

School Council Newsletter March 2014

Well we thought the cold weather would have been behind us now, but Mother Nature is making sure it hangs on. Seems like the games we purchased are getting to good use!

That said, I'm sure everyone is looking forward to spring and March Break. We wish you a relaxing and safe holiday whatever you choose to do.

For tips on surviving March Break, see the York Region Survival Guide:

<http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/1445404-march-break-survival-guide/> or

<http://www.yorkregion.com/blogs/post/2073411-fun-ideas-for-march-break/>

Check out some March Break activities on Pinterest:

<http://www.pinterest.com/scholarschoice/march-break-activities/>

Other great links for beating the March break boredom blues:

<http://community.scholarschoice.ca/parent/march-break-boredom-busting>

Some tips from Scholars Choice are listed below:

20 Inexpensive Activities to do on March Break

- Go to your community rink and go skating
- Go tobogganing
- Go to your local recreational centre for a swim
- Rent some movies, make popcorn and have a pyjama party
- Have a fun afternoon of making crafts or practicing a play
- Bake cookies from scratch
- For a Girl's Day go get a simple manicure and pedicure
- For a Boy's Day get a few friends together and play road hockey or pond hockey
- Attend a matinee of a family-friendly movie, play or ballet
- Spend an afternoon learning about a certain culture then try the cuisine
- Your kids love video games so give Guitar Hero or Dance Dance Revolution a shot
- Go glow-in-the-dark bowling
- Try out rock-climbing
- Buy a disposable camera and have your child document March Break then write a journal about it
- Turn your home into a lab and try out a new science kit
- Break out of routine! Have ice cream for breakfast, breakfast for dinner, and stay up late
- Get to know your town better, go to your local museums, art galleries, libraries etc.
- Have an all-day Scavenger Hunt
- Plan a Family Game Night
- Create a jar with things to do, then every day they can pick an activity from the jar

Literacy

This month our school is going to be hosting a book fair and a read-a-thon will be coming soon. Please sign up to volunteer to help out. Ask your child for the sign-up sheet that went home this week.

Mark your calendar for a Cuddle Up and Read night on the last day of the book fair Thursday, March 27. It will be a great opportunity to share your love of reading and to shop for books with your kids. We will be looking for volunteers for this evening as well. Please email wilshire.es@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca if you can help out.

Did you know as a Wilshire family you have free access to online resources like tumble books, bookflix and on line encyclopedias. Go to the library section of the new Wilshire website to see more. <http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/wilshire.es/library/Pages/default.aspx>

For some interesting tips on how to help young children become strong, confident reader go to <http://www.readingrockets.org/>. It has free reading guides, articles, parent tip sheets, FAQs, videos, and research articles.

I am copying one of the questions I saw on the site with the answer below. I know when my son Ethan was learning to read it was not easy. We did some of the things below, like making words in chocolate pudding (fun, delicious and messy), and even stuck words to the classic Jenga game and every time we played, he had to read the ones that fell down.

Other Reading Tips from reading that I saw on the Walter Scott Public School Newsletter include:

- Read with your child at least once every day, even when they are older.
- Make sure they have plenty to read (books, magazines, newspaper).
- Notice what interests your child, and help find books about those things
- Respect your child's choices. There's nothing wrong with series fiction if it keeps a young reader turning the pages.
- Help your child build a personal library. Designate a bookcase shelf they can keep their books.
- Check up on your children's progress. Listen to them read aloud, read what they write and ask teachers how they're doing.
- Go places and do things with your children to build their background knowledge and vocabulary, and to give them a basis for understanding what they read.
- Tell stories. It's a fun way to teach values, pass on family history and build your children's listening and thinking skills.
- Be a reading role model. Let your children see you read, share interesting things with them that you have read about in books, newspapers or magazines.
- Encourage writing along with reading. Have your child write your shopping list, take messages, and write thank you notes to family members for gifts

If you have tips or stories you want to share for encouraging reading with your children send them to wilshire.es@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca and we will can share them at our next council meeting.

Question: My child is having trouble identifying sight words. What can I do to help?

Answer: There are many ways to help your child develop his reading skills. Sight words can be practiced using flashcards, which you can easily make at home using index cards. Use pictures, symbols and colors to help reinforce the word.

Adding fun activities like writing the words in shaving cream, in the sand, on a chalkboard, or using magnetic letters may be motivating for your young learner, and is a good way to help him feel the shape of the word.

Also, point to words in stories you are reading. Stop on a familiar sight word (like: the, that, this, and) so your child can fill in the word.

Parent Survey

Keep your eyes out for our Wilshire School Council survey. In the meantime, participate in a Provincial survey just released. The survey is for parents, students and educators of children in grades 4 - 12. Go to <http://www.studentsurvey.ca/> to fill it out and encourage your children to do the same.

The survey is sponsored by the Ontario Student Trustees' Association - L'Association des élèves conseillers et conseillères de l'Ontario and People for Education

Upcoming School Council Meeting

Invite a friend or neighbour to our next school council meeting. Monday, March 3 at 7pm in the staff room. Bring a nut free snack and feel free to email your questions ahead of the meeting to wilshire.es@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca. See you soon.

If you have any suggestions for topics of interest for the next school council newsletter please email us at wilshire.es@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca.

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