

Pages for Parents

A quarterly publication brought to you by:



The Grand Rapids Reading Institute

Fall 2011

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News

Turning Pages' tutors will again be working with 24 low 2nd and 3rd grade readers at Congress Elementary in Grand Rapids this year, and an additional 18 first graders are expected bringing our total to 42! These students are learning to read and spell using multi-sensory techniques and phonics instruction. Students use sand trays, bubble wrap and other textures to learn letters, sounds and words. This hands-on instruction keeps students engaged and aids recall. It is the best way to teach all learners and it is making a difference with these at-risk students. Tutors and students will work together for the whole school year thanks to a grant from the Rich and Helen DeVos Foundation!

Do you order gifts on-line? If you do, you can help Turning Pages raise funds by using Goodsearch. Go to www.goodsearch.com and put in Turning Pages as your favorite charity. Click on Goodshop and you will see all the participating stores. Shop as you normally would and Turning Pages will get a percentage of your sales. Thank you for thinking of Turning Pages this school year!

Turning Pages had a busy summer working with kids from Taft Avenue Apartments in Wyoming each Wednesday evening. The goal was to strengthen reading and spelling skills in this low-income community. Children ranged in age from 5-8 years old and enjoyed pizza and fellowship along with reading and spelling games with Sally and Jodi. A big thank you goes out to Jodi from Family Outreach Center and to Compassion This Way for helping to make this possible.

Shop the 29th Street Garage Sale Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and help support Turning Pages and other charities! Do you like garage sales? What could be better than having a warehouse full of garage sale items for sale at garage sale prices? The 29th Street Garage Sale is located inside the Watson's store on 29th Street. It is in the back of the store and filled with everything from bikes and garden tools to books and jewelry. Check out their furniture area for great deals on desks and bookcases. Do you have items to donate for Turning Pages? Fill out their on-line form at www.29ThStreetGarageSale.com and put Turning Pages on the name line. Donations are accepted M-W during store hours at the receiving doors.



Board Members:

Sally Berry

Fred Burkhart

Jim DeHoog

Michael Dubiel

Anna Maddox

Tim Neff

David Sawyer

Jim Scholle

Chad Stoub

Robert Sweezie

LOL Joke!

What happened to the dog that ate all the cantaloupes?

Answer on page 2

Activity

Make Your Own Word Magnets

Cut out words from lots of different magazine covers. The covers are usually sturdier than the pages, and the words are bigger. Mount these words onto sticky-back business card magnets (the kind where you turn your business card into a magnet) or other flat magnets that are already covering your fridge. If you are recycling magnets, glue the words on and when the glue is dry, cut the words out into rectangles. Make sentences, messages and poetry out of these colorful words. The different fonts, colors and sizes will make your refrigerator door more attractive and the words will just beckon kids to come up with creative messages.

Sally created the following from just three magazines in the office:

Family: amazing, best ever, special, gift

This fun activity will promote reading, vocabulary development and creativity. Enjoy!

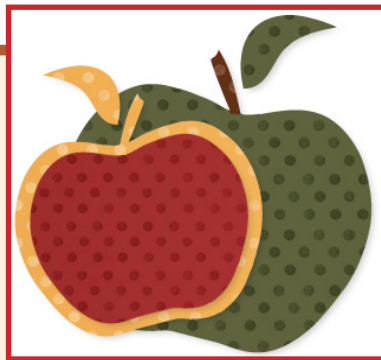
**Answer
to the Joke:**

He became Melancholy!
Get it? (melon-collie)

ha ha HO ho ho!
tee hee! ha ho ho hee!!

Writing Instruction

Writing paragraphs and papers is a difficult thing for teenagers to do. The whole process can be overwhelming and often it is because they have not had enough practice with writing in order to be comfortable with it. Writing instruction needs to take place in all grades.



Many students who struggle with reading need hands-on instruction, and also explicit instruction in order to figure out how the language works. These same students will benefit from this type of instruction when it comes to writing. So, how do you make writing hands-on? Here are some ideas to try at home or in the classroom:

Take a paragraph from a magazine or an article out of the newspaper and copy it, so it is a larger font. Have your student (or child) cut apart the paragraph into individual sentences. Label the sentences (use explicit instruction here and tell what each one is) - topic sentence, detail sentences, concluding sentence and other. By taking apart paragraphs students understand how they are put together. They are also getting practice reading paragraphs.

Another idea is to take a paragraph of 6-8 sentence strips (you will have to type these out) and mix them up. Have your student or child put these in order, so the paragraph now makes sense. To make this more challenging add a couple of sentences that do not fit the paragraph and see if your child/student can figure out which ones do not belong.

One last activity is to go through and highlight the topic sentences and concluding sentences in articles. Read the two and discover how they are similar. What are the words that signal a conclusion? (therefore, finally, etc.)

The more practice a student gets with different activities, the more comfortable they will be when it is time for them to write their own paragraph.

When they do write a paragraph, offer encouragement and praise along with ideas for improvement. Writing will become easier and less of a chore with hands on practice.

Vocabulary Instruction

Morphemes are the smallest parts of words that have meaning and by teaching students these meanings they can figure out the meanings of larger words. For example, the prefix re- means again and the suffix -en means "to make", so the word refreshen means to "make fresh again".

Vocabulary also needs to be taught as early as first grade because students need to understand that words can have different meanings. Take this list of small words taught in first grade: bat, pit, jam, rock and club. Each of these words has 2-4 meanings. If children don't know the meanings of words or only know one meaning, they may not be comprehending the sentences they are reading. Take the following sentences for examples of the different meanings: He cut his gum. Don spotted the bat. Tim cut the deck. You can see how tricky the English language can be. If you want more examples like these, just pick up any Amelia Bedilia book at your local library and you and your children will see the funny mishaps Amelia gets into when she misunderstands or mixes up the meanings of common words and phrases.

Adding morphology and vocabulary instruction to reading instruction will help all students at all ages especially ESL (English as a Second Language) students.

Thank You Notes

Did your child receive a gift from Aunt Margaret who lives in another state? (Hopefully not hand sewn bunny pajamas like in the movie -A Christmas Story) A nice thank you note from your child in their handwriting is a nice and personal way to show their appreciation of the gift. It is also a good way to get your child to practice their handwriting, letter formation and spelling words.

Consider the following difficult words which are on many spelling lists and often are used in correspondence: Mr., Mrs., dear, sincerely, love, Aunt, Uncle, great, beautiful, pretty, etc.

Does your child know his/her address? The return address on the envelope will provide an opportunity to practice this important information. Talk about why the information on an address is needed. You might even look at a map together to see where the letter will travel and how it might get there.

Writing letters is becoming a lost art with all the new technology available, but it is a skill worth learning and a gesture that is still appreciated by the recipient!

Walking and Memory

A new study suggests that walking can help prevent brain shrinkage which happens as people age. When brains shrink, memory problems can occur.

Researchers followed 299 older adult people for nine years and found that those who walked 6-9 miles a week had increased gray matter and did better on cognitive tests than those who did not walk as much.

Those who walked the most cut their risk of dementia in half! It's not too late to start walking today!

The complete study was published in the Oct. 13, 2010 online issue of *Neurology*.

School Anxiety?

You can help your child with these tips from parent coach Tina Feigal:

1. Listen deeply to your child. Reflect how she feels back to her in clear words. When fears start to arise, make eye contact, showing that you really care and say, "I can tell you are worried about the kids on the bus being bullies." Then end the conversation. It is amazing how JUST ACKNOWLEDGING THE FEAR helps it to dissipate.

2. Tell stories of your own school experiences. As adults we often forget to share our childhood tales with our own kids. They think we can't understand them, because we are big and they are little. It's so helpful to remind our children that we were kids once, too. It increases our credibility to show them that we have experience, and that we have overcome obstacles. So share the stories of your success with challenging situations, so kids realize they are not the only ones who face these things. A sense of camaraderie with one's parents is a wonderful family-builder!

See the full article at <http://www.chiff.com/a/back-school-stress-tips.htm>



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Changing a life's direction every day, one page at a time.



A Tongue Twister to Tell Your Sister:
Spoiled boys in Boise enjoy toys that are noisy.