



Read-Aloud Virginia is dedicated to improving literacy and strengthening families by encouraging parents to read aloud to their children every day.

Mark Your Calendar

January 15: RAV Booth at Virginia Center Commons
January 22, 10am to 2pm: FREE RAV School Training Workshop at Tuckahoe Public Library
1700 Parham Road, Richmond, VA. Contact: Joanie Bache at mbache@aol.com.
February 26: RAV Booth at KIDS EXPO, RIR Fairgrounds Pavilions

News from RAV:

Holiday Float: Joanie Bache reports that The RAV Christmas float looked "awesome" in Richmond's December parade, with students waving and smiling from the float as they shouted "Read Aloud Virginia!" to the crowds. Executive Director Gary Anderson was interviewed on tv, completing the great day with a community-wide message about the importance of reading aloud. On December 31, RAV joined Radio Disney at the Science Museum in Richmond for Noon Year's Eve fun. RAV volunteers read aloud to children and worked with parents to begin RAV programs in their schools.

A Million Books for A Million Children: Barnes & Noble at Libbie Place in Richmond and in Hampton Roads, in partnership with Verizon, asked customers to purchase books for students at Reid Elementary School in support of RAV, which was presented with the donated books in early January. In addition, Barnes & Noble has donated 200 new books to the effort. Many thanks to Jenny Sharrar, Community Relations Manager of B&N.

Books for Homeless Children: RAV and RARC (Richmond Area Reading Council) with the help of students, teachers, Girls Scouts and Boy Scouts, collected 2,400 slightly used books for homeless children in the Richmond area during November and December. Volunteers from RARC visited CARITAS churches, reading aloud and giving books to boys and girls. We will continue to distribute books to the homeless and to homes throughout the Richmond area that have no books for kids to listen to. We're grateful to all of the families who donated books and to the volunteers who read them aloud.

"Read Aloud to a Child Week": Congratulations to RAV! The week was a huge success, with participation from elementary schools, middle schools, libraries, and even from high schools where students and athletes read to younger children. Schools reporting activities that ranged from pajama parties to book fairs to Starbucks Read-Alouds and Read Aloud to Children Day at Walmart, included: Bethel Manor, Reams Road, Ruby Carver, Fox, Willard, Curtis, Ingleside, Northumberland, Pemberton, G.H. Reid, Byrd Middle School: Hanover Public Schools, Henrico Public Schools, Jonesville Middle School, Matoaca High School, New London Academy, Poquoson Primary School, Princess Anne Elementary, Thomas Dale High School. Many thanks to other participants and supporters: Lynchburg Public Library, Richmond Public Library, Ruth Camp Campbell Memorial Library, and National Book Festival.

The Media have taken notice! A recent article in *The Virginian Pilot* lauded the success of the Read-Aloud-to-a-Child Week in Virginia, citing the work of Dana Patton, a teacher at Willard Model Elementary School. More than 85 percent of Willard's parents read to their children during the past year, and the "Standards of Learning" test results show how well the program can work.

Tips From Teachers and Parents:

Non-Fiction Support: Sharon Condrey, reading specialist from Reams Road Elementary School, suggests designating read-aloud areas in the school based on social studies and science themes, where guest readers can share a book related to the selected topic.

School-Wide Sharing: Aaron Hansen, a RAV parent at Fox Elementary in Richmond, reported that every child in the school received a copy of the same book, *Because of Winn Dixie*, to be read aloud by parents. The kids loved it, and got to keep their books, thanks to help on the purchase price from Scholastic.

Jump-Starting Your Program: Bruce Coffey, an inspiring speaker on the techniques and benefits of reading aloud, is available to come to your school. Contact him at papahans5@mac.com.

The most important twenty minutes of your day are reading aloud to your child.

The Einstein Mascot: Einstein, the RAV bird, will visit your school, pass out book marks, etc. while you have a PTA reading activity or school celebration for reading aloud. Einstein doesn't talk, but the kids sure love to hug him!

Visiting Authors: "James River Writers" has local writers who will speak at your school. The children at Pemberton loved it when Libby Meggs shared how she wrote and illustrated her book, *Go Home Cat*, with parents and students at their PTA Meeting. Visit www.JRWF.org and look for "Reading, Writing Richmond" for more author information.

Tips for Reading Aloud to Your Child:

Make time for family reading every day. Plan ahead for a scheduled "Family Reading Time" every day when children listen to parents, sitters, or older teens read books to them. This may mean that an adult reads while the children clean up the dishes, fold the clothes, or draw pictures about the story that they are listening to. Be prepared for spontaneous reading aloud also, while waiting in a doctor's office or at a sports practice. Bedtime is still a favorite time for parents to read aloud to their children. RAV helps parents keep track of these reading times, to ensure that they continue on a regular basis.

Help your child's teachers make time to read aloud to the students every day. Volunteer to read in your child's classroom today. Children love to have their parents, grandparents, aunt, uncle, big brother or sister visit their class to read. Teachers love having another voice for the students to listen to.

Read Aloud for Fun

A new year is the perfect time for new beginnings and old favorites. Here are some books that encourage new starts, hard work, and the belief that "you can do it." * *Book selections are for suggested listening "read-aloud" levels.* Remember to read books that are 2 -to-3 years above what kids can easily read to themselves.

Toddlers and Preschoolers

Have You Seen My Duckling? Nancy Tafuri
Come Along Daisy, Jane Simmons
This Little Chick, John Lawrence

Pre-K and Kindergartners

Come On, Baby Duck! by Nick Ward
I Lost My Bear, Jules Feiffer
Big Al, Andrew Elborn

Grades 1-2

The Bravest Dog Ever: The True Story of Balto
Little Flower, Gloria Rand
Horton Hatches the Egg, Dr. Seuss

Grades 3-4

Seeker of Knowledge, James Rumford
Stone Fox, John Reynolds Gardner
Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt, Deborah Hopkinson

Grades 5-6

Holes, by Louis Sachar
Rabble Starkey, Lois Lowry
The Great Turkey Walk, Kathleen Karr

Grades 7-8

Out of the Dust, Karen Hesse
The Cay, Theodore Taylor
The Star Fisher, Laurence Yep

High School to Adult

Alive, Piers Paul Read
Tuesdays With Morrie, Mitch Albom
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou

A Great Book to Share with Older Children (9 years and up):

Always Wear Clean Underwear, Marc Gellman

*With appreciation to *Read Aloud International* for the selected works.

Word Play: Remember that you don't have to wait for bedtime to "spread the words." Experts say that the skills that come from active listening improve receptive language and verbal facility in all children, forever. Try reciting rhymes as you ride in the car, at bath time, or waiting for the school bus.

When the children get impatient with winter weather, prepare them for the coming spring with this old bit of silliness:

"Spring is here
and bringing good cheer.
Robins chirp
and frogs burp."

--Anonymous

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Message from Gary Anderson, RAV Executive Director and creator of the "Listen-Up" program.
RAV's Secondary School Program Helps Students Learn By Listening

There is no environment where the benefits of reading aloud are more dramatic than in the "Listen-Up" program, where at-risk students listen to books read by an instructor or played on a CD or tape. This new program, which was launched among GED secondary-school students in Virginia, has already demonstrated the positive impact of reading aloud to students, helping them build a better knowledge of words, jumpstarting literacy, engaging them in the content of books. We hope it has also launched a new group of lifetime readers.

To help program participants begin to recognize words within the books, Listen-Up instructors go through books and single out any words that may be problematic for the students. The instructors assess the students' understanding of the texts' vocabulary, and then lead group discussions so the students can talk about the main points of the story and what it means to them, so that at the next listening session everyone is on the same page literally and figuratively. It is essential for the students to enjoy the books so that they are eager to fill in the gaps. This program has the most dramatic impact with students who have built up a negative attitude towards reading. I can't think of a better program to help secondary students develop self confidence, reading skills, and a love of books in one educational strategy.

--Gary

Don't Forget the Pizza! Tune in to Channel 6 Richmond every day at 6:10 am following the weather report for the RAV book "picture of the day." These are pictures based on books and drawn by students who have listened to the books read aloud to them by parents. Students who have pictures shown on TV are given FREE Little Caesar's coupons from Channel 6. Congratulations to Carver, Northumberland, Fox, and Pemberton whose pictures have been featured on channel 6 so far this year. Thank you, Channel 6 and ***Little Caesar's!***

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Read Aloud Virginia is a non-profit organization that is 100% dependent on financial support from outside sources, mainly from folks like you. If you agree that our programs are important in the battle for the minds and futures of our children, please consider making a donation to Read Aloud Virginia. With your help we will continue to bring Read Aloud Virginia to more schools and reach even more children. You can send your check to the addresss below. Thank you.

www.readaloudva.org

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