"What's Luck Got to Do With It?" Wishes and Family Stories Spark Student Writing Through GiggleIT

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Abstract

Do you wish upon a falling star or a rainbow? Carry a rabbit's foot or a special coin? What's your favorite saying about luck? This workshop will immerse attendees in the 2013 GiggleIt Project where students interview their families for stories and proverbs about luck and good fortune, then direct this inspiration into their poetry and prose writing projects facilitated through the school library.

During this hands-on workshop, participants will tap one another's cultural heritage for symbols and sayings about wishing, luck, and good fortune. Small group discussions will explore how teacher-librarians and teachers can help students see connections between these proverbial expressions and their personal choices to work hard toward success in school and in life.

Based on this collected cultural wisdom, participants will write poetry and alternating-viewpoint tales together in pairs or small groups, as students do during their GiggleIT Project writings. There will be time set aside during the workshop for volunteers to share their poems and stories aloud with the entire group.
Additional writing and creative projects which can easily be sponsored through the school library will be outlined, and several effective methods for students to use when selecting a few options from many choices (such as picking 3 GiggleCritters for class mascots from the 40 choices in GiggleTown) will be actively practiced during this workshop as well.

After participating in this workshop, teacher-librarians and teachers will be prepared to coach their students in interviewing skills, guide them through collating their family stories and proverbs about good fortune and bad luck, teach them techniques for making timely selections when numerous options are presented, help them explore poetry styles, and assist them as they collaborate to write a story using input from all group members.

The free GiggleIT Project is sponsored by IASL- Children's and Young Adult Literature Special Interest Group.

Keywords: Creativity, appreciation of cultural heritage, communication, information seeking, decision making

Biographical note

Katy Manck is a retired academic/corporate/school librarian and currently serves as IASL Treasurer. She recommends young adult books beyond bestsellers on her BooksYALove blog and at www.Abookandahug.com. Katy promotes IASL in her home state of Texas and is a founding member of the GiggleIT Project.

Patricia Carmichael is presently Deputy Principal at St Paul's College in Australia. She is also Chair of the Children's and Young Adult Literature Special Interest Group for IASL and has been nominated for the IFLA Libraries for Children and Young Adults Section standing committee. Her teaching and librarianship honors include state and national awards from The Australian College of Educators and the School Library Association of Queensland. She was awarded the Inaugural Alan Drury OAM Excellence in Teaching Award –Senior Teacher of the Year by the Queensland College of Teachers in 2009. Patricia is one of the founders of the GiggleIT Project.

Barbara Combes lectures for the School of Information Studies, Charles Sturt University, Australia, specialising in Teacher Librarianship. Major interest areas include the role of teacher librarians in education, information seeking behaviour, elearning and the online experience in distance education particularly for first time users, information literacy, policy and planning. Barbara is completing her PhD on the information-seeking behaviour of the Net Generation. Previously she lectured in the School of Computer and Information Science at Edith Cowan University, Australia. She is President WA Operations of the West Australian School Library Association (WASLA), past Vice President Advocacy and Promotion of the International Association of School Librarianship, and a founding member of The GiggleIT Project.