



ECO Charter School

ENVIRONMENT · COMMUNITY · OPPORTUNITY

2015-2016 LITERACY INCENTIVE PROGRAM ONE PLANET, MANY STORIES: ECO READS AROUND THE WORLD

The ability to read, view, write, design, speak and listen in a way that allows us to communicate effectively influences how we negotiate the world. The power of literacy lies not just in the ability to read and write, but rather in a person's capacity to apply these skills to effectively connect, interpret and discern the intricacies of the world in which they live.

The past decade alone has seen students' literacy repertoire extend beyond the traditional pillars of reading, comprehension, grammar and writing, to include digital and interactive applications. With today's learners faced with a myriad of traditional and digital literacies, as a community, including parents, teachers and administrators, we must ensure that our children develop the skills to effectively navigate and decipher the constant information stream that surrounds them.

Today, many children are being classed as 'digital natives' – just as comfortable online as they are offline. The internet enables endless educational possibilities, with constantly evolving information streams, however, the vastness of the internet can be a hindrance to those children who cannot effectively sift through and interpret the material presented. Strong literacy skills are a key tool used when children discern and interpret information, enabling them to utilize the internet to its

full potential and making sure that the inevitable 'digital footprint' that children will leave, is one that is safe, appropriate, and reflective of their true self.

Studies have shown that children's motivation and achievement improve when their parents are involved in their education. There are many everyday things we can do to encourage literacy learning. One thing we will do this year is sponsor a literacy incentive program entitled, **One Planet, Many Stories: ECO Reads Around the World**. Unlike many reading incentive programs, this special program will feature students reading in order to achieve the shared goal of increasing our individual and collective knowledge about the world around us, and paying that knowledge forward by networking and working to supply children around the world with books who unlike us, have virtually no access to print or digital reading materials or resources.

We will not include hollow extrinsic rewards like earning food or prizes because studies have shown that these types of programs change the students' pattern of book selection, encouraging students to select books with larger text and shorter lengths. Students may read more, but the reading is less rigorous and therefore, not a lasting benefit to students. We want the gains our students make in reading to last and we want those gains to reverberate around the world, reaching children, who

just like us, dream big dreams, but who have limited opportunities to realize those dreams.

We know that education is among the most effective means of transcending systematic limitations. We seek to attempt to "tip the scales". Here's how this program will work. Beginning on October 26, 2015, ECO Charter School students will be challenged to read fiction or non-fiction book, folktale, poetry, etc. from a pre-defined culture. Students will need to also write a response in a literature journal. Each time a student completes the reading and journal entry she/he will earn a stamp in her/his passport. When a student earns twenty stamps, the stamps will be converted into a book that will be sent to a pen pal at a school on a different continent. Monthly, students will be recognized for the number of books they earn.

Throughout the school year, ECO students will communicate with students in the foreign schools and share what they're reading about along with information about their book earning progress. The program will culminate in June 2016; we will celebrate our accomplishments at an international festival where students share their learning about all the books they've read and we'll give the books an official "send off" party. We want to teach students that reading is important, that reading is



something they can enjoy and that their actions can make a difference around the world. As students read more, students will improve their own literacy skills as well as help create opportunities for exposure to literature.

Of course we cannot make this program successful without the support of our families. We will need our families to help with the initiative via fundraising, book donations, and of course, book reading supervision at home! We will reach out to local, state and global entities, corporations, as well as celebrities for support with purchasing the books and shipping the books all over the world.

Let us come together to realize success with this mutually-beneficial endeavor. Here a few ways you can help to enrich your child's experience as part of this program:

- *Read to your child, with your child and encourage your child to read to you; Share your knowledge and explain how you use literacy in your everyday life*
- *Encourage your child to read and view a variety of texts such as newspapers, novels, comics, magazines, websites, email and time-tables as part of this program and beyond*
- *Encourage your child to write and design for a variety of purposes using different mediums*
- *Discuss how texts look different depending on the purpose and audience — for example, text messaging uses different spelling from school projects*

- *Talk about things that you have read or viewed that were amusing, interesting or useful*
- *Discuss favorite authors, producers, directors or illustrators and what you like about them*
- *Discuss new and unusual words or phrases and exploring these through print and electronic dictionaries*
- *Play games that develop knowledge and enjoyment of words*
- *Review the world map with your child; talk with your child about different cultures and customs around the world*

TAKE THE READERS' PLEDGE!

*I promise to read
each day and each night.
I know it's the key
to growing up right.*

*I'll read to myself,
I'll read to a crowd.
It makes no difference
if silent or loud.*

*I'll read at my desk,
at home and at school,
on my bean bag or bed,
by the fire or pool.*

*Each book that I read
puts smarts in my head,
'cause brains grow more thoughts
the more they are fed.*

*Come rain or come shine,
snow, wind or sleet,
each day of the week
reading's a treat.*

*So I take this pledge
to make reading my way
of feeding my brain
what it needs every day.*



**ONE PLANET, MANY STORIES:
ECO READS AROUND THE WORLD**

WEEK	KINDERGARTEN	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH	FIFTH
NORTH AMERICA OCT. 26 – NOV. 20	MEXICO	CUBA	PUERTO RICO	NICARAGUA	CANADA	HAITI
SOUTH AMERICA NOV. 23 – DEC. 11	BRAZIL	VENEZUELA	ARGENTINA	ECUADOR	CHILE	PERU
EUROPE DEC. 14 – JAN. 22	FRANCE	UNITED KINGDOM	SPAIN	ITALY	RUSSIA	GERMANY
AFRICA JAN. 25 – FEB. 19	MADAGASCAR	SUDAN	MOROCCO	GHANA	NIGERIA	EGYPT
ANTARCTICA FEB. 22 – MAR. 4	ENTIRE CONTINENT STUDY WITH EXPLORATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE (INTRO AND IMPACT ON CONTINENT)					
AUSTRALIA MAR. 7 – APR. 8	AUSTRALIA	TONGA	NEW ZEALAND	FIJI	SAMOA	PAPUA NEW GUINEA
EARTH DAY APR. 11 – APR. 22	SCHOOL-WIDE EXPLORATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES					
ASIA APR. 25 – MAY 27	JAPAN	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	INDIA	ISRAEL	CHINA/TIBET	SYRIA
CULMINATING ACTIVITIES & SPECIAL EVENT	ECO CHARTER SCHOOL WILL CREATE A COUNTRY SYMPOSIUM. STUDENTS WILL PREPARE A PRESENTATION ON A COUNTRY THEY LEARNED DURING OUR EXPLORATIONS. THERE WILL BE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN EACH GRADE LEVELS COUNTRIES THROUGH FOOD AND FESTIVITIES.					