

A Brief Overview of the Greenwich United Way Reading Champions Program



greenwich
UNITED WAY

READING

CHAMPIONS



Greenwich United Way Reading Champions, a program of the Greenwich United Way Direct Impact Programming, is a literacy program pairing Greenwich youth with community volunteers in an effort to build fluency skills during the school year. In partnership with the Greenwich Public Schools, since inception in 2008, the program has assisted over 3,000 children to achieve individual reading goals in fluency. By enabling students to obtain immediate feedback and receive one-on-one personal attention, this flagship program has been a resounding and proven success. The students are selected for participation in the program through their respective schools.

In conjunction with the Greenwich Public School's reading curriculum, Reading Champions contributes to the development and growth of students' fluency. The program services children all 11 elementary schools in Greenwich. The after school program is held at the Byram Archibald Neighborhood Center (BANC), Boys & Girls Club of Greenwich (BGCG), and the Y.W.C.A. of Greenwich. Reading Champions boasts over 4000 volunteer hours each year! Because most students work with the same tutor each week, strong interpersonal relationships are formed and the volunteers become strong mentors for the children, a critical value-add!

Volunteers work on-site with students on fluency using specific reading passages and reviewing difficult words and phrases. Children master Fry words which are the most common words used in English ranked in order of frequency. Session results are entered onto a graph which allows students to measure progress. At some locations, kindergarten students work with volunteers on specified grade level tasks assigned by the teacher.

During the after-school program volunteers help children with their homework assignments.

Volunteer tutors are trained, no teaching experience is needed, and tutoring opportunities are always available.

Anyone interested in volunteering should contact

Greenwich United Way at 203-869-2221

or info@greenwichunitedway.org.



Each Reading Champion starts with a reading passage on a level chosen by their educators. Passages begin at Level A and increase in difficulty to Level Z. Samples are shown:

Reading A-Z Fluency Passage Level A

Name _____ My Dog
Word Count: 33

My dog can jump.

My dog can run.

My dog can swim.

My dog can dig.

My dog can climb.

My dog can sit.

My dog can roll over.

My dog can hug.

Number of Errors

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Accuracy (%):

Reading a-z Fluency Passage Level M2

Name _____ Mars
Word Count: 100

If you get a chance, look at Mars through a telescope. 11
Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun. It is smaller than 23
Earth and has two moons. 28

Mars is called the Red Planet because it is covered with 39
red rocks and dirt. There are even dust storms there! You 50
might also see an ice cap. People think that Mars used to 62
be like Earth. There are signs that there used to be rivers. 74
Now the rivers are dry. 79

People still do not know if there is or was life on Mars. 92
Would you like to make Mars your home? 100

Reading a-z Fluency Passage Level Z1

Name _____ Against the Wind
Word Count: 299

Although Beryl Markham was born in England, she grew up and spent a 13
majority of her life in Africa. She was a famous racehorse trainer when she became 28
enchanted with the thought of flying planes. 35

Markham began taking flying lessons, and after only eight hours of lessons, 47
she flew her first solo flight. She went on to earn her pilot's license, which allowed 63
her to carry passengers in her plane. Markham delivered mail and supplies in 76
her plane and flew sick patients to the hospital. She flew thousands of miles over 91
African jungles. A pilot friend called her "a fine pilot with great courage who could 106
find her way in a plane to any spot." 115

Markham soon decided to strive for something no woman had yet 126
accomplished—flying solo across the Atlantic from east to west. Amelia Earhart had 139
made a solo flight across the Atlantic from west to east with the wind behind her 155
plane. Markham wanted to fly in the opposite direction with the winds against her, 169
making the crossing lengthier and much more dangerous than Earhart's flight. 180

In 1936, Markham took off from England in a plane with no radio. Soon after 195
she left England, however, the wind swept her map out of her hands and into the 211
ocean. She flew "blindly" for 19 hours through darkness and stormy weather. 223

At one point, as the weather got worse and lightning flashed, Markham 235
realized that she was flying upside down. She was able to turn the aircraft right side 251
up. Finally, when a fuel line froze, Markham crash-landed in Nova Scotia, Canada. 264
She did not fly all the way from England to America, according to her original plan. 280
However, Markham became the first woman to make a solo nonstop flight from 293
east to west across the Atlantic. 299

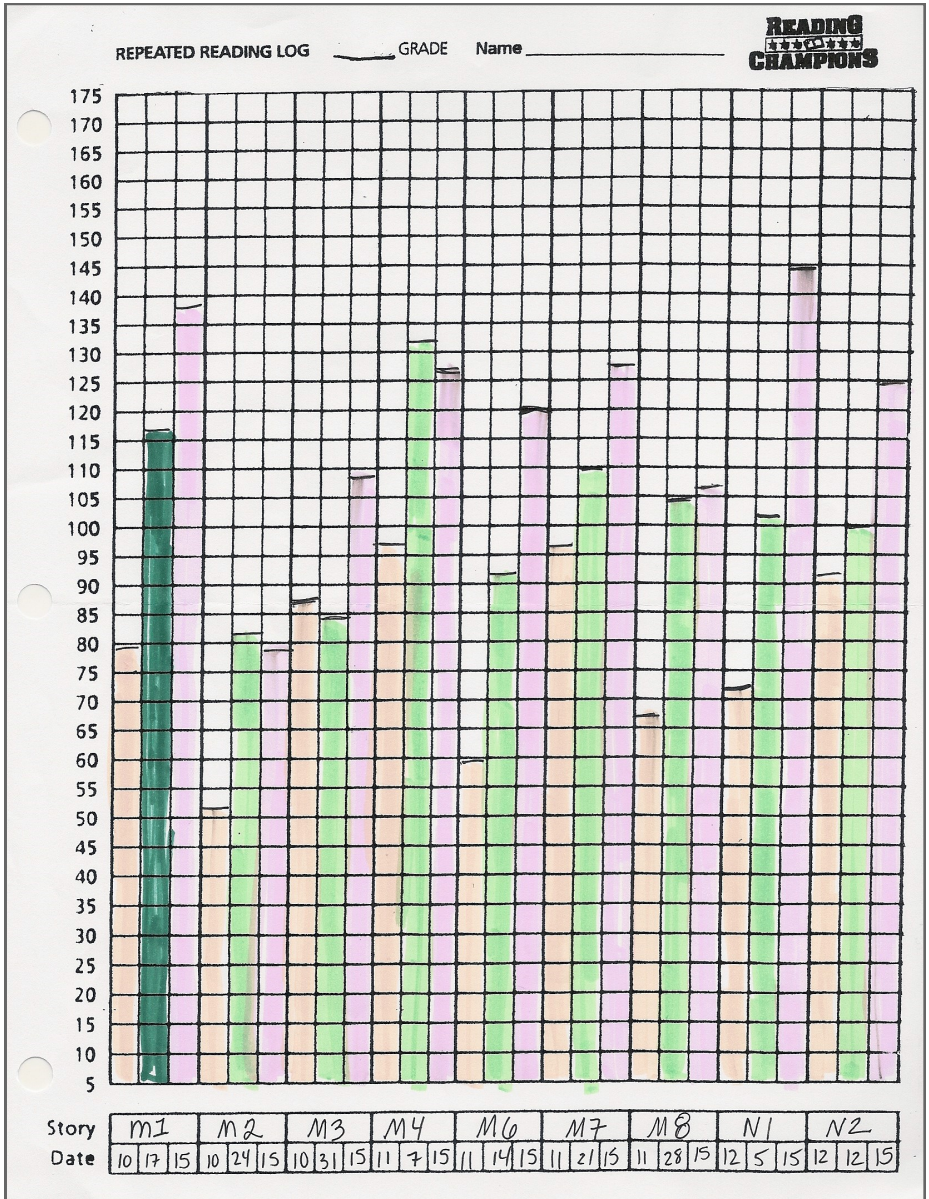
Number of Errors

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Accuracy (%):

Accuracy (%):

The students participate in monitoring their results by coloring in their own graph. Below is a sample graph a child uses to record their growth and progress. Data is taken from the fluency chart on the previous page.



Each student has a special folder where they keep completed passages. It is here where the student earns recognition in the form of stickers which they place and display proudly on their folders after each session.



Collecting stickers on a weekly basis seems to be one of the favorite aspects of the Greenwich United Way Reading Champions program! The students are anxious to cover their folders with as many stickers as they can.

Here is what some of our past Reading Champions have said about this flagship program:

“I now love reading because of my tutor. And I am never alone anymore. Reading keeps me company.”

Cos Cob School 2nd grade Reading Champion

“My RC tutor comes on Wednesday; I love reading with her and now wish every day was Wednesday.”

New Lebanon 1st grade Reading Champion

“Because of my tutor, I am now a good reader and because my mom works every night, I can now read a bedtime story to my little brother.”

Hamilton Avenue 3rd grade reading Champion

**“I love my RC tutor
and wish she could be my grandmother
so she could be in my life forever.”**
Julian Curtiss 2nd grade Reading Champion

Greenwich United Way Reading Champions ends every year with a memorable award ceremony.

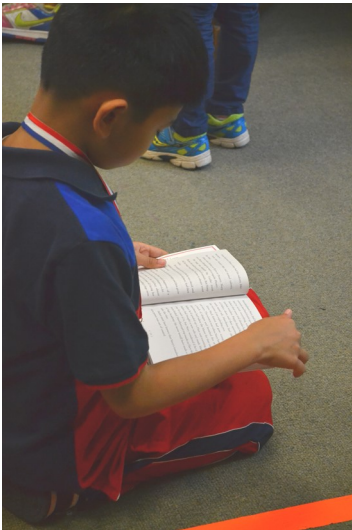
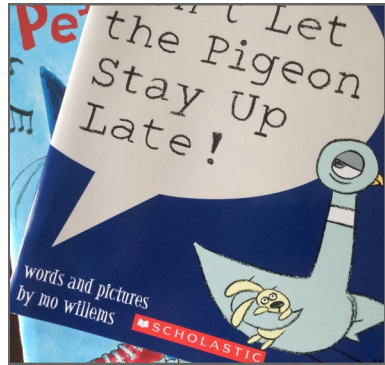
Each student earns an Award of Excellence, a medal, and a book for their summer reading. Many Greenwich United Way board members participate in the medal award ceremony. School principals, literacy specialists and after school directors are also present. You can light up the world with the enthusiasm at these ceremonies.



List of Supplies Used by Each Reading Champions Tutor

- Tote bag
- Student binders containing:
 - Tutor logs
 - Fluency sheets
 - cwpm graph
- Reading A to Z passages
- Fry Words and Phrases
 - Crayons
- Pens/Pencils/Markers
 - Tissues
- Antibacterial lotion
- Motivational Stickers
- Timer and 3 AAA batteries
 - Index Cards
 - Student Folders

Each student receives the following
at the end of the year ceremony:
an Award of Excellence,
a reading medal and a book.





500 W. Putnam Ave.

Suite 415

Greenwich, CT 06830

203-869-2221

www.greenwichunitedway.org