



April 2016
Reading Partners

Marlyn's Message

Dear volunteers and supporters,

With this beautiful Spring weather come thoughts of year end planning as we once again flow into the program's home stretch. Many of you have asked how long we continue reading in the schools; the answer is it depends on the school or community center. Some of the students are very busy with year end field trips and other school year end programs that start the beginning of June. At other locations, the teachers may invite you to remain through the second week of June, when full days are still

in session. At each location, you'll have year end parties to celebrate with your students and that's probably the best indicator of how long you'll be at the school/center. So check with your Team Leader to find out the dates for those parties.

Each year the program celebrates your service with a year end event and this year again it will be a breakfast held at the JCC. I plan these events as a way of giving my personal thanks for the energy, time and commitment that each of you gives to Reading Partners. It's an opportune time to catch up with other reading volunteers and hear a great speaker, too!

The children feel so lucky to have you in their lives and I'm grateful that you've chosen Reading Partners as a way to express your citizenship, social values and commitment to literacy. Please be on the lookout in your email and USPS for your invitation. Details are also below.

Warm regards,
Marlyn



This year at our year end school and center parties each volunteer will be giving his/her student a book personally picked out by you. 70 of you came into the office and picked out books of your choice. It was a free mini-library with books of all topics in grades K-3. I found that a majority of the books fell into Grade 1. So, for those who couldn't get in and want suggestions, here are some books that were compiled by the youth librarians at the Ferguson Library, specifically targeted for 1st graders.

All the Stamford libraries have specific grade lists available in a handy brochure.

The Case of the Baffled Bear
Crocodile and Hen: A Bakongo Tale
Good Night, Good Knight
Mama, Don't Go!
The Outside Dog\
Bepop Express
Coming on Home Soon
Isabel's House of Butterflies
Chickie Riddles
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers
Mystic Horse



My name is Annika Tallis and I live in Darien, CT. I am a senior at Greenwich Academy in Greenwich, CT. In addition to being a reading partner, I have a job at a local chocolate store and am going to be a camp counselor this summer.

I first participated in the Reading Partners program as a junior in high school. I remember how on the first day, both my buddy and I were shy and it took some time for us to warm up to each other. By the end of the year, she was like my little sister. Watching her reading skills progress made me tremendously proud and I loved being able to share my love of reading with a younger girl. I was excited to continue volunteering with the organization this year and am lucky enough to be reading with two second graders. What I love about the program is that I am able to connect with other high schoolers that have the same passion as me of helping younger students with their reading skills. The curiosity and energy that the kids have each week is inspiring and I hope that I will be able to continue participating in the Reading Partners Program while in college.

Continue Your Sight Words Work

The purpose of reading is to construct meaning from text. This meaning is dependent on the rapid, automatic and effortless recognition of words. "In order to read and write fluently with comprehension, children must be able to automatically read and spell the most frequent words." (P. Cunningham) When reading becomes more comfortable, the student can then "read to learn" vs. "learn to read."



There's still plenty of time to work on sight words and you can have a lot of fun doing it with board games, index cards and games of concentration.

From the Reading Tutor's Handbook by Schumm and Schumm: How to Teach Sight Words—

1. Choose 3 words for your student to learn.
2. Write the first word on an index card.
3. Pronounce the word.
4. Ask the student to pronounce the word.
5. Talk about what the word means.
6. Work together to think of a sentence using the word. Write the sentence on the back of the index card.
7. Repeat steps 2-6 with the other 2 words.
8. At the end of the session, review all 3 words.
9. The next time you meet, flash the 3 words to your student. For each one read correctly, put a check mark on the index card. If your student misses a word, offer encouragement, read the sentence on the back of the card, and review the pronunciation and meaning of the word.
10. Add a few new words.
11. After a word gets 5 checks, you can enter the word in your student's personal dictionary. Review the words in the dictionary from time to time.

Volunteer Appreciation Event in the Works!

Your invitation is coming--look in your USPS-snail mail! Mark down May 25, at the JCC from 9:30-11:30.