

USC Readers ^{PLUS}

Fall 2005 Newsletter

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From the Director:

A Great Beginning

This fall semester has brought many new faces to the USC ReadersPlus program as well as some new "partner programs". We have introduced three new coordinators—at Weemes, 32nd Street, and Norwood, 44 new Readers and Math Mentors, and 2 new graduate students to our office to coordinate new programs—Literacy One and the African American Millenium Foundation Pen Pal Program. In addition, we are working with a new principal at Norwood Elementary this year – Francis Goldman.

Though new to her role as school principal, Ms. Goldman is not new to USC ReadersPlus. In 1997, the program's inaugural year, she was a teacher at Norwood and worked closely with our first cadre of USC Readers. Congratulations on your new position, Ms. Goldman, and thanks for your continued support!

Looking Ahead

We are presently in the process of collecting and compiling our student assessment data to help us evaluate our program's efforts in improving the reading and math skills of struggling students at our schools. During the first week of October, USC Readers pre-tested 55 students, assessing them in terms of both reading skills and attitudes. Math mentors pre-tested 32 students during this same period. After six weeks of one-on-one individualized attention and assistance from their Readers and Math Mentors, many of these children were graduated from the program prior to post-testing because of marked improvements. A full assessment report will be composed once all data is gathered and reviewed.

I would like to personally thank *everyone* who has worked so hard to make the beginning of the 2005-06 academic year such a great success—tutors, coordinators, program office staff, and school staff alike. USC ReadersPlus is a signature program here at USC because of the meaningful work that we all commit to *together*.

Thanks for a great semester, and let's look forward to the beginning of yet another great year in 2006!

Peaceful Holidays –
Tina

WELCOME NEW READERS & MATH MENTORS!

ENJOU ALEXANDER	ANGELI BERGER
FIONA BLACK	ROBYN BOLDEN
JEZREEL CHARLES	LEON CHEUNG
CLATRINA COOPER	ALEXI COPPINGER
KATHARINE DANIEL	IRMA ESCOBAR
AMANDA FOURNIER	CHEYLINEL GASTON
JESUS GONZALEZ	EMMANUEL GUTIERREZ
CHRISTINE HASROGLOW	CHRIS JONES
DAVID KANG	KENYA KAPLAN
LAUREN LUSKEY	CASEY McALDRUFF
COURTNEY McDERMOTT	EMANUEL MEZA
SHAUNA NEWMAN	LINDSAY OSBORN
WHITNEY PEPPER	FRANCISCO PUS
DEWA RAAB-SNYDER	ANITA RAI
LAURA ROBLES	DINA SALAMIA
PATRICIA SANTOS	ARIEL SHALIN
MELISSA SHIMIZU	JEFFREY SKINNER
AGNES TANG	RANDI THOMPSON
ANDREA VALDEZ	ANGELA VIMUTTANAN

Kids Say the Darndest Things...

Here are your responses for some of the funniest things your students have said to you!

"I have to finish my homework so I can go to soul circus!"

Friend says "You've been saying that all day!"

-5th graders, Foshay

"Why didn't you put your contacts in today?", When I showed up to work wearing glasses.

- Jenn

Moody, Weemes

"Do you know how to dance?"

"Yeah, I have all the moves!"

- Casey McAldruff, Norwood

2nd Grader: Do you have a boyfriend?

Reader: Yes.

2nd Grader: Does he have a tight car? Where'd you get him at? Did you wait till you were big and smart and then you chose him?

- Ilka Turcios, Weemes

Kindergartner pointing to a plush cow- she rubs her belly and says, "MMMMM, carne asada!"

- Patte Gonzalez, Vermont

GRABS MY CELL PHONE AND SAYS "NO! I TOLD YOU NOT TO CALL ME... I WILL CALL YOU LATER... YOU MONKEY!"

-4TH GRADER, FOSHAY

One time we were playing Scrabble and one student was writing the names of the players down. He wrote down USC for me because he didn't know my name and I was wearing a USC shirt.

- Emanuel Meza, Norwood

"Do you want a burrito?", as he pulls 4 squishy burritos out of his pant pockets. I guess they had burritos for lunch that day.

- Maria Spinozzi, Vermont

Kindergartner: I have a penguin.

Reader: What's his name?

Kindergartner: It's a girl. Her name is ballerina.

- Jezreel Charles, Weemes

YOU'RE IN COLLEGE, BUT I'M WAY SMARTER THAN YOU,

- LAUREN LUSKEY, 32ND STREET

Third Grader: Do you have any kids?

Reader: No, I don't.

Third Grader: Are you married?

Reader: I'm not married.

Third Grader: Well, you should hurry up and get married because you're getting old!

- Chelsey Rask, Norwood

I ASKED A KINDERGARTNER WHAT SHE WANTED TO BE WHEN SHE GROW UP. SHE SAID "A MODEL, A SINGER, A DANCER, AND A POLICEWOMAN" TO WHICH I ASKED HER WHETHER SHE MIGHT NOT HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO HAVE 4 JOBS. SHE EXPLAINED THAT HER MOM WOULD WRITE HER A NOTE SO SHE COULD BE ALL OF THEM. - Fiona Black, FOSHAY

"you could buy a tuxedo for yourself and one for me and we could be on a date!"

- Maureen Osborne, Vermont

THE NEWEST ADDITIONS TO OUR READERS FAMILY

USC African American Millennium Pen Pal Project & Literacy One

COORDINATOR: JOMELINE BATALAYO

COORDINATOR: SONJA LOPEZ

The USC African Millennium Pen Pal Project includes students from Foshay Learning Center, 32nd Street School, Manual Arts High School, and the College Readiness Academy who all persevere to prepare for the new SAT.

They engage in writing lessons offered by the Pen Pal instructor and they collaborate in various literacy group activities. During each meeting, the students are introduced to vocabulary words that are likely to appear on the SAT, and they are asked to use these words in their writing samples, as well as in collaborative group efforts. Moreover, the students are taught to improve their grammar, writing structure, and critical thinking skills through authentic literacy events.

In addition, the Pen Pal participants have successfully communicated with their pen pals in South Africa. They have all been enlightened about South African culture and have helped to motivate and inspire students in South Africa to achieve academically.

Literacy One is an English as a Second Language program that focuses on improving reading readiness, vocabulary, social fluency and phonemic awareness for non-native English speaking kindergarteners. The USC ReadersPlus program is now administering the program, working with teachers and students at Norwood, Weemes and Vermont Elementary Schools.

Literacy One is a highly interactive, kinesthetic and tactile student-centered program, which augments and supports the mandated Open Court reading curriculum and strives to close the gap between this prescribed curriculum and English language learners. Ten to twelve students are served at each of our schools based on teacher referral and parent permission and orientation.

After school sessions take place at each school for 90 minutes, twice a week, at no cost to parents. Each classroom is staffed with one credentialed, experienced kindergarten teacher and one teaching assistant, an experienced USC Reader.

PUMPKIN CARVING

This semester, the office staff hosted a pumpkin carving party at the JEP house! This was a great way for staff from different sites to get to know each other while showing their Halloween spirit.



Clockwise from top: Lia Evans, Daisy Ortiz, Chris Jones, and Jackie Gurany have some Halloween fun!

Readers and Math Mentors came, socialized, and carved!

SHAUNA
NEWMAN, OF
WEEMES, HOLDS
HER
AWARD-WINNING
PUMPKIN!



Thanks for joining us at our Holiday Celebration!

GOOD LUCK ON FINALS!

THANKS FOR A GREAT SEMESTER!!

Family of Five Spotlights

Meet some of our Readers and Math Mentors!

VERMONT: Maria Spinozzi

Major/Minor: Aerospace Engineering / Planning and Development

Years as a Reader: 4th year, minus one semester

Best Session You've Had With A Student: We read Balloon Farm by Harvey Potter. My student liked it so much she wanted to make her own farm, so we made a book farm. I was really surprised that she remembered all the books she had read with me.

Favorite Children's Book: There's a Monster at the End of this Book. It's cute, and fun to see if the kids can guess who the monster at the end of the book is.

FOSHAY: Fiona Black

Major: Screenwriting

Years as a Reader: 1

Something You Want People To Know About You: I lived in England before moving to San Diego.

Best Session You've Had With A Student: I was with this really quiet Kindergartner who has a lot of difficulty with the English language. We were doing an activity where I traced his body on construction paper and then he drew clothes on himself and named his head, legs, and arms etc. I cut it out and held it up to him and the biggest smile spread across his face. I folded it up and gave it to him and knew he was really happy for the first time.

NORWOOD: Chris Jones

Major/Minor: Sociology/International Relations

Years as a Reader: 1 semester

Something You Want People To Know About You: I dropped out of high school with a GPD of 0.93 and made it to USC. Fight on!!!

Best Session You've Had With A Student: Helping my student who knows English as a second language enter the reading/writing contest.

32ND STREET: Lauren Luskey

Majors: Public Relations/Religion

Years as a Reader: 1/2 (I started this Fall)

Something You Want People To Know About You:

I'm from Texas and my dad owns a western store, but I don't have an accent or dress like a cowboy.

Best Session You've Had With A Student: I taught a main idea lesson that I wrote on my favorite Halloween book, The Hallo-weiner, and we decorated masks to go along with the story. It was great to see my students enjoy and learn from a lesson I created, and I loved sharing one of my favorite stories with them.

WEEMES: Jenn Moody

Major/Minor: Psychology; Business/Religion minors

Years as a Reader: 3 years

Best Session You've Had With A Student: When a student remembered the first four letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make. We'd been working on them for about 4 weeks and it was good to see that he'd made progress.

Favorite Children's Book: Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day because my mom used to read it to me and my brothers all the time and we would all chime in and say the line "terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day" every time it appeared in the book.



More Resources

WEBSITES FOR MORE ACTIVITIES

1. <www.aliontheweb.org>

This website is for a children's literature project. It gives a blueprint for literacy and lots of activities. You can explore model classrooms to see activities in action.

- contributed by Delia Raab-Snyder, Vermont

2. <www.scholastic.com>

This website contains a plethora of activities for several grade levels. After choosing a grade the website allows you to choose subjects and a skill. For each skill you chose, there are interactive online activities and lesson plans, as well as whole themed units (good for After School!).

- contributed by Jordan Rice, 32nd Street

3. <www.lessonsplanpage.com>

This website has a large variety of activities for different grade levels, and especially for elementary school students. It has a lot of science, technology, and math lessons, in addition to reading.

- contributed by Alexi Coppinger and Melanie Abnoosian, 32nd Street

4. <www.teachingideas.co.uk/english/contents.htm>

This site offers many creative reading ideas and activities for different ages, as well as activities in different subjects. It includes a list of recommended books, as well.

- contributed by Stephanie Margolin, Vermont

5. <www.eduref.org/cgi-bin/printlessons.cgi/Virtual/Lessons/Mathematics/Applied_Math/APM0203.html>

This is a website about applied math so that children can see the real world applications of mathematics. It can make math more tangible and the plans seem to be very thought out and well done.

- contributed by Melissa Shimizu, Vermont

6. <<http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/jep/readers/activityres.htm>>

This is the actual website for USC ReadersPlus and contains activities submitted by Readers and Math Mentors. This is a great space for anyone looking for quality session activities that don't need to be modified!

- contributed by the Office staff, Readers Office

Math + Fairy Tales

FOR ANY FAIRY TALE:

After reading the standard version of any fairy tale, ask the student to revise their favorite fairy or folk tale to include numerical information. This new version of the tale can be used as a source for generating story problems.

Directions:

1. Pick a favorite fairy tale or folk tale. Read the tale you have chosen.
2. Rewrite the tale by adding numerical information
3. Write five story questions that someone else could answer using the added information based on their grade level and experience.

Example for *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*:

The Bear family has three boy bears. The oldest, Bernard, is 16 years old. The youngest, Bobby is 7 years old. The middle bear is named Barry. The bears live with Mama and Papa Bear in a house in the woods. They have 2 dogs and a cat.

Humans loved to bother the Bear family, and they would come to try and sell them things like magazines and automatic wood choppers, which are very useful in a forest.

One day, Papa Bear said, "That's enough! That one human, Bob, came every day last week! We are going on a vacation!".

Sample Questions:

1. If Barry is 2 years younger than Bernard and 2 times as old as Bobby, how old is he?
2. How many animals total (including the Bears) live in the Bear household?
3. If Bob visited the Bear family everyday last week, how many visits did he make to the Bears' home?



Math + Fairy Tales

General Activity

Help Mr. Wolf find out how many pigs are in each house - This covers subtraction facts through 18 and motivates the student to do the facts.

For any Fairy Tale:

Ask the students to revise their favorite fairy or folk tale to include numerical information. This new version of the tale can be used as a source for generating story problems.

Directions:

- 1.
- 2..
- 3.

Compose word problems suitable for their level, using the fairy tale theme...(i.e.If Snow White and 5 Dwarfs took a nap, how many dwarfs would be awake?)

Practice Telling Time with Cinderella - Is an activity the motivates the student to help Cinderella place the correct time onto each clock.

Cinderella: