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“Bring in the Kids!”: The Experience of an Academic Library/Elementary School Partnership

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“Bring in the kids!”: The Experience of an Academic Library/ Elementary School Partnership

Molly M. Wolf
Colloquium on Libraries & Service Learning
August 9-10, 2018

"Bring in the Kids!": The Experience of an Academic
Library/Elementary School Partnership

Molly M. Wolf
Presented at the Colloquium on Libraries & Service
Learning, August 9-10, 2018

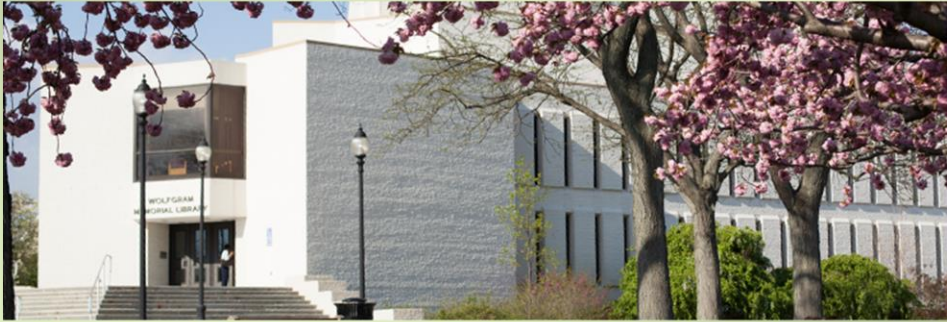
Molly M. Wolf, MEd, MS



- Librarian @ the Wolfgram Memorial Library of Widener University
- 20 years of experience
- Education & Curriculum/Children's Literature Librarian (among others)

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Wolfgram Memorial Library



This is a picture of the Wolfgram Memorial Library at Widener University in Chester, PA. The Wolfgram Memorial Library is a huge white brick triangle.

Widener University



- Three campuses across two states
- Main Campus located in Chester, PA
- Undergraduate, Graduate, & Doctoral Programs
- Approximately 6500 students

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This is an aerial view map of the main campus of Widener University showing the close proximity of the Wolfram Memorial Library and Stetser Elementary School. They are literally across the street from one another.

Stetser Elementary School



This is a picture of the front entrance of Stetser Elementary School in Chester, PA.

Stetser Elementary School

- Located in Chester, PA
- 318 students
- Kindergarten – 6th Grade
- 13:1 Student to Teacher Ratio
- 100% of students qualify for free breakfast & lunch
- 93% Black / 4% Hispanic / 3% White

-- Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2018

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Stetser Elementary School

- 28.95% score proficient or above on the PSSA Mathematics/Algebra 1 (48.3%)
- 41.74% score proficient or above on the PSSA ELA/Literature (61.7%)
- 44.12% score Proficient or above on the PSSA Science/Biology (74.5%)

-- Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2018

Stetser Elementary School:

- 28.95% score proficient or above on the PSSA Mathematics/Algebra 1 (The average score in Pennsylvania is 48.3%)
- 41.74% score proficient or above on the PSSA ELA/Literature (The average score in Pennsylvania is 61.7%)
- 44.12% score Proficient or above on the PSSA Science/Biology (The average score in Pennsylvania is 74.5%)

Stetser Elementary School



In addition Stetser Elementary School has no library. There used to be a library in the school, but it was disassembled when the space was needed for a classroom.

The Widener / Stetser Relationship

- **Community Engaged Teacher Education Program**

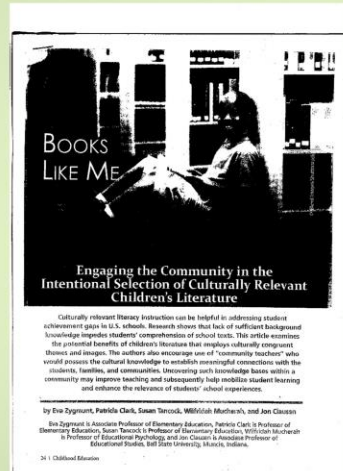
- “The Community Engaged Teacher Education program is a critical service learning program that utilizes the integration of science/sustainability and language arts concepts as an organizing feature.”

Widener University and Stetser Elementary school have an existing relationship through Widener's Community Engaged Teacher Education Program. “The Community Engaged Teacher Education program is a critical service learning program that utilizes the integration of science/sustainability and language arts concepts as an organizing feature.”

- Widener has an established relationship with Stetser
- Teacher education student and Education Faculty work with Stetser and their students in a variety of ways.
- It was mentioned to me by an education faculty member that

Stetser didn't have a library
-- I decided to do something about it

"Books Like Me" Grant



"Books Like Me" Grant

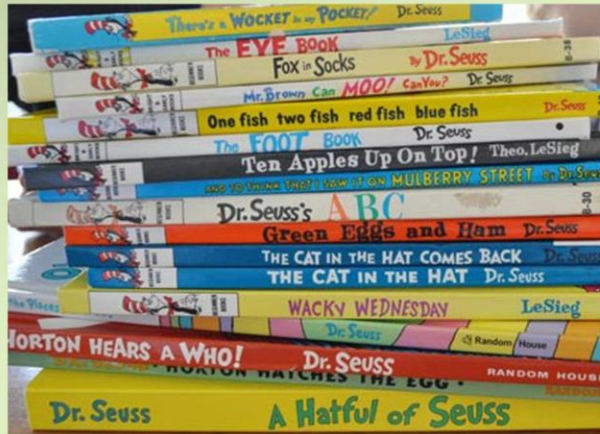
An education professor showed me this article Zygmunt, E., Clark, P., Tancock, S., Mucherah, W., & Clausen, J. (2015). Books Like Me: Engaging the Community in the Intentional Selection of Culturally Relevant Children's Literature. *Childhood Education, 91* (1), 24 about how the community can be involved in choosing books for school libraries or classroom libraries that are relevant to the racial, ethnic, religious makeup of the community. I said to the professor that I would order the books on this list for the Wolfgram Library's children's collection as they looked like books our students should have access to. The professor then mentioned that "wouldn't it be great if we could get these books for Stetser too." I

decided to see if I could make that happen.

-- In 2015 I secured grant money to create a "mobile library"
\$800

-- I ordered this "Children's Browsing Book Truck" and the
approximately 50 books mentioned in the "Books Like Me:
Engaging the Community in the Intentional Selection of
Culturally Relevant Children's Literature"

S.S.R. Fridays (2016-2017)



-- Teachers approached me. I thought it was a great idea and my director at the time approved.

-- Began in the Fall of 2016 with 2 second grade classes

-- I gathered age/reading level appropriate books from the library's Curriculum Collection 25-30 books (the class sizes at Stetser are large 26 -32 kids per class)

-- I then pick one book for the teacher/student teacher to read to the class

--Themes have been: Dr Seuss, Eric Carle, art, music, sea creatures, pets, families, gardens & flowers,

poetry, winter holidays, spring holidays, Martin Luther King

-- Some members of library staff had concerns... they thought the kids would be loud and disruptive



Two pictures of the Curriculum/Children's literature collection on the fourth floor of the Wolfgram Memorial Library where the Sustained Silent Reading Fridays take place.

A Coordinating Activity



Name: _____

The Cat in the Hat Word Search

X	M	F	I	Z	F	U	N	E	V	B	A	L	L	T	R	I	C	K	S			
Q	P	H	J	U	M	P	L	A	Y	B	O	X							W	I	S	H
H	T	L	L	Q	L	F	W	W	G	B	U	M	P									
B	T	Y	T	M	U	T	I	N	X	C	A	T										
B	D	R	S	E	U	S	S	S	S	D	R	S	E	U	S	S	S	S				
A	L	G	A	M	E	S	H	V	H	F	I	S	H									
V	T	Z	S	U	N	N	Y	H	D	F	U	N										
B	A	L	L	J	N	Y	Y	Q	O	G	A	M	E	S								
Z	K	J	P	L	S	Y	C	Z	T	H	A	T										
M	J	M	V	K	L	W	C	A	X	J	U	M	P									
T	U	D	C	L	O	O	H	I	T	M	O	T	H	E	R							
B	V	I	A	F	B	X	M	Y	E	P	L	A	Y									
M	R	S	M	O	T	H	E	R	X	S	A	L	L									
T	U	A	T	H	I	N	G	Z	A	S	U	N	N									
I	B	O	X	P	T	S	S	E	R	T	H	I	N	G								



-- In January 2017 I started adding on a coordinating activity for the students to take back to the classroom with them

--I try to coordinate with the book the teacher reads to the class.

-- Sometimes it is a coloring page, sometimes it is a word search

(Stetser has no working photocopiers, so extra "worksheets/activities" are few and far between)

-- These are free printables I find on the web

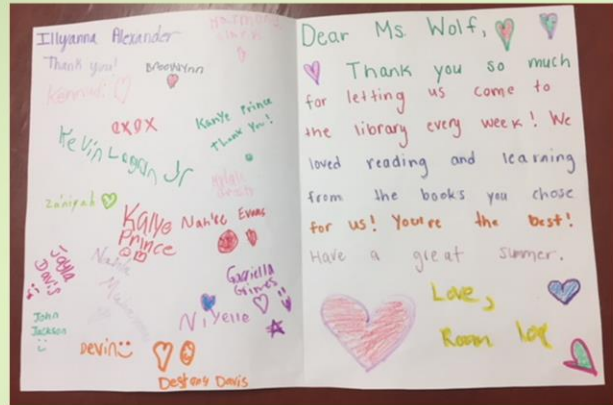
Art Projects



-- April / May 2017 I gave the students paper plates to color to look like flowers. They had a lot of fun with this project adding glitter, paint, crepe paper, leaves/stems, and different shapes.

-- I put the flowers on display in the Curriculum collection for the Stetser kids and Widener Students to see.

A Thank You Note



The students created a tank you card for me at the end of the 2016-2017 academic year.

End of the Year Review



- I had a meeting with the teachers to evaluate how the first year went and to see if we wanted to continue the program
- remember those concerns certain members of the staff had... at the end of year one there were NO COMPLAINTS ABOUT NOISE.
- Teachers wanted to continue. They loved the "take home" activities
- They asked for MORE art projects. Stetser has no art program in school
- I asked for more contact with the teachers/better communication [advance notice if not coming.

Some idea of what the kids are studying so that I can coordinate books]

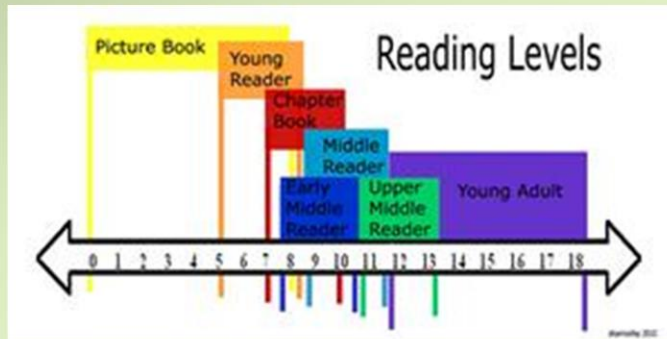
-- Teachers asked for more lower reading level books

S.S.R Fridays (2017-2018)



- Began the second year of this program in October 2017
- Expanded from second grade to second and first

Leveling the Books



-- ED1201 Early Literacy


-- Worked with professor to design an assignment for the students. They had to level 50 books from the Curriculum Collection

Leveling the Books

Leveling Books in the Curriculum Collection

Time Required: 2.5 hours or 50 books

Tools:
Accelerated Reader
<http://www.arbookfind.com/>
American Reading Company
<https://www.americanreading.com/documents/ARL-TRKS-Slides.pdf>



Procedure:

1. You will need to come to the library and check out the books you are leveling.
2. Look up the title of the book on the Accelerated Reader website.
3. Find the corresponding grade level color on the American Reading Company chart.
4. Create an Excel spreadsheet with the following information on it:
 - a. Book Title
 - b. Book Author
 - c. ISBN
 - d. Accelerated Reader Level
 - e. American Reading Company grade level color

Example:

Book Title	Author	ISBN	AR Level	ABC color
Ben's Trumpet	Rachel Capora	9781435200968	2.2	Red

Questions?
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-- The student leveled 510 books

Leveling the Books



A picture of children's book on a shelf with different colors tape along the top of the spine of the book. The colored tape corresponds to a reading level.

More Art Projects



In addition to the paper plate flowers the students designed their own snowmen!

End of the Year Review



I met with the Stetser teachers at the end of the second year to see what was successful and what was unsuccessful. Again, the teachers asked for more art projects.

Next Steps

- Level More Books!
- Have Students generate the list of books
- Have student/library staff read to the students
- Add another art project – Paper Bag Puppets!
- Expand to more grades!

Next Steps for 2018-19 academic year:

- Level More Books!
- Have Students generate the list of books
- Have student/library staff read to the students
- Add another art project – Paper Bag Puppets!
- Expand to more grades!



Any Questions?

References

Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2018a). *PSSA results*. Retrieved from <https://www.education.pa.gov/data-and-statistics/PSSA/Pages/default.aspx>

Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2018b). *Pennsylvania school performance profile: Stetser el sch*. Retrieved from <http://www.paschoolperformance.org/Profile/6599>

References

Thank you!

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Thank You!