



**Books, Books and more Books**  
[Lakshmi Rao Sankar](#), S2C Practitioner

## NOTES TO CRP'S before you start this lesson –

**Trigger alert** on page 11, last paragraph

- if your speller is upset about their level of reading motor skills, contact [info@i-asc.org](mailto:info@i-asc.org) to be connected to an S2C Practitioner who will guide you in how to teach the ocular motor skills your speller needs to read independently.
- If the speller is upset by limited reading choices and access to books, help formulate a plan to access free audible books, find a sibling or volunteer to read to them.
- If the speller is upset by their limited tolerance for reading OR listening to a book read to them, come up with a plan that improves their tolerance in increments of minutes per reading session.

Have a stack of books with interesting titles handy.

Growing up in INDIA, when I was a tween and teen no one in my family wanted to own a television. I was one of 9 cousins, and we always spent at least one month of the summer, together at my uncle's house. My oldest and youngest cousins are 7 years apart and the rest of us were a year or two apart. 5 girls and 4 boys. We spent summers at my uncle's quiet university town, in SURATHKAL, by the INDIAN OCEAN in South India. While we did listen to music, play endless card games and go to the beach, and write and act in plays that our parents watched, most of our time was spent reading books. My cousin KRISHNA was a member of two libraries (libraries are not free in India) and had a secret membership in one more, that his parents didn't know about. Once a week we would ride the bus for 2 hours each way into MANGALORE, the nearest city and come back with 60 books from these libraries.

SPELL: SUMMERS

SPELL: YOUNGEST

WHICH COUNTRY DID THE AUTHOR GROW UP IN? INDIA

WHAT IS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF COUSINS, INCLUDING THE AUTHOR? 9

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WHO HAD A SECRET MEMBERSHIP IN A LIBRARY? KRISHNA

WHAT'S THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF BOOKS THE COUSINS BORROWED FROM EACH LIBRARY EVERY WEEK?  $60/3 = 20$

NAME AN ACTIVITY THE COUSINS ENGAGED IN OVER THE SUMMER (PLAY CARDS, WRITE AND ACT IN PLAYS, READ BOOKS, GO TO THE BEACH.)

NAME AN ACTIVITY YOU ENJOY IN SUMMER.

VAKT - FIND SURATHKAL ON THE MAP



Image: A lending library in Mangalore – [churumuri.blog](http://churumuri.blog).

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Image: India map – startitnew.blogspot.in

Holed up as we are under the CORONAVIRUS pandemic isolation, with a lot of time on our hands, I am transported back to the times, when we didn't do much in our summer except spend day after day together in one house, with stacks and stacks of books to read. We would transport ourselves into the lands our books took us. Into the green, rolling DOWNS (low hills) of THE SHIRE, and eat our ELEVENSES, a meal between breakfast and lunch, with FRODO BAGGINS – a HOBBIT (a made-up race of 4 foot tall, human-like people with hairy feet, who live in burrow like holes, they are loving and brave.) in a book called THE LORD OF THE RINGS by J R TOLKEIN. Or sometimes we would be in a hot and dusty town in the American wild west, witnessing a gunfight with the bad guy and FLINTY (flint is a stone, here it represent a cold, calm expression) eyed SUDDEN, a cowboy and an OUTLAW (someone wanted by the law) and the fastest gun in the west. JAMES GREEN is the name of the character called SUDDEN because he could draw out his gun and shoot very quickly. It is also the name used in the book series written by OLIVER STRANGE.

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Image: Wikipedia

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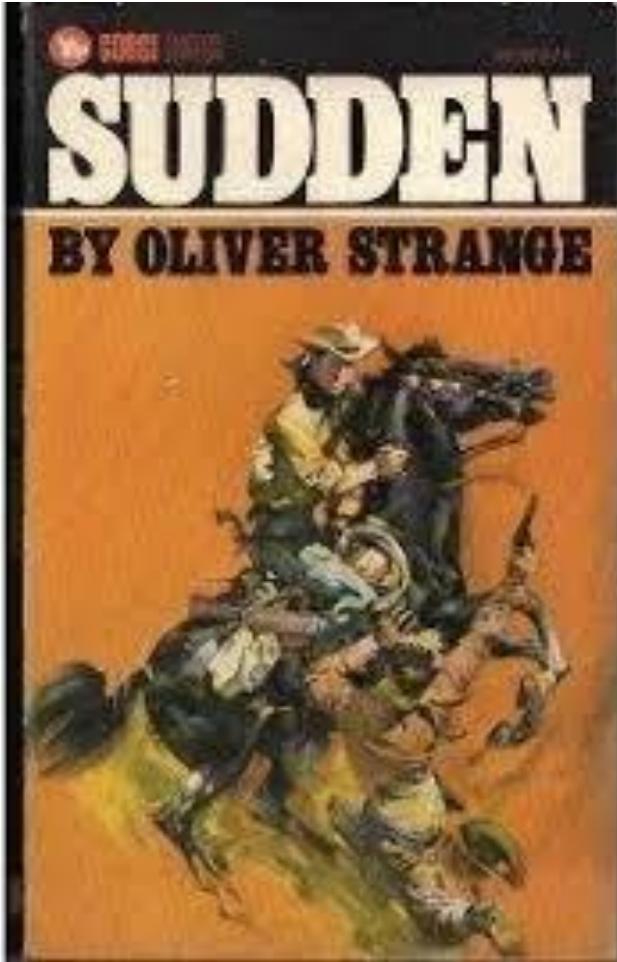


Image: Goodreads.com

SPELL: WILD

SPELL: TRANSPORT

SPELL: STACKS

WHAT VIRUS HAS US AT HOME? CORONAVIRUS

WHY ARE WE HOLED UP IN OUR HOMES? CORONAVIRUS ISOLATION/PANDEMIC

WHAT IS THE MEAL BETWEEN BREAKFAST AND LUNCH? ELEVENSES

WHAT ARE ELEVENSES? A MEAL/A MEAL BETWEEN BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

HOW IS THE SHIRE DESCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR? GREEN, ROLLING DOWNS

WHO IS THE AUTHOR OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS? J R TOLKEIN

NAME A LOCATION THE AUTHOR IS TRANSPORTED TO. THE SHIRE, A HOT AND DUSTY TOWN

WHICH BOOK'S SETTING WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO BE TRANSPORTED TO?

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Books weren't just for reading though. We had other uses for them. Back in school, my classmates GURU and RAM, who sat behind me, would sit with their TEXTBOOKS (books that were about the subject being taught) on the table, while the teacher taught and played a vigorous game of BOOK CRICKET. Cricket is a complicated game that originated in ENGLAND –two sides of eleven players take turns to bat and BOWL (pitch). In book cricket, you have 2 players. When it's your turn to play you open the book to any page. The page number on the right side page is your score. Page numbers with 2 digits or more, have the number in the units place as your score. So, if you open the book to page 412, your score is 2. If you open the book to a page number that ends in a zero you are out, and it is your partner's turn to play. It was a game that GURU and RAM took to a fine art form, escaping undetected by most teachers.



Image: 123rf.com

WHERE DID THE AUTHOR'S CLASSMATES SIT? BEHIND HER  
WHERE DID CRICKET ORIGINATE? ENGLAND

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NAME ONE OF HER CLASSMATES. GURU, RAM

NAME SOMETHING THE CRICKET PLAYERS TAKE TURNS DOING. BAT, BOWL

WHAT AMERICAN GAME SOUNDS LIKE CRICKET? BASEBALL

DESCRIBE HOW A SCORE IS MADE IN BOOK CRICKET AND HOW YOU ARE OUT

VAKT – PLAY A COUPLE OF ROUNDS OF BOOK CRICKET!

Another thing to do when you are cooped up at home is to create book SPINE poetry. The spine of book (look at the ANATOMY of a book in the visual below) always carries the title of the book in a large and visible font. This is a CONVENTION (practice) from the days that books have been stacked upright or sideways, with their spines out, in shelves in bookstores and libraries. As kids, we would wander around the house, and pick out interesting titles. Then we would stack them together and make it sound as poetic as possible. Here are a few samples.

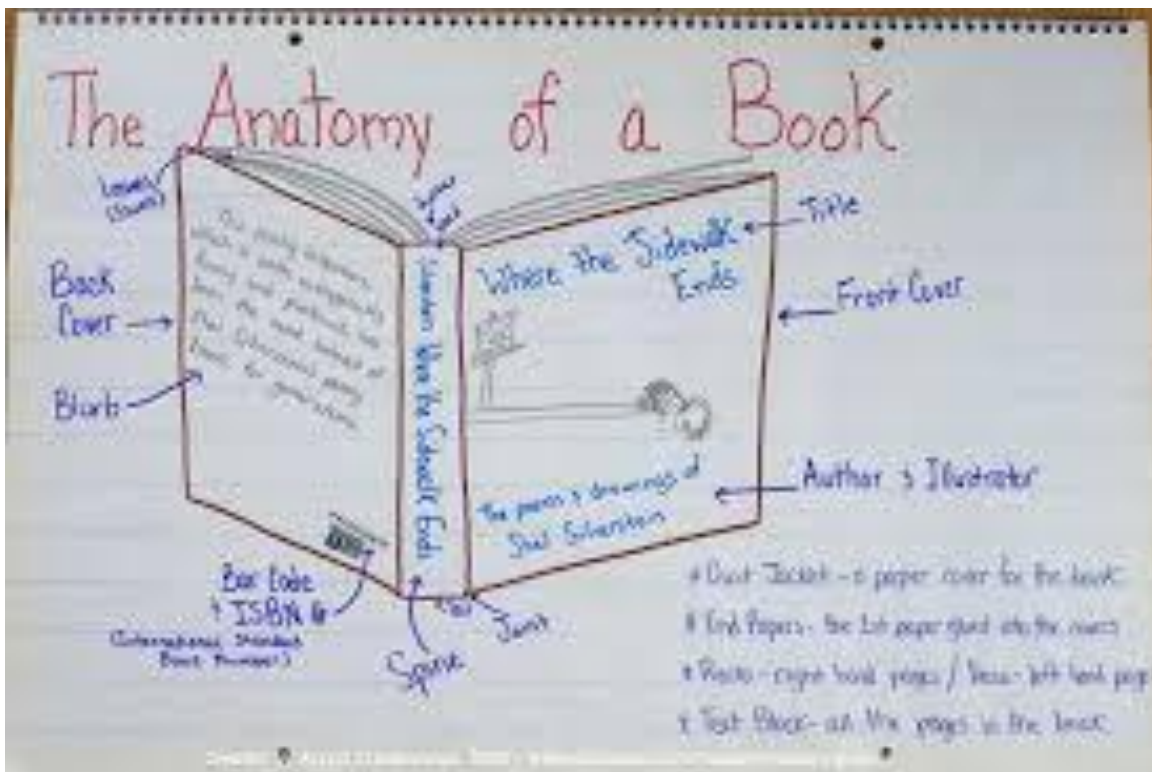


Image: Scholastic.com

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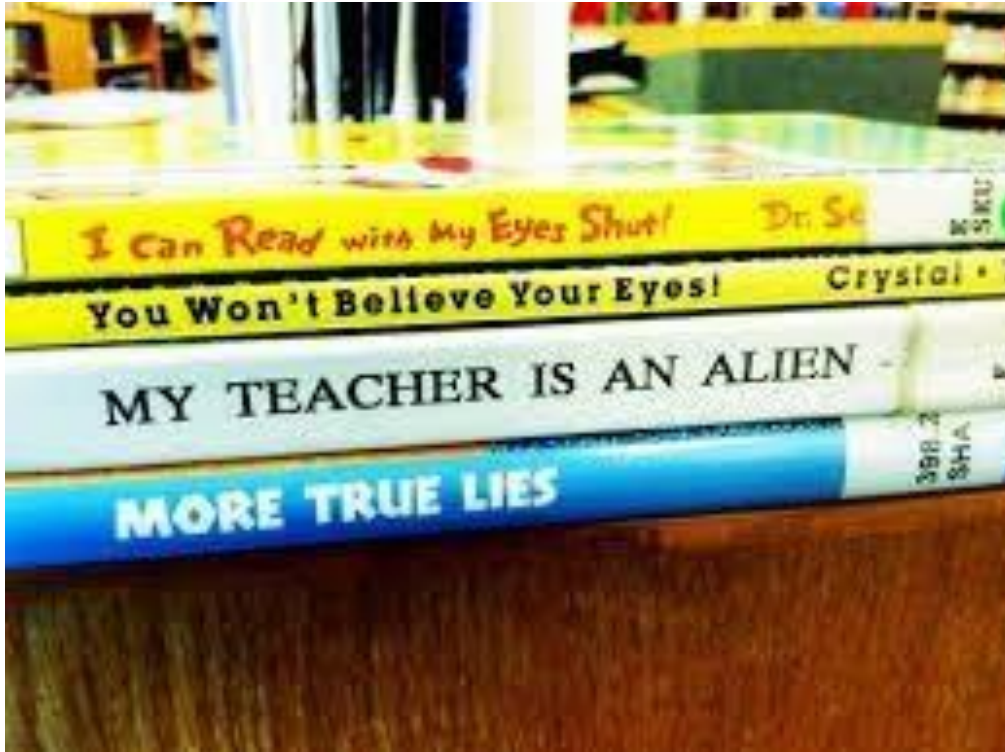


Image: Book Spine Poems - 100scopenotes

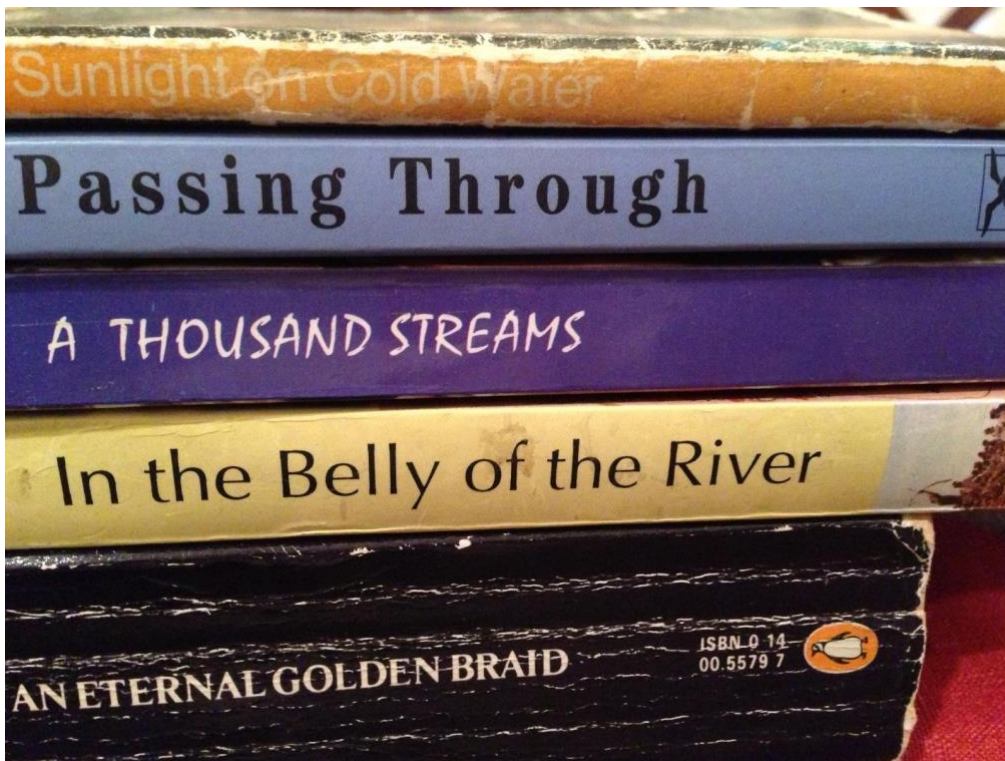


Image – by author

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SPELL: ANATOMY SPELL: SHELVES

WHAT KIND OF POETRY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT? BOOK SPINE

WHAT DO YOU FIND ON THE SPINE OF THE BOOK? TITLE

WHAT KIND OF FONTS DO YOU SEE ON THE SPINES OF BOOKS? LARGE, VISIBLE  
NAME A PLACE, THAT I MENTIONED, WHERE YOU USUALLY SEE BOOKS STACKED  
LIBRARY, BOOKSTORE

VAKT- MAKE YOUR OWN BOOK SPINE POETRY WITH A SET OF BOOKS TO CHOOSE  
FROM

VAKT – USING THE VISUAL ABOVE – GO OVER THE ANATOMY OF A PHYSICAL  
BOOK

When we cousins were apart, we stayed in touch with each other by writing long hand written letters. This was pre-email, and phone calls between cities, called long distance calls, were expensive. Our passion for books showed up in our letters as well. Since we often owned the same books and sometimes the entire series, in a collection, we wrote in CODE to each other. We picked a book that we both owned, and we would use a code that would use page, paragraph, line and a word's position in a line to indicate a word. For example in this paragraph I would indicate the word 'series' by giving you this number 51. ( 5<sup>th</sup> line, 1<sup>st</sup> word in that line.) The entire letter wouldn't be in code, but we had key sentences in code. I wish I had kept those letters, to look at now. Years later, I read a book called THE CURSE OF CHALION by LOIS MCMASTER BUJOLD where the princess and her trusted CHANCELLOR (a high-ranking court member) on a secret mission for her, used this exact same code to send secret messages to each other.

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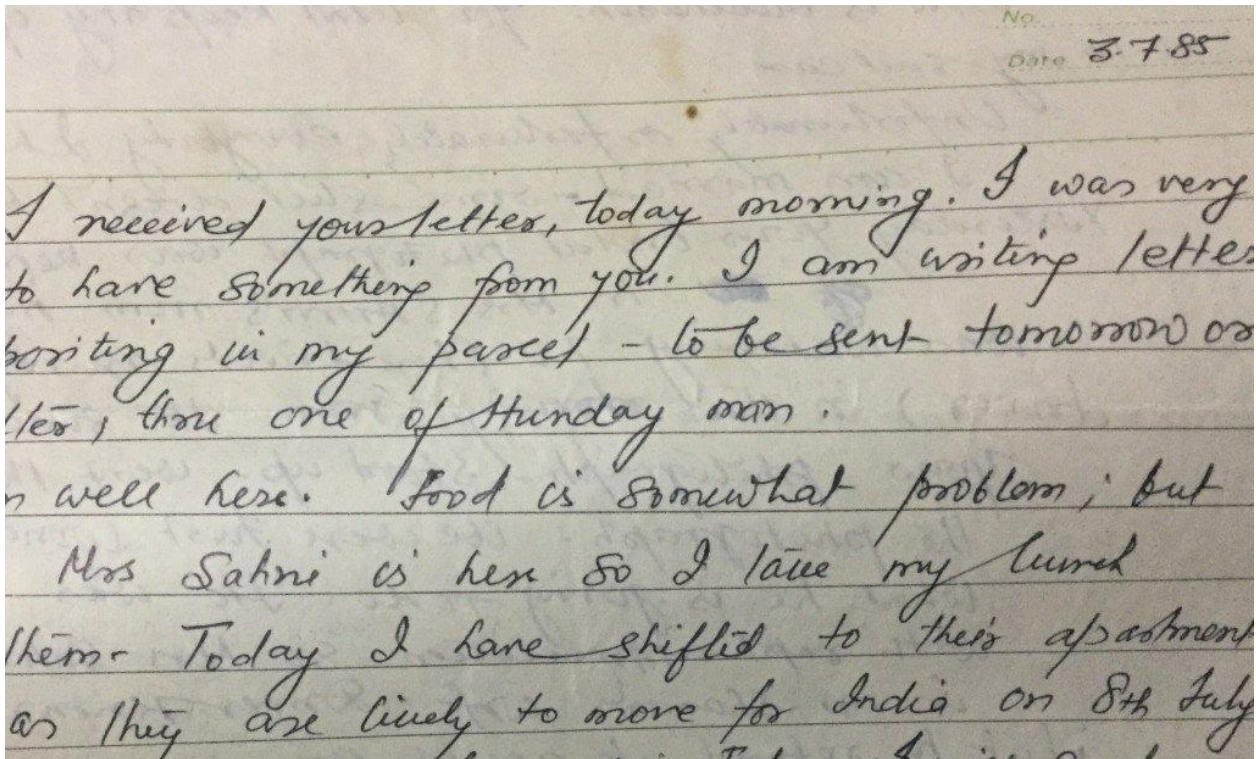


Image: Letterpile.com

SPELL: PASSION

SPELL: COUSIN

WHAT IS THE ELECTRONIC FORM OF SENDING LETTERS? EMAIL

HOW DID THE COUSINS STAY IN TOUCH? BY LETTER/BY HANDWRITTEN LETTER

WHAT PHONE CALLS BETWEEN CITIES CALLED? LONG DISTANCE CALLS

NAME ONE ELEMENT OF A BOOK THE CODE USES PAGE NUMBER, PARAGRAPH NUMBER, LINE NUMBER, POSITION OF THE WORD IN A LINE

NAME A CHARACTER WHO USES THE CODE, IN THE BOOK, THE CURSE OF CHALION PRINCESS, CHANCELLOR

HOW WOULD YOU ADAPT THE LETTER BOARD INTO A CODE?

VAKT- HANDWRITE A SENTENCE WITH YOUR CRP'S SUPPORT

Once I became an S2C practitioner, and I know what a thirst for learning the spellers I partner with have, I've been lucky enough to read many books together with them. I am going to tell you something that might heighten your own emotions. Every reader is different, and every speller uses a different way to navigate the motor skills needed for reading or the regulation needed to listen as someone reads out loud. Some learn the OCULAR (relating to eyes) MOTOR skills

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needed to read a book - physical or on a device, and some prefer to be read to. Wherever you are in your motor or regulation skills, enjoy the process and remember doing a little a day goes a very long way to getting where you want to be. In ESCAPADES (an act requiring daring or adventure) with my spellers, I've learnt from my mistakes. With a young adult whom I still work with, I picked a book called SARAH, PLAIN and TALL by PATRICIA MACLACHLAN because we were studying the history of the western expansion in the United States in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century. This speller refused to read the book, because he was 18, and the reading level recommendation for that book was Grade 3. Even though it was a NEWBERY award winner. Newbery is an award given, out by the AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION annually to writers who contribute to children's LITERATURE.



© American Library Association

Image: ALA.org

SPELL: PRACTITIONER    SPELL: LITERATURE

WHAT KIND OF PRACTITIONER DID THE AUTHOR BECOME? S2C

WHAT DO SPELLERS THIRST FOR, ACCORDING TO THE AUTHOR? LEARNING

WHAT KIND OF BOOKS RECEIVE THE NEWBERY AWARD? CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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WHICH CENTURIES DID THE AMERICAN EXPANSION WESTWARD OCCUR? MID 18<sup>TH</sup> TO MID 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

NAME A FORM THAT YOU CAN READ A BOOK IN - PHYSICAL, ON A DEVICE

WHY DOES THE SPELLER THIS AUTHOR IS TALKING ABOUT REJECT THE BOOK, SARAH - PLAIN AND TALL?

I did plead my case that I still love and read children's and young adult books to this day. But to someone whose competence had been questioned for a very long time, my choices are not relevant. We read instead, ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST, by KEN KESEY. Since that time, I've enjoyed many books with my spellers. The speller who I just told you about, who has now read many books was happy to have A LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE by LAURA INGALLS read to him, because he decided he wanted to catch up on CLASSICS (something of established value) most people have read in their childhood. Happily, he is now at a place where he is comfortable choosing any book he wants to read. He feels he doesn't have to prove his competence by picking only a certain type of book. Books are an open book to him (haha - joke!). I, on the other hand, explore options with my spellers before they pick the book they want to read. A good place to explore what you want to read – is on a site called GOODREADS.COM. Your best bet is to ask other readers for recommendations. I still ask my cousins what they are reading. And for those of you who prefer reading in different forms there are so many blogs to choose from. There is one for every interest. For example, if you are interested in nature photography, just put the phrase 'best nature photography blog' in GOOGLE or any other search engine and the links to the blogs will come up for you.

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**What will you discover?**  
Because Deborah liked... She discovered:  
 Steam Punk, Science Fiction, Fantasy

Image: Author

SPELL: HOUSE

SPELL: CUCKOO

WHICH BOOK DID THE SPELLER END UP READING INSTEAD OF SARAH, PLAIN AND TALL? ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST

WHO IS THE AUTHOR OF A LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE? LAURA INGALLS

WHAT KIND OF BOOK IS A LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE? CLASSIC, CHILDHOOD CLASSIC

NAME A KIND OF BOOK THE AUTHOR STILL LOVES TO READ CHILDREN'S BOOKS, YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE IDIOM BOOKS ARE AN OPEN BOOK TO HIM MEANS?

VAKT: TYPE GOODREADS.COM INTO GOOGLE OR BING ON A DEVICE, LOOK THROUGH THE WEBSITE.

It's not possible to end the lesson without talking about at least one book that I've enjoyed reading with a speller. So here it is. QUAKING by KATHRYN ERSKINE. It

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has a female PROTAGONIST (lead character) called Matt - Matilda who is 14. Matt is closed off to making new relationships, and dresses like a GOTH. That's a subculture, that dresses in black, wears black eyeliner, black lipstick, black nail polish. She has been placed in multiple foster homes, had an abusive father, and lost her mother. The book begins as she is placed in a new foster family with SAM and JESSICA FOX. They are calm and loving and respond to Matt's hostility and silence with love. They are QUAKERS (a religious order) and you learn a lot about their beliefs and how they stand up for peace. The book is set in 2002/2003 when a passion for revenge and war sweeps their community. Being anti-war is seen as being unpatriotic. Matt's new family is in danger because they are activists in the peace movement against war. A boy who is bullying Matt, in school could be a part of this. The book is about standing up for one's beliefs, and about love. A lovely inspiring story, with a Matt you all want to be like.

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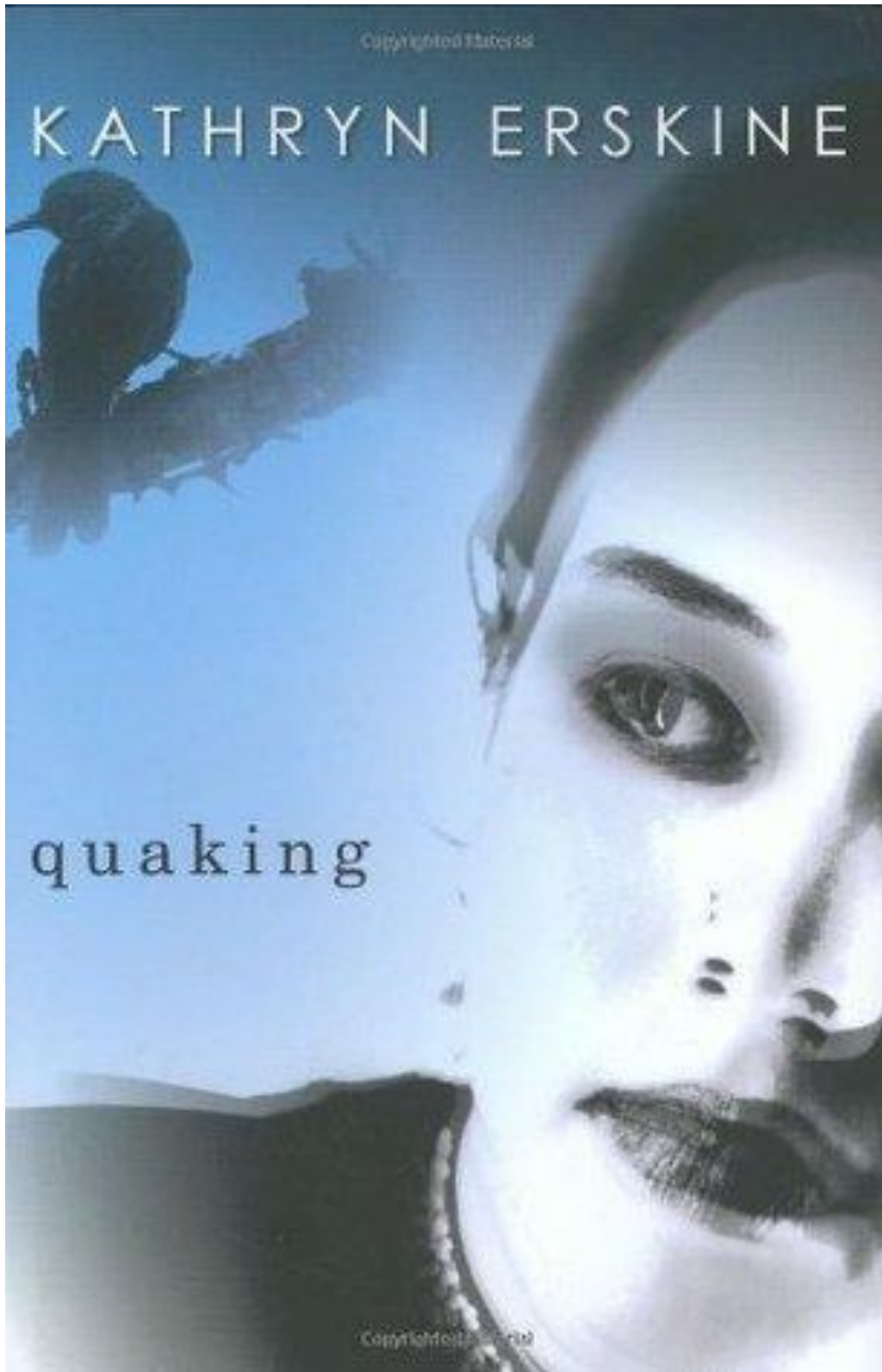


Image: Goodreads.com

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SPELL: GOTH

SPELL: CHARACTER

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE AUTHOR OF QUAKING? KATHRYN ERSKINE

WHICH COUNTRY IS AMERICA AT WAR WITH? IRAQ

WHAT IS THE NAME OF MATT'S NEW FOSTER PARENTS? SAM AND JESSICA FOX

NAME A STYLE CONVENTION THAT I MENTIONED THAT GOTH'S USE TO DRESS

BLACK CLOTHES, BLACK NAILPOLISH, BLACK EYELINER, BLACK LIPSTICK

WHY IS MATT'S NEW FAMILY IN DANGER? THE COMMUNITY THEY LIVE IN, IS FOR AMERICA'S WAR IN IRAQ, WHILE THEY ARE STANDING UP FOR PEACE. THE COMMUNITY AND THEY DISAGREE ABOUT WAR.

VAKT – FIND BLACK CLOTHING AND BLACK MAKEUP, EXPERIMENT IN DRESSING LIKE A GOTH

### CREATIVE WRITING:

PICK A BOOK YOU'VE READ. CHANGE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING: THE LEAD CHARACTERS AGE OR GENDER, THE SETTING, A PLOT POINT. WRITE ABOUT HOW ANY CHANGE YOU MAKE CHANGES THE BOOK.

Lakshmi Rao Sankar, S2C Practitioner, The Whole Point, Brooklyn NY

The author, Lakshmi Rao Sankar, lives in Brooklyn, has a dog named Obi, and is a passionate gardener. She finds author blurbs ( a short description for promotional purposes) hard to write.

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