



Vermont Reading Partners

A Volunteer Literacy Program

Student-Tutor Newsletter, March 2012

Affiliate of Pro-Literacy
America

Winning Essays: VRP's First Student Essay Contest

In the fall of 2011, Vermont Reading Partners sponsored its first essay contest for grades sixth, seventh, and eighth entitled "Should Being a Bookworm Make Me Squirm?" (See December 2011 newsletter.) Nine schools and twenty-two students participated. In this issue, we are pleased to print the essays of the three top winners, all from Maple Street School in Manchester, Vermont.

First Place

"The Reader and The Worm"

By **Nichole Schimd**

Maple Street School

7th Grade

A worm sits upon an apple and eats. The rain will come, but that will not faze him. The wind will blow, but he will continue to chomp. The flies will approach, and they will be determined to anger him, yet the worm will proceed with his task. As night draws nearer, he will abandon his mission and rest. Morning will soon rise. The worm will awaken, and shall proceed as the day before.

A reader lies under a tree and reads. He is within his personal imaginary world, enjoying the story as it unfolds. The other children may appear and see the reader engrossed in a book and call him a nerd or geek; nevertheless, the reader will ignore them and carry on with his pleasurable experience. He will read until dusk arrives, then he will doze off and dream of how the story had played out. The following day the reader has the inclination to continue his reading, but with a new story.

The reader and the worm are each persistent with their occupation. A constant reader is called a bookworm because a worm is consistent with his work. The reader also prods along with his task at hand.

While the worm eats and the reader reads, time passes and life goes by around them. They are oblivious to their surroundings; so deeply involved, are they in their favorite pastime. The reader need not struggle to be other than he is. A bookworm has resolution, single-mindedness, and willpower. To each his own—does the soccer goalie feel badly for spending so many hours practicing his punts? Does the runner suffer guilt for the effort made in improving his time? I surely hope not! Then why would a bookworm feel the need to squirm? Let's leave that to the worm.

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Second Place

“Should Being a Bookworm Make You Squirm?”

By **Sarah Mangiacotti**

Maple Street School

7th Grade

“Does being a bookworm make you squirm?” Of course, it makes me squirm. I am a bookworm, and that is what we, bookworms, do. We squirm. I live in a bookstore and squirm my way through the bookshelves, reading along the way.

Each book I enter, I devour. I squirm and wiggle through fantasy novels, historical and realistic fiction, and my favorite, biographies. Just the other day, I read about Abraham Lincoln, and boy, did I squirm. He was a great president. He really made a difference in our country’s history. I learned a lot about Old Abe’s personality and how honest he was.



Winners in the VRP 2011 student essay contest celebrate at the Mark Skinner Library in Manchester.

While in my bookstore, I get to read books and gain access to other worlds. Yesterday, I traveled to Hogwarts Academy in England and took a potions class with Professor Snape. The day before I visited the Gods and wiggled on adventures with my friend Percy. Since these fiction books are very amusing, I sometimes get lost in them.

Although I like to squirm my way through fiction and fantasy books, my favorite genre to consume is nonfiction because I get to discover new information. For example, tomorrow I am going to crawl into the National Geographic Wild Animal Atlas to learn more about undomesticated animals in their natural habitat.

Finally, the question still stands; should being a bookworm make you squirm? Being a bookworm should absolutely make you squirm, squirm with happiness at being able to escape into different worlds. Wriggle with enthusiasm at being able to learn new things you never would have known. Wiggle with excitement at being able to realize how courageous and wise our heroes of history are. Being a bookworm should be something to be proud of, not something to be ashamed of.



Third Place

“Should Being a Bookworm Make Me Squirm?”

By **James Reilly**
Maple Street School
6th Grade

As a recent graduate of the Scholarly School of Wiggles, Wiggles and Squirms (otherwise known as SSWWS), I can say with some authority that being a bookworm technically should not make one squirm. However, in my extensive research, there have been quite a number of cases in which reading has evoked various degrees of squirming. I have found that there are three categories of Squirmers: The Flailers, The Wrigglers, and The Twitchers.

The Flailers tend to be under physical or sensory stress, which causes them to make varying unnatural body movements while reading. Here is just a sampling of typical Flailer experiences: reading while hanging off the edge of a cliff, reading while having surgery, reading a Stephen King novel, or reading while watching Alfred Hitchcock’s *Psycho*. These are examples of what we here at SSWWS like to call Extreme Squirmers.

Reading in a calm and controlled environment should not generally elicit squirming. However, The Wrigglers is another group of readers who are known for squirming and tend to be in a constant state of irritation after being subjected to various distractions. While reading *Health and Fitness* magazine in the waiting room of the doctor’s office, one Wiggler used squirming as a way to cope with a coughing person who sat down next to him and spoke of his recent tuberculosis diagnosis. Another resorted to book-squirming after being interrupted by her uncle, who had had a few too many sips of the apple cider punch, and was singing *Tie a Yellow Ribbon ‘Round the Old Oak Tree* while wearing a Thanksgiving turkey suit. Still another Wiggler had to face the challenge of reading while watching the revolting Jeff Lieberman film, *Squirm*, about worms that burrow into people’s skin. These are what we call the Soon-to-Be-in-Psychotherapy Squirmers.

The final group of Squirmers is the The Twitchers (the clinical name for those TooMuchStarbucksiosers). These patients can often be found reading in a Borders bookstore that contains a Starbucks café. They are the only group who bring the squirming upon themselves by indulging in twitch-inducing chemicals, such as a Mocha Frappucino, 5-Hour energy (only four calories!), Red Bull, or NOS.

“Should being a bookworm make me squirm?” Well, I ask you this: Should having extra brain cells make me squirm? At SSWWS, those who answer yes to this question are immediately transferred to our video game facility.

Honorable Mentions

Emma LeMay, 8th Grade, Maple Street School
Amelia Perkins, 6th Grade, Mettowee Community School
Aggie Bisselle, 8th Grade, Maple Street School
Riley Anne Lane, 7th Grade, Arlington Memorial Middle School
Rachel Senecal, 8th Grade, Maple Street School

We are grateful to Zion Episcopal Church for donating office space to Vermont Reading Partners.



The 13th Annual Hockey Fundraiser was held February 19, 2012, at the Riley Rink where The Vermont Law Enforcement Hockey Club faced off against the Green Mountain Boys. Winners: the Green Mt.Boys.

Bookshare Locations

Early Childhood Through Teens

MACH'S MARKET, Pawlet

NICHOLS STORE, Danby

SHAFTSBURY COUNTRY STORE
Rt. 7A, Shaftsbury

STEWART'S SHOPS, Manchester

WAYSIDE COUNTRY STORE, Rt. 313,
Arlington

WINCHESTERS, Pownal

Agency Bookshares

BENNINGTON FOOD CUPBOARDS

OAK HILL CHILD CENTER, Pownal

SUNRISE FAMILY RESOURCE
CENTER, Bennington

WIC –Women, Infants, and Children
Nutrition Program,
Bennington

Sponsors **Ice Angel**

The Perfect Wife Restaurant & Tavern Program Sponsors

Vermont News Guide, Stewart's Shops,
The Manchester Journal,
Vermont Law Enforcement Hockey Club,
Green Mountain Boys.

Student Sponsors

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Friends of Literacy

Sonny's Blue Benn Diner,
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Bookshare Partners

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GSK Climate Control, Jim and Marilyn Hand,
People's United Bank.

Donors

Bob's Diner, East Dorset Jiffy Mart,
Gringo Jack's,
Breton Towslee Rubbish Removal.

Summer Social—Save the Date!

Save Sunday, August 26, for VRP's annual .
Summer Social Fundraising Event

"Celebrating Vermont Authors."

Place: The Manchester Country Club,

Time: 6 p.m.

Delicious, hearty hors d'oeuvres, special desserts,
cash bar.

Tickets: \$60 per person.

A raffle will be held for books by Vermont authors.
A silent auction will include a South African Photo
Safari for two,
jewelry by local artisans, restaurant gift certificates,
and much more.

Call 362-2323 or email VRP2323@sover.net.