lot of our kids do better, they listen better, when they're moving their bodies and their brains start listening at a better, higher capacity when their bodies are moving, which is really encouraging to those of us who have fidgety kids. Well, he's coming back next week to talk about the minds of girls – so meet me here

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