



# Reading Counts



## Engaging Students with the 4R Plan

Emma Martin

Team Leader & Livonia Tutor

In the classroom setting, it is essential for students to pay attention in order to further their own education as well as the education of their peers. Unfortunately, the attention of students can be hard to grasp, especially around the Halloween season. Luckily, there is a four 'R' plan (introduced by Renee Bodkin) to send your students down the path of wanting to pay attention, despite the excitement of the season:

### 1. Reward Great Attention

Students want to learn and pay attention in your class when they know they will be rewarded. Rewards may be considered bribery but in all honestly, we are rewarded for our successes in life, why not in school? Students of all ages respond to rewards. The key is to find the rewards that work best for the students in your class.

Kindergarteners are happy with a sticker and a prize from the prize box. Extra points on a test grade often motivate middle and high school students. I think that most students of any age will pay attention if they know that candy is at stake. Kids like candy! Obviously be aware of allergies and parental issues with food but you usually can't go wrong with a bag of candy sitting on your desk as incentive to stay on task. These types of rewards do not have to be used on a daily basis. The most important reward is positive feedback. Catch them being good. It's so nice to catch a child when they're good and compliment them.

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## Fall... into Reading and Math

Theresa LeBlanc

Dansville Tutor

As a teacher or tutor, there are so many great reading and math activities to do during this time of year!

One example is the unique writing responses for these next months. Talk about the fall and how this time of year stimulates your senses.

- What do you see?  
*Leaves changing, night coming earlier.*
- What do you hear?  
*The wind, a wolf's howl, crunchy leaves.*
- What do you taste?  
*Pumpkin pie, Thanksgiving meals.*
- What do you feel?  
*The colder air coming! Excited for meals with family!*
- What do you smell?  
*The hay from the hayrides, paint from the pumpkins, candy from trick-or-treating!*

Another example is to use math in cooking recipes! For example, try having students write out steps on how to cook a turkey. Then follow up with how much you have to use of each ingredient. Cooking means fractions so this is a great time to reinforce or teach new math skills!

Graphing leaf colors is another interactive way to be engaged with the season. Have cutouts (or use real leaves!) and graph (bar graph style would probably be the most comprehensive) how many leaves of each color you find.

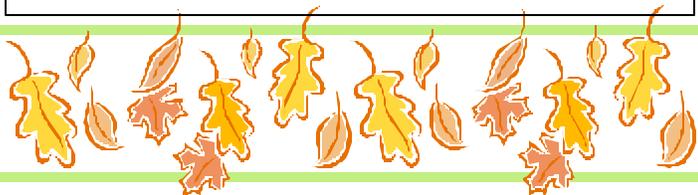
Some festive ideas for writing or worksheets:

\*print on orange, brown, or yellow paper

\*using "fill in the skeleton" instead of "fill in the blanks"

\*have writing responses or shape poems fill in leaf or pumpkin-shaped cutouts.

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## Engaging Students with the 4R Plan

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### 2. Relevant Information – Related to Life

This may seem like a “no-brainer” but make sure students see the relevance of the information being taught. Make sure they realize that 99% of what they are going to learn in school is important and related to their lives. Younger children need to know that learning reading and writing each day will improve their skills and will make them better readers and writers when they grow up. This makes what they are learning relevant and will make them want to pay attention.

### 3. Remove Distractions

Students have a difficult time paying attention when there are numerous distractions. Remove potential distractions and the chances of students wanting to pay attention will increase. Distractions could be on the kids’ desks, out the window or door. Other adults in the classroom talking quietly or on the phone could also be a distraction to students. Even a pencil or extra paper could pose as a distraction to a student. Teachers need to anticipate what could be a distraction in their class. Then they need to do what they can to remove these distractions.

### 4. Really Fun

Don’t just make class fun, make it really fun! Your enthusiasm is contagious. If you are enthusiastic about learning then they will be too. It’s hard *not* to pay attention when the teacher is full of life and energy. Use your voice to keep their attention. Speak very softly then change to an exuberant voice. This holds a student’s attention and keeps them on task. If you are excited about a topic then it will rub off on the students. They’ll be excited! If your class is “Really Fun” then the students will want to pay attention.



## Speech Can Be For You Too!

**Gail Brooker**

Mt. Morris Tutor

Whether working on a math problem or reading a story, the students we work with are always talking. While you are listening, you may pick up on words that they do not pronounce correctly or you may notice that they have trouble sounding out words. Even though it is the job of the speech therapist to address their specific needs, there are a few easy things you can do to help them improve:

**Provide a model:** If the student mispronounces a word, repeat the word back to them correctly. This provides them with more opportunities to hear the correct form of the word. You’ll be surprised at the number of students who will say the word again correctly!

**Sound it out:** If the student is trying to say an unfamiliar word, first let them attempt. Then, point to each part of the word as you sound it out. Next, let the student try to blend the sounds together. If they are unsuccessful, make sure you sound it out again and blend it together correctly.

**Encourage them:** Reading is hard! It’s important to always let the student know that it’s okay if they do not sound out a word correctly. The main thing is that they are trying, and by trying they are learning. If a student is really frustrated you may want to provide an example from your own childhood. This shows the student that they aren’t alone and that you were just like them.

There is one important point to remember when using these strategies: **Do not interrupt the student so often that it interrupts the flow of reading or comprehension.** We do not want to frustrate our students even more by stopping them after every couple of words. Use your discretion and take cues from their body language and facial expressions. Enjoy your time with the students and realize that simple strategies like these can make a world of difference!



## Reminders

- Final Activity Circle of the semester will be held Tuesday, November 13 at 9:00 am in the Union room 324.
- The Final Reflection Dinner for the fall 2007 tutors will be held Wednesday, December 5 at 6:00 pm in the Union room 322/323. We look forward to seeing you there!

## Fall into Reading and Math

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### Great Fall Literature:

For Grades K-2

\*Alligator Arrived with Apples: A Potluck Alphabet, by Crescent Dragonwagon

\*Autumn: An Alphabet Acrostic, by Steven Schnur

\*How Do You Know It's Fall? by Allen Fowler

For Grades 3-4

\*The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A Story of Life for All Ages, Leo F. Buscaglia

\*The Stranger, by Chris Van Allsburg

\*Pumpkin Fiesta, Caryn Yacowitz

For Grades 5 and Up

\*The Witches, Roald Dahl

## Important Contact Info

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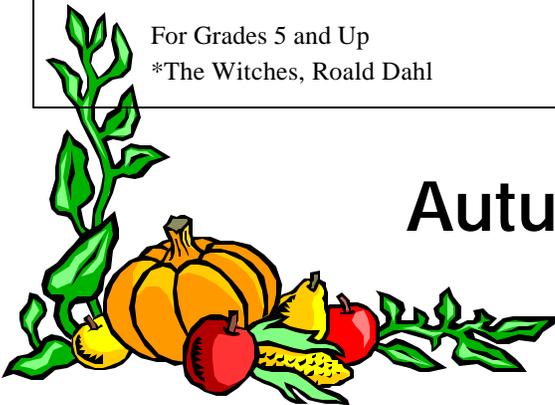
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Mt. Morris and Geneseo

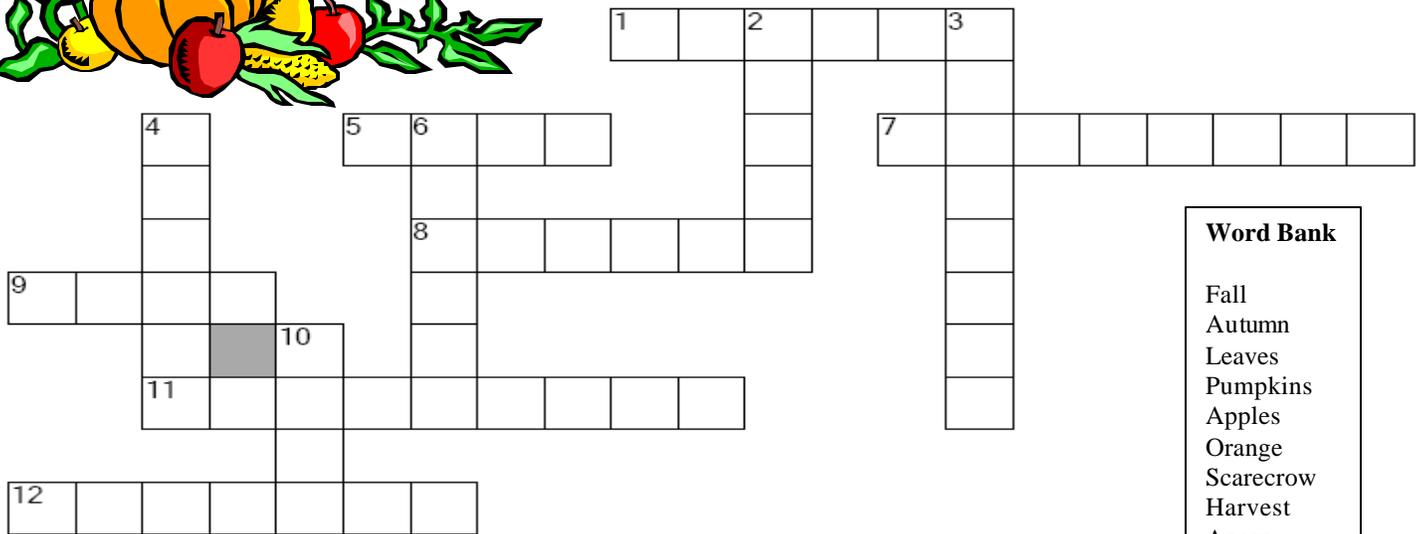
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## Autumn Crossword Puzzle



### Word Bank

Fall  
Autumn  
Leaves  
Pumpkins  
Apples  
Orange  
Scarecrow  
Harvest  
Acorn  
Rake  
Corn  
Squirrel

### ACROSS

1. Changes colors in the fall
5. Grows on stalks
7. Great for pies and for carving
8. The third season of the year
9. Another name for Autumn
11. Scares birds from cornfields
12. To reap or gather

### DOWN

2. The fruit of the oak
3. A small rodent
4. Keeps the doctor away
6. Red and yellow makes this color
10. Used to gather fallen leaves

Newsletter created by Emma Martin and Rachel Dungan

***Spread the Word!***  
***Tutors are needed for the Spring Semester!***

We have already received requests from classroom teachers for tutors in the spring semester. Please pass the word that we will be recruiting. Students who were student teaching in the fall are very welcome to join us in the spring! We anticipate openings throughout the school day, but students with availability in the morning hours will be particularly needed.

TUTORING FAQs

**Q. What benefits are there in becoming a tutor in the America Reads or America Counts programs?**

Share a love of reading or math with a child; Connect with the off-campus community; Gain skills that improve your resume; Have a fun and challenging experience; Make a difference in a child's life!

**Q. Will I be paid?**

Generally, in order to be paid for your tutoring you must a) be work study eligible b) have taken ANY of the following: CURR 213, CURR 313, MATH 140, MATH 141, SPED 366, or CDSC 310 c) have your own means of transportation.

If you meet all requirements except for the coursework, there are limited paid opportunities and pre-schools in Mount Morris or Dansville. Please contact us for more information.

If you do not meet these requirements, you may still gain the experience of working for the program by becoming a volunteer. Volunteers who have not had the above stated courses generally work in pre-K classrooms. Volunteer tutors who have had one of the above courses may be placed in a K-6 class. All placements are subject to having available spaces for tutoring.

**Q. With what grade levels will I be working?**

Our tutors are placed in grade levels pre-K through 6th grade. We will not place a tutor in a grade level he or she is not comfortable tutoring. Please let us know your preferences and we will do our best to find a good match.

**Q. With how many children will I be working?**

This is up to the discretion of the classroom teacher. Some will prefer you to work one-on-one and some will prefer that you work in small groups. You will not have to teach an entire class.

**Q. Will I be tutoring subjects other than reading or math?**

No. If you are an America Reads tutor, you should only be tutoring in reading and literacy. If you are an America Counts tutor, you should only be tutoring children in math.

**Q. How many hours will I be required to tutor?**

Generally, tutors are in the classroom between 3-6 hours per week. Your tutoring schedule depends on our own classroom schedule, the number of hours you have available, and the needs of the school districts. If you are a paid tutor, you will also receive hours for your travel time and your preparation and training.

**Q. Is there work involved outside of the classroom?**

There are a series of training workshops that you should plan on attending. Some will be mandatory and some optional. We also strongly encourage spending some time outside of the classroom in preparation for your tutoring sessions.

**Q. What school districts are involved?**

We have placements at the following schools: Geneseo Elementary, Livonia Primary, Livonia Intermediate, Mount Morris, Avon Central, Dansville Primary, Dansville Intermediate, Dansville Middle School, and Kidstart (pre-K in Geneseo, Mt. Morris, or Dansville)

**Q. How do I get to my placement?**

You are responsible for your own transportation. You must have consistent access to reliable transportation to participate off site. There are a limited number of opening available on campus at the Holcomb center if you do not have a car.

**Q. How do I get involved?**

Contact Andrea DiGiorgio at 245-5734, [digorgi@geneseo.edu](mailto:digorgi@geneseo.edu)