



Spring 2007

TEAM READ TIMES

Taking a look at First Amendment issues

By **Monica Fiscalini**
program director

At a recent Team Read staff meeting, the on-site coordinators and I were looking over children's spring-themed books featuring Easter bunnies, egg hunts and chicks.

We are careful to make sure that a Bible story doesn't end up in the Team Read on-site libraries. Teaching about religious holidays in public schools is legal; however, Team Read is not the right place to do so. We only have 30 minutes, after all!

I did a little digging around and found some guidelines from the US Department of Education regarding volunteers in public schools.

"Volunteers must respect the very strong First Amendment rights of students:

- Do not preach about your faith to the children and their families while conducting your educational activity.
- Do not prohibit or discourage speech or other activity simply because of its religious content or nature."

At our meeting, we discussed that Easter is a festive and significant season for some families and not for others.



The First Amendment Center notes that in the classroom: "Religious holidays offer opportunities to teach about religion in elementary and secondary schools. Teaching about religious holidays, which is permissible, is different from celebrating religious holidays, which is not. Study of holidays serves academic goals of educating students about history and cultures as well as about the traditions of particular religions."

With all religious holidays and/or gift giving occasions, we need to be respectful of students' circumstances.

Thank you for your commitment to helping students with their reading and serving as a positive and caring role model.

Fast Facts:

- ☺ Team Read's 110 tutors are serving 193 students.
- ☺ Twenty-eight of the Team Read students are being tutored in Spanish.
- ☺ Ten prospective tutors for the 2007-2008 school year contacted the Team Read office in March.
- ☺ Eighty-two tutors, staff and guests attended the March luncheon/training.
- ☺ Principals from each of the five Team Read schools have attended a luncheon/training this school year. Thank you!!
- ☺ The "You Read to Me, I'll Read to You" series by Mary Ann Hoberman is a big hit at all the schools. Thank you, tutors for letting your on-site coordinators know what your students' and your favorite books are. We can then purchase copies for all sites to enjoy.

APRIL 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Thank you for volunteering your time & talents with Team Read!						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Schedule of Events

- ☺ April 2-6 — Spring Break
No tutoring
 - ☺ April 12 — National Drop Everything and Read Day
Celebrate birthday of Beverly Cleary, Ramona Quimby author
 - ☺ April 15-21 — National Volunteer Week
 - ☺ May 11 — Last day of Team Read tutoring for 2006-07 school year
 - ☺ May 16 — Team Read luncheon (free)
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Chinook Room, Fruitland Building,
200 S. Fruitland
- June 8 — Last day of school

Goodbye from program director

June 8 is the last day of school and also my last day as Team Read program director. While I have thoroughly enjoyed the job, my husband and I are planning a move to Boise, Idaho.

I will help the new director in any way I can to make for a smooth transition. I also plan to assist the National Children's Reading Foundation in its efforts to offer Team Read to other school districts. NCRF has taken its READY! for Kindergarten program to other districts in Washington and as far away as Oklahoma and Canada!

Thank you, tutors and school staff for making Team Read such a great program.

— Monica Fiscalini

MAY 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Team Read briefs

National Volunteer Week

Inspire by Example is the theme for National Volunteer Week (April 15-21). The annual celebration was created in 1974.

About 61.2 million people in the United States (26.7 percent of the population) volunteered through or for an organization at least once between September 2005 and September 2006, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported in January.

'That's not reading!'

Children's book author Mem Fox reminds adults about the importance of comprehension in her book, "Reading Magic."

"It's crazy to try to assess children's reading ability by simply asking them to read aloud," she writes. "They might do it successfully yet have no understanding of the text at all, and that's not reading!"

Tutors must chat with students about what they're reading to make sure they comprehend what's happening in the story, Fox points out.

Lit fest 2007

The Mid-Columbia Literary Festival continues through May 31 at Columbia Basin College. The winning entrant from the second annual Mid-Columbia Reading Foundation Children's Book Writing and Illustrating Contest will read on

May 22. For a complete schedule, visit www.columbiabasin.edu/litfest.

Final weeks

These final weeks of Team Read for the 2006-2007 school year will be busy ones. Before our last day of tutoring on May 11, we'll provide spring bags for tutors to give to their students featuring a book and Cool Reader sunglasses.

We'll celebrate a great year with a tutor luncheon on May 16.

Tutors will also be given the opportunity to sign postcards reminding their students to read over the summer. Coordinators will pass out cards to sign in the coming weeks, and the office will mail them to students in mid-summer.

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Newsletter prepared

by Monica Fiscalini, program director



Improving
Reading Skills ...
One Student
at a Time!

Famous quotes on volunteering

Citizen service is the very American idea that we meet our challenges not as isolated individuals but as members of a true community, with all of us working together. Our mission is nothing less than to spark a renewed sense of obligation, a new sense of duty, a new season of service...

— former President Bill Clinton

Everyone can be great because anyone can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't even have to make your subject and your verb agree to

serve... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

How can we expect our children to know and experience the joy of giving unless we teach them that the greater pleasure in life lies in the art of giving rather than receiving.

— James Cash Penny

If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.

— Booker T. Washington

A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm.

—Henrik Ibsen, poet and playwright

Team Read is a program of the National Children's Reading Foundation that has provided one-on-one reading tutoring to select elementary schools in the Kennewick School District since 2000.

