



# EBB VALLEY EAGLE'S MARCH NEWSLETTER



Principal: Robert Mitchell

Asst. Principal: Pat Reed

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410-386-1550 Fax:410-386-1555

## March 2010 - Notes from the Office

Dear Ebb Valley Families,

Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, is the first day of MSA testing for Grades 3, 4, and 5. The Maryland State Assessment will be given on March 9th, 10th, 16th, and 17th from 9:00 AM until Noon. It is important that your child arrives at school on time during this testing period. If your child does not arrive before testing starts, he/she will be held in the office until a testing break occurs. This could mean that he/she could possibly be sitting in the office for an hour or more should he/she arrive late. It is also important that he/she is not picked up from school for an early dismissal until testing is completed for the day. Please make every attempt to have your child here each day.

Should your child be absent for illness during the testing time, he/she will be pulled during the week to make-up any missed portions. This is not an optimum situation because it pulls your child from instruction and tested in a room different than their regular classroom. Every attempt should be made to have your child at school for MSA testing.

In order for children to be focused, alert and at their peak performance it is important that they are well rested and eat breakfast each morning. You may want to talk to your child about the importance of testing, but do not over emphasize it because we do not want students to be stressed. Please remember that this test is one measure of your child's performance in school, as it measures how well your child has mastered the state curriculum. It is important and should be taken seriously, but should not cause anxiety. All we can ask is that everyone try to do their best.

Please help us make this a positive experience for your child! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.

***Inclement Weather Policy***

In the event that it becomes necessary to close schools for the entire day because of inclement weather, the announcement will be made no later than 6:30 a.m. through the following media sources: WTTR – AM 1470, Channel 21 and Channel 3 (Westminster), as well as the major TV stations (Channels 2, 11 and 13). If weather conditions are such that the opening of schools might be delayed one hour or more, or it becomes necessary to close schools early, the notification will be made through the same stations as for the closing of schools. Pupils and parents are asked to refrain from calling the school, radio stations or the Pupil Transportation office to inquire about school closing and bus service as it may impact the handling of announcements. When schools are closed all day or close early, there will be no after school or evening events.

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***Reminder for borrowed lunch money*** The cafeteria has limited funds for children who need to borrow lunch money. If your child borrows lunch money, we appreciate your promptness in repaying that money to the cafeteria the next day. Keep in mind that you can purchase advance lunch tickets for your child. You can prepay for as few or as many lunches as needed. Lunches are \$2.00 each. Please send in a check, made payable to the Ebb Valley Cafeteria, for the number of lunches you wish to purchase times \$2.00 each. If you would like to apply for free or reduced lunches, please contact the office for an application.

\*\*\*\*\*

***Absent / Tardy Reminders***

To report your child's absence, please use one of the following methods:

Email: [eveattendance@k12.carr.org](mailto:eveattendance@k12.carr.org)

Phone: 410-386-1550

Fax: 410-386-1555

Note: Absent notes must contain – child's first **and** last name, explanation for absence, date of absence(s), signature of parent or guardian.

Students who arrive after **8:40 AM** are **late** and must be brought into the office by a parent / guardian to be signed in. Students will receive a pass to take to their homeroom teacher.

\*\*\*\*\*

***Kindergarten Registration for 2010-2011***

**March 22-26 , 8:00 a.m. – 4:00p.m.**

**March 24, 4:00p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Children who will be five years old on or before September 1, 2010 will need to be enrolled in Kindergarten. Parents will need to present the following at the time of registration:**

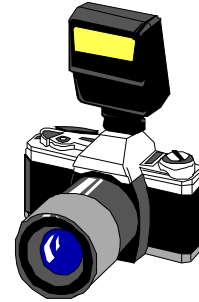
1. **identification of parent or legal guardian (driver's license and/or court documents)**
2. **a copy of the child's birth certificate/registration**
3. **verification of residence in the form of a recent utility bill (BGE, land-line phone bill, cable bill, water bill), a signed lease agreement or a settlement statement on your home.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**HAS YOUR ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBERS CHANGED?  
PLEASE INFORM US IN WRITING ASAP!!!**

## ***Individual & Class Picture Day***

On **THURSDAY, MARCH 11th**, Larry Allen and Company Photographers will be here at school to take **class group pictures and individual student portraits.**



This will be your only opportunity to purchase class group pictures. Class group pictures **will not** be produced for students who do not pay IN ADVANCE. Group pictures cost \$13.50 each and can be ordered by selecting **“Bonus K”** on the order form.

**Each student must pay individually. Please do not write one check for all children in the family. Make checks payable to LARRY ALLEN & CO.**

Individual portraits will be taken for students who bring in their order form and money on March 11<sup>th</sup>. All portrait packages will be mailed to the address you write on the order form.

**Only children who bring in an order form and money on March 11<sup>th</sup> will get their individual picture taken.**

**All students present on March 11<sup>th</sup> will be in the class group photo, but only students who pay and select “Bonus K” on the order form will be mailed a class picture.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Parent / Teacher Conference Night - Thursday March 4, 2010**

Teachers and Staff members will be here Thursday evening, March 4<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00PM – 7:30PM for Parent/Teacher Conferences. If your child’s teacher notified you that a conference is requested, please call the school office at 410-386-1550 to schedule the conference. If you have any concerns you need to discuss with your child’s teacher, please call us to schedule a conference on this night.

## Music News and Announcements

Mr. Meerdter wants to thank everyone who tried out for this year's Eisteddfod performance. Everyone did an outstanding job! Mr. Meerdter would like to congratulate the following nine students for representing Ebb Valley in the 2010 Eisteddfod concert. If you would like to support these students in this artistic endeavor, you are more than welcome to come to the concert at Westminster High School on Friday March 26, 7:00 PM. Again, congratulations to these students:

Grace Garrett  
Sarah Otto  
Quinn Murphy  
Sammy Windisch  
Demi Askew

Brian Coleman  
Joel Owens  
Jeremy McDermott  
Alex Anderson

**Attention parents/guardians of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade class (and 5<sup>th</sup> grade instrumental groups).** Students have been working extremely hard for their performance for the spring concert on Thursday May 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. We need everyone's support through attendance at this concert to make the show a successful one. Mr. Meerdter will audition for speaking parts towards the middle of April. Please mark your calendars and save the date: Thursday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 for the spring concert!

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Greetings from the Art Room**

During the month of March our nation celebrates Youth Art Month. This year Ebb Valley Elementary will celebrate by participating in an art exhibit at the Carroll County Arts Council Building in Westminster, Maryland. There will be Opening Receptions on Thursday February 25<sup>th</sup> and March 4<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 until 7:00 pm. The exhibit will run until March 10<sup>th</sup>. If you have the opportunity please stop in to see the beautiful artwork that has been created by the students at our school and throughout the county. Students who have art work on display are : Tristen Bussard, Jessica Cramer, Jack Mueller, Taylor Shank, Michael Ringer, Grace Wagaman, Fenna Hott, Garrett Deltuva, Ali Johnston, Paige Spertzel, Nichole Green, Trenton Gardner, Ryan Magana, Austin Mikoloski, Samantha Rae, Kendall Rietz, Andrew Helphenstine, Skylar Davis, Morgan Kresslein, Holden Williams, Mackenzie Bartholow, Zeb Tapp, Becky Stickles, Alexis Miller, Cindy Beck, Demi Askew, Grace Garrett, Jacob Hare, Kelly Binks, Jake Fitzsimmons, Anna Bein, and Emily Veach,

***Congratulations to all of the young artists at Ebb Valley Elementary.***  
**Please keep your eyes open for upcoming news regarding our Second ANNUAL ART SHOW AT EBB VALLEY ELEMENTARY. The show will be held in May. All students at our school will have an opportunity to submit art work. Details regarding this show will be given within the next few weeks.**

This Just In!

From Mrs. Spera, School Counselor

**Classroom Counseling this month:**



**Kindergarteners** will be developing their career awareness starting at the end of the month. Small groups of kindergarteners are now working to develop social and emotional skills such as getting along, and active listening!

**First Graders** will be starting a unit at the end of March focusing on appreciating diversity, and working together.

**Second grade** will be focusing on career awareness and strength identification at the end of the month.

**Third and** are completing a three-week unit on Academic Success (called Step-Up). Third grade parents will see folders coming home with information about our lessons inside. We will be working with career awareness activities at the end of March and into April.

**Fourth grade** is completing a “Conflict Resolution” unit. Lots of information will be coming home about active listening, taking space, using “I” statements, and “Unhooking”. Please ask your fourth grader about these concepts.

**Fifth graders** learned the “Keys to Academic Success”, as well as how to break down a task (such as a long term project) into smaller chunks in order to get it accomplished with ease.

March’s Character Trait of the month is:

**SELF DISCIPLINE and  
Dependability**





## **PBIS News!**

Ebb Valley Students continue to follow their *Flight Plans!*

- Our next PBIS Pep Rally will be held on April 1st, 2010 to celebrate all of our on-target behavior for the third quarter!

*Maryland State Assessments* (MSA's) are approaching for grades 3-5 (March 9, 10, 16, 17)! There are many things that parents help with, to help boost student achievement every day (certainly including test days).

**\*\*good night's sleep-** in order to get a good night's sleep, your child needs a predictable, appropriate bedtime routine. In America, the average school-aged child(1st through 5th grades) get 9.5 hours of sleep, but experts recommend 10-11 hours (more for kindergarteners). You may want to see [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org) for more information and resources on this topic.

**\*\*nutritious diet,** especially breakfast

**\*\*school attendance-** missing days from school can lead to gaps in information and therefore, achievement.

**\*\*quiet area and a set time** for completing homework

\*\*for other helpful hints, please visit [www.testtakingtips.com/parents/](http://www.testtakingtips.com/parents/)

***Coffee with the Counselor update:*** We are planning a CWC evening after the PTA meeting on February 25, 2010: right now, we've got a snow forecast, so we're keeping our fingers crossed! The next CWC evening is planned for April 21, 2010 @ 7:30pm and the topic is "Childhood Anxiety": Please mark your calendars!

Ebb Valley Media Center  
***"Reading is a Treasure"***



## Bedtime Story Night

Please be sure to join us for Bedtime Story Night on Thursday, March 18 from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. Wear your pajamas and slippers (hopefully the snow will be gone) and bring your favorite stuffed animal. Come listen to stories and enjoy milk and cookies before tucking your children into bed.



The Keys for Reading incentive is continuing. Remember to sign and return your child's bookmark once 4 books have been read. Your child will earn a free ticket to a Frederick Keys baseball game.

Coming Soon!

**Watch for the Ebb Valley Pirate Reading Incentive this year. Aaargh! It should be a jolly good time!**

## **Matt Novak**

On April 9 Matt Novak, an author, will be visiting Ebb Valley. Order forms for autographed books have been sent home. Check your child's book bag if you haven't seen it. Orders are due by March 12 so that the books can be received in time for autographing. Our Media Center does have several of his books if you would like to see them before ordering. He was a Disney animator before becoming a children's author. His visit promises to be lots of fun. Please feel free to call if you need another form.

**Keep Reading!**

Helga Anderson  
Media Specialist



## Nurse Notes:

Hearing and vision screening is held in March this year. This screening is for all K, 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders. The dates are the 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, & 31<sup>st</sup>. If your child(ren) do not pass either test, a form will go home to notify you of the issue. Please have your child(ren) evaluated by a physician and return the form to the nurse. Also, if you are questioning your child's hearing or sight, and he/she is not in one of the above grades; contact the nurse to have your child added to the screening list.

### *Just a few reminders to all parents:*

- **Students sent home with a fever greater than 100 degrees MAY NOT return to school until FEVER free for at least 24 hours without medication.**
- **Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen** are the only drugs permitted with parent signature. However, any dosing above the recommended dose for weight and age will need a physician order. Forms are available in the Health Room.
- All other **Over-the-Counter** or **Prescription** medicines will need a physician order, **No exceptions.**
- Students are **NOT PERMITTED** to transport any medications, ointments etc. to or from school.
- Parents must bring in the medicine in the **original container** with the student's name on the outside. Please make sure that all **prescription medications** are properly labeled from the pharmacy with the student's name, medication, dosage, physician's name and expiration date.
- **Reminder to all Kindergarten parents:** Please consider sending in a change of clothes for your child. The clothing will remain at school and used if needed.
- The following items may come to school with your student: Chapstick/lip balms, saline eye solution, hand lotion, sunscreen, and waterless hand cleansers. Non-medicated cough-drops are also permitted. (Halls, Luden's or Ricola, for example). Medicated cough-drops have a daily dosage and a limit for a 24 hour period; these would need a physician order and be transported by an adult.

Thank you for your continued cooperation, and let's hope for a healthy school year. As always, feel free to contact me with any questions.

Nurse Kerrie

***Please remember to send in your labels!!***

***Ebb Valley collects the following items and uses the proceeds to purchase classroom and recess equipment:***



***Campbell Soup Labels***

***Box Tops for Education***



***Tyson Project A+***

***Coke Reward Codes***



***Please tell your friends & family and send all labels in to school. Thank you!!***

## Community Notes....

Charlotte's Quest Nature Center - On Sunday, May 2, 2010, Charlotte's Quest is celebrating 15 years of service to the community and its area schools. They are inviting our school community to join them on this special day. Aspen Run Bluegrass will be the entertainment for the afternoon. Smokey Bear will be on hand to visit with children. Manchester Volunteer Fire Company will be doing fire prevention activities. Games and crafts are planned. The 4H group, Power Take-Off of Hampstead is providing the food for the afternoon and the High Ridge 4H Group will be providing a petting zoo and pony rides. Mr. Stephen Israel will be bringing a display and will talk about the archaeological investigations at Charlotte's Quest Nature Center and Pine Valley Park. The Master Gardeners of Carroll County plan to bring Madagascar Cockroaches. Reptile Wonders is coming with some exotic reptiles. Vendors, exhibitors, and non-profit groups will be on hand from noon until 4 p.m. selling plants and other goodies.

***Dates to Remember.....***

*March 2 - Market Day Pick Up 7:00PM in Cafeteria*

*Volunteer Training in Media Center 7:30 - 8:00PM*

*Dr Seuss' Birthday*

*March 4 - Parent/Teacher Conferences 4:00 - 7:30 PM*

*March 8 - 12 National School Breakfast Week*

*March 9 & 10 - MSA Reading for Grades 3, 4 & 5 at 9:00-12:00PM*

*March 11 - Spring Group and Individual Pictures in Room B133*

*March 12 - PTA Basket Bingo in Cafeteria 5:30 - 9:30PM*

*March 15 - 2 Hour & 45 Minute Early Dismissal*

*March 16 & 17 - MSA Math for Grades 3,4, & 5 at 9:00-12:00PM*

*March 17 - Wear Green Day*

*March 18 - Bedtime Story Night 6:30-8:00PM*

*March 22 - 26 Kindergarten Registration Week 8:00AM-4:00PM*

*March 24 Evening Hours for Kindergarten registration 4:00-7:00PM*

*March 25 - Maryland Day - Wear Maryland Colors*

*March 26 - Donuts with Dad 7:30 - 8:15 AM*

*March 29 - March 31 Vision & Hearing*

*March 30 - Market Day Pick Up 7:00PM in Cafeteria*

*Volunteer Training in Media Center 7:30-8:00PM*

Lunch - \$2.00    Ice Cream - 75 cents    Milk - 50 cents

Lunch Choices also include: Tuna on Roll, Cheese Sandwich, Tossed Salad

# EBB VALLEY ELEMENTARY



## March

## LUNCH

## 2010

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p>1</p> <p>Chicken Patty Tator Tots Fruit</p>	<p>2</p> <p><b>Dr Seuss Birthday</b> ABC Nuggets Baked Beans Snowflake Roll Fruit Frozen Juice Bar</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Spaghetti Casserole w/Roll Hot Vegetable Fruit</p>	<p>4</p> <p>CheeseSticks w/ Dipping Sauce Hot Vegetable Fruit</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Pizza Vegetable Fruit</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Popcorn Chicken Tator Tots Snowflake Roll Fruit</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Turkey Wrap or Hot Ham &amp; Cheese Wrap Hot Vegetable Fruit Dessert</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Grilled Cheese Sandwich Tomato Soup Green Beans Fruit Cheddar Whales</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Soft Shell Taco w/ Lettuce &amp; Cheese Corn Fruit</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Pizza or Hot Dog on roll Vegetable Fruit</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Chicken Nuggets Baked Beans Snowflake Roll Fruit <b>Early Dismissal</b></p>	<p>16</p> <p>Hamburger or Cheeseburger on Roll Tator Tots Fruit</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Cheesesticks w/ Dipping sauce Hot Vegetable Fruit Dessert</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Diced Chicken w/Gravy Rice Hot Vegetable Fruit</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Pizza Vegetable Fruit</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Chicken Patty Confetti Rice Fruit</p>	<p>23</p> <p><b><u>Breakfast for Lunch</u></b> (2)Pancakes w/Syrup (2)Sausage Patty Orange Juice Baked Apples</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Turkey Wrap or Hot Ham &amp; Cheese Wrap Hot Vegetable Fruit Dessert</p>	<p>25</p> <p><b><u>Maryland Day Dinner</u></b> Oven Fried Chicken Mashed Potatoes &amp; Gravy Green Beans Roll Fruit Dessert</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Pizza or Hot Dog on roll Vegetable Fruit</p>
<p>29</p> <p>Chicken Tenders Tator Tots Roll Fruit</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Cheesesticks w/Dipping Sauce Hot Vegetable Fruit</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Nacho Chips w/Cheese Taco Meat Corn Fruit</p>		

Breakfast - \$1.25

# EBB VALLEY ELEMENTARY

## March

## BREAKFAST

## 2010

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>1</b> (2)Waffles w/ syrup <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>2</b> Breakfast Sausage Pizza <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>3</b> Bagel w/Topping <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>4</b> Choice of Donut <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>5</b> Scrambled Eggs & Toast <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk
<b>8</b> (2)Pancakes w/syrup <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>9</b> Breakfast Pocket <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>10</b> (2)Cinnamon Toast <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>11</b> Choice of Donut <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>12</b> Egg & Cheese Muffin <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk
<b>15</b> (2)Cinnamon Toast <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>16</b> (3)French Toast Sticks <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>17</b> Breakfast Sausage Pizza <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>18</b> Choice of Donut <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>19</b> Scrambled Eggs & Toast <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk
<b>22</b> (2)Waffles w/syrup <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>23</b> Bagel w/ Topping <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>24</b> (2)Cinnamon Toast <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>25</b> Choice of Donut <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>26</b> Egg & Cheese Muffin <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk
<b>29</b> Pancakes w/ syrup <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>30</b> Cinnamon Toast <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk	<b>31</b> Breakfast Pocket <b>or</b> Cereal & Toast Fruit or Juice Milk		

# 1 READING For Many - One

# For Many-ONE

Volume 3, Issue 3

February / March 2010

*Literacy Vision*  
Each one of our Carroll County Public School students will purposefully and critically engage texts and communicate with accuracy, clarity, and impact.

<b>Inside this issue:</b>	
A Reading Wish	1/4
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## A Reading Wish

Walking through South Carroll High School hallways, smiles greeted me with, "Remember how shy I was?" "I'm on the football team!" "Look at my new tattoo!" Later, when walking into Ms. Mary Lou Hanley's 9<sup>th</sup> Grade reading class, some smiles faded despite excellent co-teaching using Thinking Maps with Ms. Christina Franklin, the Reading Intervention teacher. Reflecting on our Literacy Vision, I focused on its description of success for "Each one of our CCPS students." Each ONE!

*On this day, our Literacy Vision collided with reality.*

You see, *this* 9<sup>th</sup> Grade included familiar faces. Some of these students had attended the elementary school where I had been their principal. When our students left elementary school-we *believed* they would be successful. Yes, each one of them! Some students would require additional time and modifications, but we believed they would graduate.

Why was visiting my previous elementary students as *high* schoolers creating a real-time progress monitoring that crushed my reality? What was the *story behind the numbers*? With Ms. Hanley's and Ms. Franklin's support, the story was to unfold. My next visit included a few minutes to talk with some students.

Not surprisingly, these adolescent boys and girls did not hesitate to respond to the question,

*"If you had one Reading Wish for children still in elementary school, what would that wish be?"*

*"Learn to break down words (phonics) so you can read more clearly and understand what you are reading."*

*"Read interesting books so you will not think that reading is boring."*

*"Become better readers so you will not struggle when you get older."*

*"Read MORE. Actually read. Teachers reading to you is not the same."*

*"Keep on reading-so you will not wind up in low classes."*

*"Read more books because you'll need it. I tell you this!"*

Listen carefully to what students are saying they need to be able to do:

1. To be able to apply *Phonics* successfully before leaving elementary school.
2. To read books by terrific, *engaging authors*.
3. To increase real *"eyes on text"* time.
4. To increase the required *amount* of actual reading.
5. To *monitor their reading progress* for improvement

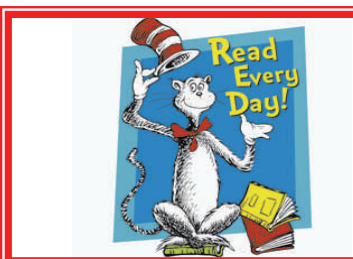
Do any of these suggestions require new line items in our budgets?

What can each one of us do NOW? See p. 4

## "QUESTIONS WE HEARD YOU ASK"

*Why do we enter formative assessment data into the data base?*

Formative data provides an opportunity for schools to progress monitor students over time and between grades and levels. For Formative Comprehension Assessments, the data is provided by individual Standards. Since the number of incorrect responses are entered into the system, the data provides information regarding standards that require professional development over time. Since the formative assessments are to be incorporated across grades and between middle and high school, it will be possible to monitor comprehension progress over time, and provide timely, aligned interventions.



National Education Association's  
Read Across America Day  
Dr. Seuss' Birthday  
March 2, 2010





## From the Middle

*Thinking Maps: Technology without Hardware*

*"Some will never learn anything because they understand everything too soon."*

*Sir Thomas Pope Blount*

*Thinking Maps* has been around for a long time. I remember visiting North West Middle School for a meeting in the early nineties and seeing the blue and red *Maps* on the bulletin board in a social studies classroom. I thought to myself, "Wow, somebody really takes graphic organizers seriously." Later, I must confess, when I heard that this glossy mini-poster was part of a series of organizers that were superior to all others, I had my doubts. When I heard that you needed to be *trained* to use them, I dismissed them outright. *How preposterous, who didn't know how to use graphic organizers, and the Maps looked more simplistic than most of the 200+ organizers in my resource guide.*

Well, my second encounter with *Thinking Maps* was more enlightening, and since the maps hadn't changed, I guess I was a bit more teachable. Two things struck me on reconsideration of the *Maps*: First, students who internalized the maps possessed a tool for capturing and extending their thinking in systematic ways that could be used regardless of content, creating a genuine vehicle for transfer in learning. Second, since each map captures an aspect of how we all think, they were inherently more powerful than event-driven graphic organizers.

Now what do I mean by *event-driven*? Well, *Thinking Maps* are much more than graphic organizers, and that's not a gimmick or a sales-pitch. It's simply the truth. Graphic Organizers are activity-based. That is, they are usually developed or selected based on the type of text to be covered or the skill to be demonstrated in the lesson. For plot, a story map; for generating interest as a student reads, a KWL chart; and last but not least, for comparing and contrasting a VENN DIAGRAM, or even better, a TRIPLE VENN. Now these have valid uses, but the *Maps* are fundamentally different in that they focus on the types of *thinking* involved in the learning. And the type of thinking involved depends on the questions the learner needs to answer. For example:

<u>Question</u>	<u>Map</u>	<u>Thinking Processes</u>
How are you defining this thing?	Bubble Map	Defining in Context
What are the main ideas and details?	Tree Map	Classifying
What are the causes and effects of this event?	Multi-Flow Map	Cause and Effect

And because the maps are tied to the thinking involved, they are free from another limitation of graphic organizers. They are not, like organizers, disposable. What does that mean? Well, when a student has written in all of the boxes for the story map, what happens? Most are done. The over achievers

will squeeze additional information into the spaces left with their own microscopic script. What if there were more events of significance in the story than boxes on the pre-printed map handout? Now that's a genuine conundrum. What if there are sub plot events? And ultimately, what happens to the organizer once it has been collected, graded, or otherwise used? In some way, it will be discarded, having outlived its momentary usefulness.

Well, *Thinking Maps* rise to meet these challenges: they are not event-driven, nor are they disposable. For instance, if students know they will be working with sequencing, they can identify the map to be used that matches that thinking process: a Flow Map. Next, they will draw the map themselves, and continue to expand it until they have recorded all the significant events in their judgment, so it's differentiated by their abilities and insights, not by how many boxes the teacher put on the organizer. Further, there are sub-boxes in the original design that may be added at the discretion of the teacher or student to include things like sub-plot, or even character development throughout the selected story. And, whenever or wherever these students encounter a need for sequencing, they will know to use a Flow Map and can create it anew. They endure within the student, whether or not the teacher includes them as part of a lesson plan.

But beyond all this, the maps promote literacy – a student's ability to process and filter relevant information from texts. How many students will select a graphic organizer from memory when faced with an instructional task? Is it wise to give them so many to try to remember? Is it sound practice to give them the impression that organizers should be selected to fit personal tastes? These impressions limit students' ability to transfer knowledge from content to content. Students trained in the fluent use of the maps have a finite selection of choices to fit educational tasks and the understanding that the questions posed by those tasks will determine the thinking required, which will immediately key them in to the map or maps to be used, regardless of content!

*Thinking Maps* represent cutting –edge literacy technology. And the best part is, especially in this hard-pressed economic climate, the only hardware required to implement their use is the human brain. And all of us, even though sometimes it may not seem to be so, came equipped with one free of charge, when we appeared at birth.

Brian F. Wienholt  
Supervisor of Secondary Reading



International Reading Association RTI Webinars:  
March 10, 2010—8:00 p.m. Core Instruction  
March 23—8:00 p.m. Differentiated Instruction





## It's About Time

As I visit different buildings and have the opportunity to talk with elementary teachers, the same issue keeps surfacing: TIME! One of the biggest frustrations that I hear from teachers is that there is not enough time to get everything in. I remember having the same frustration when I was in the classroom. Time is so much of an issue that reading specialists got together last year to research and gather data about "time". What we wanted to find out was how much time do teachers have to (you guessed it) just teach, which, of course (as you already know), leads to increased learning for our students. Teachers from several schools graciously and bravely welcomed reading specialists into their classrooms to informally observe how students spend their instructional reading block. The data collected was very telling and will not surprise you. Many times throughout the ILA block, instruction is interrupted for many reasons. A student may need to be pulled out for tier three intervention. A teacher may need to leave the classroom for an IEP meeting. Fluoride treatments need to occur and they didn't get done during homeroom for one reason or another. Sometimes, there are special days (the hundredth day celebration, a cultural program, early dismissal days, etc...). The issue is not the isolated things that crop up during the ILA block, but the culmination of all of these necessary occurrences that leads to fragmented teaching and learning. Another issue related to time is how much time during an ILA block does every *one* child spend reading and writing. In his book *Results Now*, Mike Schmoker asks numerous teachers across many states what are the two activities that occur least in their language arts block. The overwhelming response is reading and writing!

Other national literacy leaders concur that time is an issue. In his blog, Tim Shanahan writes about time: "We need to make sure that schools have enough time to teach reading effectively, and I suspect we will need longer school years and longer school days to accomplish that with all kids. But, currently, we are not using teaching time well, so simply expanding time availability is not a sufficient answer." Mel Riddle (named the 2005 Outstanding High School Principal by the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals) used the term "bell to bell" teaching when referring to how he provided uninterrupted time for teachers to (you guessed it) TEACH! Now, please don't misunderstand my message here. Teachers work hard. Teachers are dedicated. Teachers care deeply about the welfare of their students. It is when you actually spend time shadowing ONE child, yes one child, for an entire ILA block that you see a red flag and think, "we have to figure out how to use our time more effectively and efficiently to provide *quality* instruction for each student every day."

As I continue to ponder what it is that prevents us from what

Mike Schmoker calls "the buffer", I have come up with my own mental model for what we need to consider as we take a closer look at how to tackle the issue of time. When we think about time, we must think about real time, time doing what?, how often?, for how many? Real time has to do with how much time are we really giving teachers to teach during the ILA block. When you take away all of the things mentioned above (pull-outs, fluoride treatments, special days, etc.), how much time is available for learning? Time "doing what" refers to how much time each student receives explicit instruction every day. Explicit instruction, in its simplest form, is intentional teaching. It is teaching that has a purpose; a purpose embedded in standards. Explicit teaching is teaching that involves clearly defined skills or strategies that are broken down and taught directly in a series of carefully sequenced steps. Explicit teaching involves extensive teacher modeling and clear explanations of mental actions (thinking aloud). We can provide all of the meaningful authentic learning activities but, without daily explicit instruction, we have missed our opportunity to teach, hence students' opportunities to learn. I challenge each of you to "follow" one student during your ILA block and ask yourself how much explicit instruction did this *one* child receive today? "For how many", "how often" refers to how we group students. Tim Shanahan said it best when he said. "Teachers sacrifice way too much instructional time trying to provide kids teaching at their exact level. So, you'll see teachers spending 15-20 minutes each with groups at level 'L' and 'M' that frankly aren't different. In such cases the teacher would be better off spending 30-40 minutes with the two combined groups." What might Dr. Shanahan's message reveal to us as we think about ways to maximize explicit instruction for our students? How might we better utilize our assessment data to make good instructional decisions for our students, especially for those who are ready to move beyond learning how to read and can spend their time increasing their vocabulary and refining their comprehension strategies?

As we continue to move toward national standards and using local assessment data to inform our instruction, it will be important for us to reevaluate how we are using our time. As I stated earlier, teachers work hard. It's about working smarter and finding ways to provide more time for every one student to receive explicit instruction daily. As I continue to delve further into this topic, I would welcome your comments about "time". Please send me an email with your thoughts, comments, concerns, or questions- [sadale@carrollk12.org](mailto:sadale@carrollk12.org)

Stephanie Dale

Supervisor of Elementary  
Reading and Language Arts

Carroll Reading Council is pleased to announce  
author Emily Kissner will be presenting in Carroll County on March 2nd from 5:00-7:30 p.m.

Visit Emily's blog: <http://emilykissner.blogspot.com>

For more information, contact Kim Sauers at [kmsauer@k12.org](mailto:kmsauer@k12.org)



## Common Core National Standards: Are We Ready?

Governors and state commissioners of education created a committee to develop a common core of state standards in English-language arts for grades K – 12. The result of this effort was the draft report, *College and Career Readiness Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening*. The standards outlined in this report may be adopted by 48 states, including Maryland, 2 territories and the District of Columbia. After reviewing this draft report, I am excited about the alignment of the Core Standards for Writing and our Comprehensive Writing Program.

There are two areas in the report that illustrate this alignment: purpose for writing and situations for writing. In the report, it is noted that narrative writing is an important foundational mode of discourse to prepare students for their experiences beyond high school. Like our assessments, the document highlights the need for students to be able to make an argument and to inform or explain in writing for the world of work and college. In addition, the draft recognizes the need for students to be able to produce on-demand writing and writing over time. Our writing assessments provide students with both situational writing experiences. Our students respond to prompts, similar to college examinations and work requests that necessitate immediacy. Likewise, at mid-course, our assessments require students to revise their initial drafts, providing an opportunity for them to engage fully in the writing process.

Are we ready for Common Core National Standards? I am hopeful. We are making efforts to align to college and career expectations. While we have a lot of work to do, we are moving in the right direction. For more information about the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening*, please visit <http://www.corestandards.org/Files/ELASTandardsSources.pdf>.

Janetta Jayman

Supervisor of English and World Languages



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- Informal “talk-to’s” with 9th grade students to ask about their *Reading Wishes* for elementary students can move mountains.
- Now that the Houghton Mifflin Phonics Assessment is administered to all students and entered in the CCPS data base, students’ *Phonics progress* can be frequently monitored for success by Grade 5.
- With the new Common Core Standards including *Guideposts for text quality*, text selection is vital. We can select informational and literary texts of high quality including qualities of considering the cultural significance, content richness, and literary merit.
- We can provide students real time for “eyes on text” at every grade and in each discipline.


- We can increase expectations for reading based on High Schools That Work (SREB) stating students need to read 25 *books per year*, or equivalent, across content areas.
- Students reading *progress over time between grades and levels* can be monitored with the SRI Lexile system.

It is a unique opportunity to be able to follow students as they move through our elementary, middle, and high schools. Decisions about what is in the best interest of learning must include listening to the students’ voices for they are at the heartbeat of literacy.

Perhaps the flame from one small wish can enlighten literacy’s future for *your* students.

Thomasina Piercy

Supervisor PreK-12 Reading



**Maryland Response to Intervention Framework**

<http://state.rti4success.org/>

Then click on MD. To reach the documents –

Scroll down to click on State Resources- “A Tiered Instructional Support...”