



LITBITS

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First Annual Celebrity Read-In!

The Monticello Middle School Literacy Team celebrated reading with classrooms across the country on Tuesday, November 9—**National Young Reader's Day**, sponsored by Pizza Hut and the Book-It Program. To make the day even more special, the Literacy Team sponsored a star-studded event—the **1st Annual Celebrity Read-In**.

The media center and classrooms were filled with local and national celebrities, who had captive audiences, as they read their favorite books to our students and shared stories of how reading is a part of their careers. Some of the celebrity readers included: Brad Sellers, former NBA player for the Chicago Bulls; Charles Eversole, Director of the internationally acclaimed Singing Angels; Jim Draper, former Safety Director for the City of Cleveland and brother of young adult author Sharon Draper; Dr. Rich Drushel, Professor of Biology at Case Western Reserve University; Dr. Portia Winston, Consultant; Andrea Cain, Registered Nurse at University Hospitals; and Laura Evangelista, professional puppeteer.

They also welcomed a host of mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, older siblings, and grandparents. In addition, Monticello celebrity readers included administrators, guidance counselors, security personnel, teachers, and secretaries.

Since the **1st Annual Celebrity Read-In** was a huge success, plans are underway for a 2nd Celebrity Read-In for the spring of the year, complete with live radio broadcast and more celebrity readers.

Monticello's participation in the **National Young Readers Day Celebrity Read-In** could earn the school \$1,000 for books and educational resources and a school-wide pizza party. What a wonderful way to celebrate reading!

READ 180 PROMOTES SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

Students at Wiley and Heights High are working to "do a 180" on students experiencing difficulty with reading so that each can achieve high success. This intensive reading intervention addresses individual needs through high-interest literature, instructional software that can be adapted to the students, and direct instruction by the teacher. This evidence-based program produced by Scholastic is highly motivating. The computer segment of this program tracks student progress using ongoing assessment related to various literacy skills.

Learning areas include a reading zone, a word zone, a spelling zone and a success zone. There are content rich video clips that provide background knowledge for the text passages that the student reads. Vocabulary development is supported systematically and it is context embedded in the text. Oral reading practice occurs as students record themselves using microphones.



Phonemic awareness and phonics instruction are supported with modeled practice. Computer instruction is hosted by Ty, a congenial coach who is always patient and supportive. The real life teacher is very critical to the program's success, and the small group instruction is a very important part of this balanced literacy approach.

READ 180 replaces the regular English/language arts classes. Sessions occur daily for ninety minutes. The day begins and ends with whole group direct instruction. Between these meetings, students have three small group rotations. One area is a reading station including paperbacks and audio

books and cassette players for independent reading. Often this station has cozy couches or bean bag chairs for comfortable reading. A second area is the station with computers containing the instructional software and microphones. Finally, a group work station includes work tables or clusters of desks for teacher-directed small group instruction.

A companion piece to Read 180 is Scholastic Red which is a staff development online ten-session course that includes reading assessment components, strategic comprehension instruction and classroom management. This course will be offered to Read 180 teachers second semester.

Building a Wall

Assessment walls are being constructed in every elementary school. Now, some of you may be asking, ‘What is an assessment wall?’ An assessment wall is a visual representation used to chart students’ progress in guided reading. Usually, the “wall” is made of pocket charts; along the top of the chart are the Fountas & Pinnell Reading Levels (AB-WXYZ). Using an index card for each student, teachers indicate which reading level best matches the student based on assessment information gained from the Houghton Mifflin Leveled Reading Assessments or running records. Typically used for teachers in primary grades, the wall has two important purposes: to study learning trends in student groups (Title I, Special Education, transfers) and to study reading progression in relation to standards.



At grade level meetings teachers are able to view the data of all students in their grade. Teachers discuss ways to support students as they progress in their reading development. Often, the building principal, reading teachers, or literacy specialists are present at the meetings to support teachers and students. Together, everyone works to promote student achievement!

“ASK REEVES” 101 Questions & Answers about STANDARDS, ASSESSMENT, and ACCOUNTABILITY



Have you heard of it? Have you seen it? Have you read it?

If you answered “no” to any of these questions, this is your opportunity to join in learning about this district-wide resource. If you answered “yes” to all of the above questions, then you may appreciate the challenge of testing your memory.

In August, 2004 this professional resource book was distributed to all teachers in the District. It is a compilation of questions posed to Dr. Douglas B. Reeves during keynote presentations, experiences as the Test Doctor, and while working with students in classrooms. It provides answers to commonly asked questions about standards, standardized tests, performance assessment, writing to achieve, standards and electives, student motivation, interventions for under performing students, accountability, 90/90/90 schools, and leadership issues.

Try your hand at the true/false test below. The statements are based on Reeves’ responses to very important questions about standards (Chapter 1).

True or False

1. ___ Standards are fair and effective. (p. 7)
2. ___ The rubric is the most important element of standards. (p.9)
3. ___ No standard or assessment has value without insightful, professional, caring teachers. (p.10)
4. ___ Focus on student work is the heart of implementing standards-based instruction. (p.16)
5. ___ Standards in practice require teachers to be coaches and guides, not merely evaluators and instructors. (p.17)

Each month, you are invited to “Take the Test” as *Lit Bits* continues with “ASK REEVES”.
Next issue: Standardized Tests (Ch. 2)

Oh, and by the way, all five statements are true!

3rd GRADE READING ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES ON THE RISE

Results from the fall administration of the 3rd *Grade Reading Achievement Test* indicate that 55.4% of our third grade students were at or above proficient. This percent includes all students with disabilities who took the test and compares to 49.5% proficient or above in October in 2003. Our fall performance exceeds that of the statewide performance, which was 54.6%. The highest district scores were

in the Acquisition of Vocabulary Standard with a 71.95%. All students who scored at the Accelerated Performance Level or below will take the test again in March 2005. The 3rd *Grade Reading Achievement Test* will be an indicator on this year's State Report Card and will be counted for AYP. Thank you to all staff who worked so diligently and collaboratively to prepare the students for fall testing.

Noble Literacy Night



Many Noble families and teachers participated in a Family Literacy Celebration the evening of October 26.

Beacon Street came and entertained the families with great stories, juggling and songs from their presentation of "Open the Book". Students had the opportunity to balance peacock feathers on their hands and noses.

Cookies and punch were served as the students chose books at their levels to read in the Literacy Lobby and at home. All who attended had great fun!

Oxford's Character Tea

On October 29, Oxford's students and staff celebrated great books by hosting the 3rd Annual Character Tea. The day began with the Character Parade. Students were transformed into beautiful princesses & courageous superheroes holding books such as *Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, *Superman*, and *Batman*. Teachers became characters such as Cruella DeVille, Little Red Riding Hood, Amelia Bedelia, Esmeralda and a Yellow M&M. In the office, a good witch was answering the phone while the principal was the mouse from *If You Give A Mouse A Cookie*.

Following the parade, students assembled in the gym to hear a storyteller unfold a fabulous tale. Students later heard stories read by student readers. Guest readers, Sally Levine, Joe Micheller, Michael Daugherty, Connie Preisel, and Karen Frantz were invited to read to 4th & 5th grade classrooms during lunch. This day was a huge success and tribute to great books! Special thanks to the Oxford Literacy Team for supporting this event and to Amy Bloomberg, Sarah Lambert, Karen Rego, Betty Miller & Jackie Wayne for organizing the day.



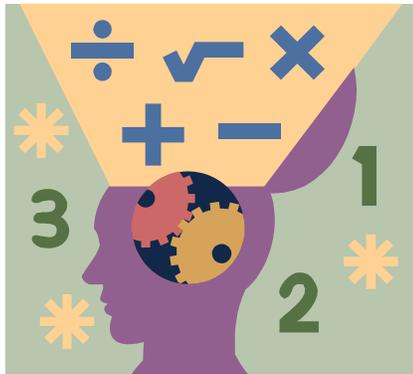
Title at Fairfax



Title at Fairfax has a different twist again this year. In addition to Title 1 Reading, Fairfax also has a Title 1 Math Program. Mrs. Nemes and Mrs. Chapman combine forces to supplement the regular educational program for many of the children. This year's Title focus is on the Content Standards for all grades in Reading and Proficiency Outcomes for the 4th graders in Math. Both teachers also integrate Writing Standards into their lessons as well. Sound confusing? While the children in the picture are practicing on their reading fluency, the book they are reading actually deals with Ordering and Patterns in Math. The groups are up and running and both teachers report that the children are delightful.



Title 1 Math at Fairfax



This year at Fairfax the Title 1 Math students have been expanding their mathematics vocabulary. In addition to the terms presented in our units, we have also been using the Shutterbug (Math) Classroom Library. The students have been given an opportunity to construct and add to their working vocabulary. The difficult part of learning vocabulary in math is that the terms are not part of our daily conversation. Providing additional opportunities allows the gradual shaping of word meanings. In addition to guided reading to enhance math instruction, the Shutterbug library is leveled so that students may self-select and read independently. It has been an enjoyable addition to our program.

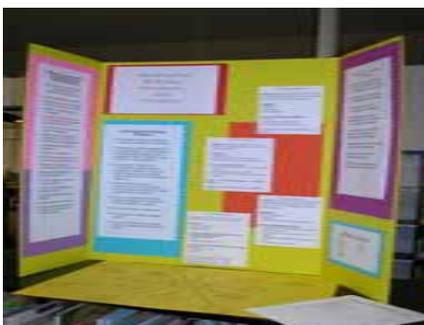
Laurie Chapman

Coventry Kids' Countries & Nonfiction Writing

The Professional Development Day in November of 2003 was a catalyst for Coventry teachers to learn more about Tony Stead's topic of nonfiction writing. Coordinated by Betty Kohn, board supported reading teacher, the classroom teachers, media specialist, and reading specialists convened during the following months to read and discuss the many ideas in Tony Stead's book, *Is That a Fact?* By March, they were ready to begin informational, descriptive, instructional, and persuasive writing with their students.

The kindergarten students engaged in whole-class explorations learning about animals or China. The Title I students enjoyed making pizza and writing directions to create favorite recipes. After previewing books about various countries, 2nd and 3rd graders chose a country and five areas of study like food, weather, clothing. Prewriting strategies included webs, KWL, and note-taking. Once the sloppy copies were revised and edited, final copies were written. In May all finished products were displayed in the media center. When all projects were completed, students and teachers reflected on what was learned about research and nonfiction writing.

Students Learned	Teachers Learned
Pick a subject to research.	Model with a group report first.
Use a computer to get information.	More modeling could be done with note taking and paraphrasing.
Combine information from several resources.	More time needs to be spent each day on nonfiction writing.
Use prior knowledge.	Seek out more kid-friendly websites.
Take notes to write sentences and paragraphs.	DO NOT start this project the last month of school.



Canterbury's Leveled Book Room

The new leveled bookroom has been a high priority this fall at Canterbury School. Funds from Ohio Reads Grants have enabled the school to receive many exciting books that teachers will use with their students in the classrooms. The Canterbury Literacy Committee has been the backbone of this initiative.

Ketti Finneran, PTA Co-President, has been instrumental in organizing parent volunteers to help level the books for the new room. Judy Davis, Reading Specialist at Canterbury, provided training for the parent volunteers. The bookroom parent volunteers have provided endless effort on this important project. Special thanks to the following parent volunteers: Chantel Akerib, Betsy Bell, Pam Berkson, Flo D'Emiliam, Rebecca Martin, Arlene Rosenberg, and Sandra Simon.

The Canterbury staff, especially the Literacy Committee, wants to thank and recognize Carol Ghazarian, Literacy Specialist, for all her work on the Ohio Reads Grants and book purchases.

Good Bye and Good Luck

The ladies in "Literacy Lane" bid adieu to their colleague & friend, Carol Ghazarian. Carol, a literacy specialist, retired from CH-UH after a distinguished twenty-eight years of service. We wish her continued success and much happiness in her future endeavors.

Best Wishes to all for a joyous holiday season!