



ReadingLinkChallenge Teacher Newsletter

2017 - 2018

The Story Behind Reading Link

In the later 1930s, the *Battle of the Books* was a weekly radio show that used a quiz format to test children's knowledge of good literature. Questions about characters, plots and settings were answered by teams representing different elementary schools.

The *Battle of the Books* program moved to a library setting in 1993 at Kalamazoo (Michigan) Public Library. It was used to encourage Grade 4 and 5 students to have fun with reading. In 1996, a similar project was undertaken at Seattle Public Library. In 2002, Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam Libraries joined the challenge, and in 2004 the entire Fraser Valley Regional Library (FVRL) came on board. As of 2014, 14 library systems from across BC have joined the Challenge, spanning from Whistler to the Kootenays!



TIPS FOR READING LINK TEAMS

- There are a variety of strategies. Teams can appoint one person to be a specialist in 1 particular title, or teams can take a more general approach.
- Focus on discussing answers quietly, and writing down answers within 30 seconds.
- Suggest to students that they read the books together with their families.
 - Hold mini practice rounds with your teams.
- Remember there will be a variety of questions asked in the challenges: short answer, multiple choice, fill-in the blank, and true or false.
- Make some sample questions.
- Family members can ask sample questions at home.

READING LINK CHALLENGE MISSION:

To encourage reading as a fun and recreational activity that allows Grade 4 and 5 students of all reading abilities to engage in the sport of reading.

GOALS:

1. To ensure the participation of children with lower reading scores throughout the region.
2. To foster teamwork and cooperative thinking.
3. To build strong relationships between public libraries and local schools.
4. To share quality children's literature with participants that represents a diversity of experiences at a variety of reading levels.





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Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can we have only one team at my school?

More than one team is required to hold the 'School Challenge'. This is because the teams must have someone to compete against. Most schools are successful with a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 5 teams. Teams may be made up of a maximum of 6 students. One member will act as "scribe" (write down answers for the team) and one will act as "runner" (bring answers to the judge). Both the scribe and runner also help answer questions. Between rounds the scribe and runner may be changed.

2. Who selects the books?

A team of librarians from Coquitlam, North Vancouver City, Surrey Public Libraries and FVRL selects the six titles using criteria such as boy/girl interest, reading level, multicultural theme, and Canadian/BC authors.

3. Who writes the questions?

The same team of librarians from Coquitlam, North Vancouver City, Surrey Public Libraries and FVRL creates the questions. Sets of easy, medium, and hard questions are mixed in the different levels of competition. A master list of questions is created so that all teams are asked the same questions at each level. Questions may be multiple choice, true or false, or short answer.

4. Do the students have to read all the books?

As a team they should read all the books. Since children of all reading levels can be included, some may read all the books and some may read only 2 or 3. Some teachers set a standard for inclusion on the team, i.e. students

should read at least 3 of the books to qualify for the team.

5. What commitment is required from participating schools?

Library staff members take care of arranging the events relating to Reading Link Challenge. These include the School, Library and Grand Challenges. In November, a staff member will visit to deliver the team copies of each book and booktalk the titles to participating teams. If your school finds they have fewer teams than originally anticipated, please return extra book sets to the library liaison.

School contacts are responsible for arranging the transportation of children to and from events, and the selection of participating teams. Many schools also choose to hold occasional lunch hour meetings throughout the year for participating kids. These can be practice competitions, or simply meetings to see how children are progressing with their reading.

6. What are the costs?

Your local library covers most of the costs associated with the program. This includes donating books to participating schools (1 set for each team up to 6 sets) and providing prizes during the challenges.

CHECK OUT:

Reading Link Challenge
www.readinglinkchallenge.ca

READING LINK TIMELINE

September 2017	Reading Link information package delivered to schools.
October 2017	Participating schools confirmed and books ordered.
November 2017	Announcement of titles and distribution of the Challenge books.
December 2017	Check on progress and begin scheduling School Challenges.
January 2018	Team members finalized.
Feb/Mar 2018	School and Library Challenges held.
May 2018	Grand Challenge between top teams each from Fraser Valley Regional Library, Coquitlam Public Library, Surrey Public Library and North Vancouver City Public Library.



For more
information contact
your local library
liaison.