



Fostering Reading: Enriched Environments for At- Risk Children

Using the
Reading Wizards Program

Cara Poon and Daniel Perkins



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The more that you
Read,
the more things you will
Know.
The more that you
Learn,
the more places you'll
GO.

-Dr. Seuss



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Importance of Reading

- Children who read daily:
 - Almost always become good students and have an easier time with schoolwork;
 - Are more likely to develop a love for reading;
 - Are more likely to become lifelong learners.
- In fact, child development experts and educators agree that reading is the single most important skill for children to master.



How Parents Can Help

- Providing children with an environment rich in language enhances their emergent literacy
- When children are exposed to high-quality learning opportunities prior to K, they are less likely to experience school failure & be identified as having a LD



PLACE HOLDER

- Introductions
- What was your favorite book as a child?



Reading Wizards Program

- *Reading Wizards* program is a series of bulletins that help parents get started on reading to their children and developing their children's love of books.
- The *Reading Wizards* program has two series--one designed for parents of pre/early readers, one designed for parents of older readers (ages 6-12).





Reading Wizards Kick-Off Events

- *Dr. Seuss' Birthday Party* for preschool-age children & *Hogwarts Cooking School* for elementary-age children.
- A fun-filled, two-hour event is designed:
 - to encourage children's reading and creativity.
 - to encourage parents and caregivers about reading with their children.



Activities

- Children will make edible treats (birthday cookie sandwiches, *Green Eggs & Ham*, *Forbidden Forest fragments*).
- Children will be involved in fun activities (Pin the Hat on the Cat; *sorted by the sorting hat into their house*).
- Parents join in on the activities and learn more about resources that Penn State Extension offers for their family.



PLACE HOLDER

- Do one Birthday party activity:
 - Pin the Eggs on the Plate
- Model the Sorting Hat Ritual with five participants.
- Do one recipe/experiment - Cookie Sandwich



Place Holder

- Discussion about conducting Dr. Seuss Birthday Party & Hogwarts Cooking School
 - Logistics
 - Challenges
 - Positive Surprises and Outcomes



To learn to read is
to light a fire;
every syllable that
is spelled out is a



Spark!

Victor Hugo



Reading Wizards Program In-depth

- Each bulletin series in the Reading Wizards program offers parents advice on how to make the most of reading time with their child. (Spanish versions of bulletins just added.)
- The bulletins are designed to help parents:
 - develop their child's language skills;
 - encourage their child to read and enjoy reading;
 - build a reading-friendly home environment that nurtures a child's love of books.



What is inside RW

- Each Reading Wizards bulletin has two parts:
 - The first section offers you general tips on reading to your child. You learn ways to make reading together fun as well as ways to use reading sessions to build your child's language skills.
 - The second section of each bulletin contains activities that are based on a book or series of books that you and your child can try reading together. (Dr. Seuss books for younger children, Harry Potter books for older children.)
 - Also in the second section are ideas of how to extend the learning beyond the reading session through educational activities, based on the books discussed.



Reading Wizards Website

- Public: <http://resiliency.cas.psu.edu/ReadWiz/Wizard.html>
- Educators only: Click on Extension Educators Only
 - User name: Harry
 - Password: Potter (make sure you capitalize P of Potter)



The greatest gift is a passion
for reading.

It is cheap, it consoles, it
distracts, it excites, it gives
you knowledge of the world and
experience of a wide kind.
It is a moral illumination.

-Elizabeth Hardwick





RW Pilot Evaluation Assessed:

- Participants' views of *Reading Wizards* program improving their practices fostering reading in their children;
- *Reading Wizards* informational bulletins in terms of usefulness, readership, content, format and appearance;
- The extent *Reading Wizards* program changed parent's behaviors relative to practices fostering reading in their children.



Preliminary Results (N=54)

- On an average, parents read books to their children 20 minutes a day.
- Behavior change were found relative to:
 - Parents asking their child questions about the story in the book;
 - Parents engaging in writing activities with children;
 - Child reading to parents.



Preliminary Results

- 81% of parents skimmed or read three or more bulletins of *Reading Wizards*.
- 55% of parents had shared the *Reading Wizards* to others in the family which included spouse, grandparents, relatives, friends, and childcare provider.
- 45% of parents indicated that *Reading Wizards* has helped them to read more to their children and vice-versa.
- 34% of the parents indicated that because of *Reading Wizards* they set a period of time for family to read together.



What is next

- Continue the evaluation study.
- Other Ideas...



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<http://www.scholastic.com>



Resources on the Web

- There are a number of sites on the Internet that offer useful resources on reading to kids. Here are some you might want to check out:
 - **Reading is Fundamental**
<http://www.rif.org/parents/articles/ChildrenWhoDontRead.msp>
 - This site has free books and literacy resources that prepares and motivates children to read.
 - **One Hundred Favorite Children's Books**
<http://kids.nypl.org/reading/recommended2.cfm?ListID=60>
 - This website, created by the New York Public Library, offers a list of 100 favorite children's books, broken down into ten categories such as animal stories, history, science, etc.
 - **Random House Kids** <http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/>
 - Random House publishing has a fun site for kids with information on different children's books and fun pages devoted to favorite children's book series' like Dr. Seuss, Dragon Tales, and Thomas the Tank Engine.



More Web Resources

- **Room 108** <http://www.netrover.com/~kingskid/108.html>
 - Room 108 is an educational activity center for kids. The kids stories make this site unique. The stories have sound and animation. There is lots of fun for children but all with an educational focus. There are songs, art, math, kids games, children's stories and much more.
- **Storybook Online** <http://www.storybookonline.net/>
 - This fun site offers a host of stories to read and listen to. You can also write your own stories and play book-related games.
- **Children's Choices**
http://www.reading.org/resources/tools/choices_childrens.html
 - The Children's Choices project has recommended new books each year. But this is a booklist with a twist: Children themselves evaluate the books, and provide reviews of their favorites. Over the years, the lists have become a trusted source of book recommendations used by teachers, librarians, parents—and children themselves.



Reading is a means of
thinking with another
person's mind;
it forces you to
Stretch
your own.

-Charles Scribner



Informal Sharing Time

- Allow educators to share any new and innovative programming they are doing.
- Provide thoughts on other issues that may need to be addressed.