

May 2021

# SPOTLIGHT ON LITERACY



A Read to Me Project Newsletter for Educators

Issue 3

## In this Issue

Literacy-building Ideas  
for Students

Did you Know?

Program Timeline

The Hidden Powers  
of Reading

69 Incredible Teachers

Farewell to RtMP  
Founder

Staff Recommendation

Contact Information

## Literacy-building Ideas for Students

We all want to create conditions for our students that cause a hunger for knowledge even when they aren't sitting in our classrooms. So how do we continue to build literacy for students during the summer? Many libraries have summer reading challenges. One idea is to make sure your students know about their local city libraries. Read to Me Project builds a love of literacy by teaching the students reading techniques that bring the stories alive, making them fun and interesting. We train students on best practices for reading like find a quiet place.

Have your students watch these videos to remind them that reading can be interesting and fun!

**How to Spark Interest** includes the story, "[Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus](#)"

**How to Spark Excitement** includes the story, "[Interrupting Chicken](#)"

### Assignment Alert!

After watching the video ask your students to write about the good places for reading.

*"My class has been practicing more reading at home thanks to the RtMP. Students are improving their reading while giving their siblings a head start in their learning. Thank you, RtMP."*

*- Ms. Aguirre (4th grade)  
Sherwood Elementary  
School, Salinas*

## Did You Know?

Read to Me Project (RtMP) programs are expanding again! This spring we piloted a new program in South Monterey Joint Union High School District for teen parents. The 8-week high school course teaches new parents all about the importance of early language and literacy and equips them with the skills to prepare their babies for success in school. As a bonus, the students receive school credit toward graduation.

We are ready and excited to reach more and more 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> students in 2021/2022. If you are interested in the year-long program for your students (*with just a little support from the teacher, we do all the work!*) click here: [Read to Me Project](#) or email Libby McMahon at [libby@readtomeproject.org](mailto:libby@readtomeproject.org) for more information.



## The Hidden Powers of Reading

Reading strengthens family bonds and fosters sweet, shared memories. Reading leads to discovery of the world. Reading exposes us to other people while inspiring new ideas, insights, and reflections.

The authors of the autobiographies, “The Distance Between Us” (Reyna Grandes) and “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” (Maya Angelou), wrote about their early reading experiences and the books that helped them realize that they were not alone in their experiences. Both women suffered hardships that children should not have to suffer, but it was through reading that they found hope. They discovered something in themselves that eventually led to successful careers as writers. In turn, they shared their stories, which have inspired and given hope to thousands of people. Share with your students the books that you have found yourself in and introduce them to a variety of stories so that they have many opportunities to find themselves in stories too!

***Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him. - Maya Angelou***

## 69 Incredible Teachers!

**THANK YOU** district supervisors, principals, assistants, and teachers! We sincerely value and appreciate your commitment to Read to Me Project and support throughout the school year. Here are this year's heroic Read to Me Project schools and teachers:

**Arroyo Seco Academy:** Marilyn Cochran, Ivan Cruz, Christine Guettler, Arlene Haefele, Vanessa Robinson, Alejandra Uribe

**Cesar Chavez Elementary:** Michelle Andrade, Alex Barnes, Diana Garrett, Matthew Quada, Erica Ramirez, Jose Ramirez

**Creekside Elementary:** Griselda Avila, Karolina Camacho, Blake Doherty, Jui-Shan Hill, Alexis Rosales, Mary Varela, Guadalupe Zavala

**Dual Language Academy of the Monterey Peninsula:** Juana Barcenas, Alejandrina Poole, Heberto Valladares, Kathryn Yates

**Foothill Elementary:** Mary Grace Cesario, David Chandler, Claire Fuerst, Natalie Gray

**Highland Elementary:** Amanda Kennedy, Jasmine Merritt, Mary Riedl, Kelly Tongamana

**Ione Olson Elementary:** Hannah Cobb, Robert Furgurson, Jamee Lynch-Moore, Karin Zandakis

**John E. Steinbeck Elementary:** Lucas Rianto

**Marina Vista Elementary:** Allison Bautista, Aaron Beecher, Amanda Fay, Jacob Gile

**Martin Luther King Jr. School of the Arts:** Miranda Finell, Marie Olivares, Samantha Reed, Lori Robinson, Joeleane Scott

**Mary Chapa Academy:** Luis Davalos, Gilly Gallegos, Hannah Hoogeveen, Marco Iniguez, Alicia Kindred, David Quintero, Cherie Smith, Ariana Whitmar

**Oak Ave Elementary:** Viviana Argueta, Alexander Cervantes, Melissa Garibay, Santina Pacheco, Joseph Portilla, Sandra Rocha

**Ord Terrace Elementary:** Jenifer Alexander, Caroline Clements, Karen Ehrhardt, John Galvin, Katherine Ross, David Sperry, Jennifer Wrighton

**University Park Elementary:** Jamie Gaynor, Amanda Nichols

**Virginia Rocca Barton School:** Sarah Granger Mineo



Photo: Kirstin van Gend (L), Barbara Greenway

## Farewell to Read to Me Project Founder

*Ten years ago, veteran Speech and Language Specialist Barbara Greenway designed a simple way to bring early literacy and language to young children to get them ready to succeed in school by pairing books with older siblings who could read them! Barbara has dedicated her life to establishing and running the Read to Me Project, bringing language through reading to the youngest children by building a strong learning foundation for kindergarten and beyond!*

*This June, Barbara will be stepping down and into well-deserved retirement. The transition has been in the works for the last two years, and it has been my privilege to work closely with Barbara to take on the Program Director role this July. I am inspired by Barbara's work and passion for creating a program that has established 4th, 5th, and 6th graders to be change-makers in their families. Her program equips students with read-aloud skills to bring a love of reading on their own and to their little ones that, in turn, fills their learning foundation with language! Barbara used her knowledge of early literacy and language to continuously improve a curriculum that teaches elementary school children the power of early learning. She curated books for both the readers, who often read below grade level, and their little ones at home creating opportunities for fun and important language learning experiences.*

*For Barbara, her work has not only been about getting young children ready for school.*

*But, also about equity in education, about having children succeed in school and beyond. She intentionally designed a program that reaches into the homes and lives of children and their families because education starts in the home. In these last 10 years, Barbara's program has reached over 16,000 students and little ones in more than 30 schools in Monterey County. This year, she made new partnerships in South Monterey County to bring Parent Education classes online to families.*

*You may reach out to Barbara directly at [bgreenway32@yahoo.com](mailto:bgreenway32@yahoo.com).*

*Thank you, Barbara, for all the hard work in starting this program and the love and joy you bring to the organization every day! We will miss you at the office and in the classrooms!*

- Kirstin van Gend

## Staff Recommendation

Here are a few summer reading recommendations from the staff for you and your students!

### Books for your students!

- Wonder by R. J. Palacio
- The Wonderful Things You Will Be by Emily Winfield Martin
- Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault
- The Bench by Meghan, The Duchess of Sussex
- The Hula-Hoopin' Queen by Thelma Lynne Godin

### Books for you!

- The Sharper Your Knife, The Less You Cry by Kathleen Flinn
- Falling in Love with Close Reading by Christopher Lehman and Kate Roberts
- The Midnight Library by Matt Haig

Our program aligns with Common Core Standards! By promoting daily reading we reinforce:

- CCSS.ELA.L.4.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- CCSS.ELA.L.4.3.A Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
- CCSS.ELA.L.4.3.B Choose punctuation for effect.
- CCSS.ELA.L.4.3.C Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English and situations where informal discourse is appropriate.

### Contact Information

Kirstin van Gend  
Program Manager  
[Kirstin@readtomeproject.org](mailto:Kirstin@readtomeproject.org)

Libby McMahon  
Executive Director  
[libby@readtomeproject.org](mailto:libby@readtomeproject.org)



To see all the standards our program aligns with please go to [How Read to Me Project supports Common Core Standards](#) (password: Rtmp2019)

[Read to Me Project](#)

