



# Reading Counts

Avon Elementary School • Dansville Primary School • Dansville Elementary School • Dansville Middle School • Geneseo Elementary School • Livonia Primary School • Livonia Intermediate School • Mt. Morris Elementary • Livingston – Wyoming KidStart

TUTORS YOU ARE INVITED TO THE 2007

## Final Reflection & Brunch

*To show our appreciation for your dedication to the America Reads & America Counts program and to reflect on our achievements and experiences, we invite you to join us for brunch on:*

May 2<sup>nd</sup>

11am until 12pm

in the College Union Hunt Room

RSVP by April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007 to [rotha@geneseo.edu](mailto:rotha@geneseo.edu)

### Let's Calm Those Testing Nerves!

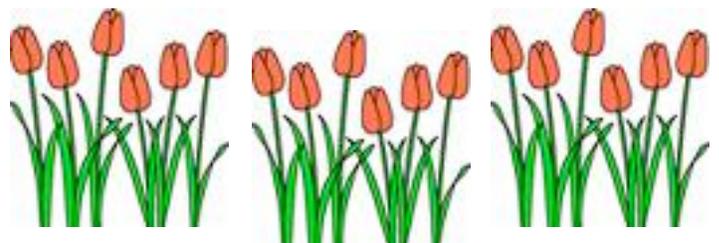
Rachel Dungan

Mt. Morris Elementary

Students feel the pressure of state and standardized testing, no matter how hard teachers might try to shield them from the worry that can interfere with performance. There are many fun and simple ways teachers can help their students relax and focus, on the day of the test. Some ideas include:

- Have the class pick out a favorite picture or short chapter book for the teacher to read aloud
- Provide students with paper, crayons, markers, etc. to draw and color
- Play soothing instrumental music
- Engage students in brain teaser games and logic puzzles
- Play abstract thinking games as a class
- Simulate a "warm-up session" where students can physically stretch out their muscles, arms, wrists, hands, and back muscles especially.

These activities can take place 20 minutes before the testing is scheduled to begin, acting as the calming time before the test. The activities can provide students a chance to clear their minds of test anxiety, so they can better focus on content and performance. Also, these activities can take place when the class is finished testing for the day, as more of a cool down, rejuvenating approach. By providing our students with a time that takes pressure and anxiety away from the "test" we can demonstrate to our students that we have pride and confidence in their ability to perform their best on the test!



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## It's Important to Read to Older Kids, Too!

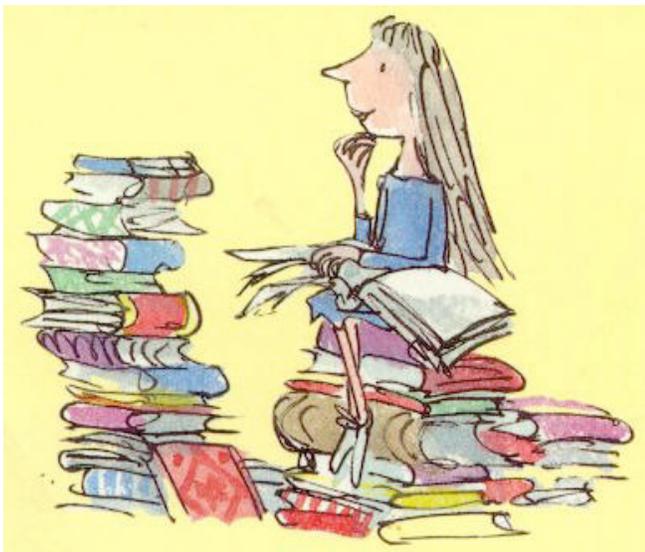
Jessica Atwood

Geneseo Elementary Tutor

A lot of people think that reading aloud is only beneficial to young children; however, that is not true. "Children of all ages benefit from being read to" (Nagle).

In the first grade class that I tutor in, it is easy to motivate kids and get them interested in reading, but what about older children? The newest thinking has concluded that the same techniques for intriguing younger readers work well for older children, too. Reading aloud to them is the best way to foster curiosity and interest in a subject, book, and the overall joy of reading. Other benefits include:

- "Children can learn what good grammar and good writing are, as well as how language can sound, when a good book is read to them" (Nagle).
- It can increase their writing skills.
- It can increase the attention span for children who have trouble reading alone.
- When adults read to their children, it becomes a shared time to bond.



Nagle, Doreen. "Read aloud to older kids, too." Gannett Newspapers 27 Oct. 2005: 3C.

## Contemporary Movies on Children's Classics Reviewed: *Because of Winn Dixie*

Bridget Commisso & Michelle Buonanno  
Livonia Central Tutors



Because of Winn Dixie by Kate DiCamillo, is about a young girl India Opal (Opal for short), who moves to a small town with her father, the preacher. Once there she finds a stray dog that she takes in and names Winn Dixie. Throughout the summer, Winn Dixie helps Opal to make many friends in her new town and to build a stronger relationship with her father. Because of Winn Dixie is a story of love, friendship and learning to be thankful for what you have.

While the movie and book both share the same general storyline, there are a few notable differences. The book is written with a young reader in mind and hence does not go very far into developing story lines or creating background, while the movie further explains events. Also in the movie, the characters are further developed and given more and different traits. One other difference regarding characters was the order certain characters were introduced. While this is a minor difference in our minds it changed some of the relationships that evolved between characters. Lastly, in the book, Winn Dixie is accepted immediately by everyone involved; however, in the movie, Winn Dixie's acceptance takes more convincing.

In our opinion, both the book and movie are well suited for school and using both can make an excellent venn diagram lesson. Given the choice, we would pick the book, simply because we felt it was much happier and better suited for independent readers.

We give the movie one thumb up, but the book gets two. Once again, making the book the winner!

## The Importance of Praise

Laura Shellhammer

Mt. Morris Elementary Tutor

A copy of this poem has hung on my refrigerator at home for as long as I can remember. Almost every time I go into the kitchen for a quick snack, I catch myself reading the poem out of habit. As a future teacher, I feel that the poem's message is a crucial one to consider when interacting with students in the classroom setting.

Many children in today's world come from unimaginable home environments. In the classroom, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the "typical" child who craves attention for the sole purpose of receiving it and the neglected and/or abused child who *needs* attention. Teachers must be very careful in their treatment of each individual student. For some children, school is the only safe haven in a world of sadness, fear, and disappointment. Because of this, it is important that all students are praised frequently throughout the school day.

In the poem, one can only imagine how the children in the first three stanzas must feel after hearing their parents' remarks regarding their accomplishments. All people, not just children, like to be praised for a job well done. When positive reinforcement is lacking, children lose their sense of self-worth, a problem that may continue well into adulthood.

As teachers, we **must** find the good in every student. Of course we are going to encounter the occasional "troublemaker," but it is absolutely necessary to believe that even the most difficult child is deserving of some form of approval.

When I tutor, I offer my students praise as much as possible. Sometimes a simple, "You did a great job today!" does the trick. Other times, I bring small, tangible rewards with me. There are a million ways to make students feel confident and cared for.

In many cases, the quality of life for students outside of the classroom is unknown. Teachers have the important responsibility of establishing a warm classroom environment and praising students as much as possible. School may be the only place where some children can truly smile...



## ★ Self-Esteem ★

*A Poem For Teachers Or Parents Or Peers Or School Nurses Or Anyone!*

**"I've got 2 A's" the small boy cried.  
His voice was filled with glee.  
His father very bluntly asked,  
"Why didn't you get 3?"**

**"Mom, I've got the dishes done."  
The girl called from the door.  
Her mother very calmly said,  
"And did you sweep the floor?"**

**"I've mowed the grass" the tall boy said, "and  
put the mower away."  
His father asked him with a shrug,  
"Did you clean off the clay?"**

**The children in the house next door  
Seemed happy and content.  
The same things happened over there, but this  
is how it went:**

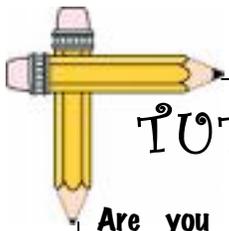
**"I've got 2 A's" the small boy cried,  
His voice was filled with glee.  
His father proudly said, "That's great! I'm glad  
you live with me!"**

**"Mom, I've got the dishes done."  
The girl called from the door.  
Her mother smiled and softly said,  
"Each day I love you more."**

**"I've mowed the grass," the tall boy said, "and  
put the mower away."  
His father answered with much joy,  
"You've made my happy day!"**

**Children deserve a little praise  
For tasks they're asked to do.  
If they're to lead a happy life,  
So much depends on you.**





# TUTORS NEEDED!

Are you looking for an opportunity to gain experience in education? Are you interested in tutoring children in reading or math? Join the America Reads/America Counts program at SUNY Geneseo and make a difference in the lives of local students and schools!

## Qualifications for the K-6 program:

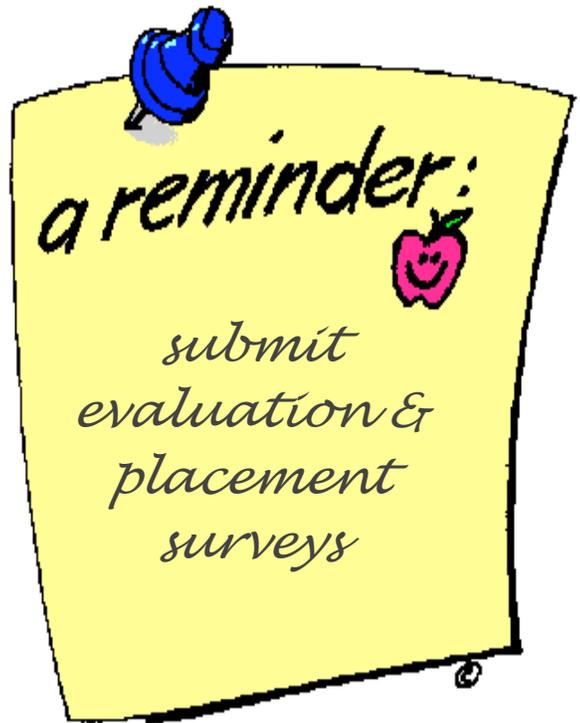
- Completed at least one of the following courses: EDU 213, EDU 214, Math 140, Math 141, SPED 366.
- Must have access to reliable transportation.
- Agree to entire semester commitment.
- Tutors who are work-study eligible may be paid for their tutoring and travel. Volunteers are always welcomed!

## Qualifications for the pre-school program:

- No class prerequisites.
- On-campus placement (Holcomb Building).
- Volunteer basis.
- Commit to at least one hour a week for an entire semester.

## *Interested?*

*We are looking for Fall 2007 tutors! For more information about the program check out our website at <http://ses.geneseo.edu> or contact Andrea DiGiorgio at 245-5734.*



## **Contact Information:**

**Andrea DiGiorgio, Coordinator**  
(585) 245-5734  
digorgio@geneseo.edu

**Angela Roth, Program Assistant**  
(585) 245-5734  
rotha@geneseo.edu

**Kay Fly, Volunteer Coordinator**  
(585) 245-5893  
fly@geneseo.edu

**Andrea Mason,  
Federal Work Study Coordinator**  
(585) 245-5731  
masona@geneseo.edu

## **Website**

<http://ses.geneseo.edu/read.php>

