



Reading – a Truly Family Affair

Celebrate Family Literacy Week from January 26 – February 2, 2020

I firmly believe that reading to our kids, beginning when they were only several months old, instilled a life-long love of reading in our now-adult children. It helped them excel at school, and reading together helped us bond as a family.

Memories of all the great books we shared with our kids was the main reason why, after relocating to Salt Spring Island in the spring of 2017, signing up to be a One-to-One reading tutor with the Salt Spring Literacy Society was a no-brainer and one of the first things I did.

Each week, I have the pleasure of having three elementary school kids, whom their teachers feel would benefit from added reading practice and the additional attention of an interested adult, read books to me for 30 minutes. As volunteers, we're encouraged to make the time we have together easygoing and fun. A portion of the time might even include a short word game or two.

Recently, one of the kids I usually work with was away, so the teacher picked another student to come in his place. It just so happened that the substitute student was one I'd worked with the previous year. To my surprise and delight, she'd brought a "chapter book" with her, which is something she wouldn't have had the courage to tackle previously. How far she'd come in such a short time!

Her chosen book was one in the "Wishbone" series – books that place a mischievous Jack Russell Terrier as the central character in classic stories, such as "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Dog" and "Moby Dog". She beamed as she read several pages during our time together and we talked about what was happening in the book.

The experience sparked a text exchange between myself and our 30-yr old daughter in Calgary. "Do you remember Wishbone books? I just read one with one of the kids I'm tutoring." "Oh heck yes I do! I loooooooved Wishbone! Which one did you read?" "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." "Ooo spooky!" Our texts went on a little while longer, but the glow of the simple connection we'd made, and the memories they'd stirred, brought us both a bit of sunshine on our otherwise gloomy winter day.

Why not celebrate Family Literacy Week by curling up with someone you love and reading one or more books? You can find family literacy resources here: <https://www.decoda.ca/support-us/events/family-literacy-week/family-literacy-week-resources/>.

It's also a great time to consider volunteering for one of the amazing adult or children's programs offered by the Salt Spring Literacy Society. For more information, please go to <https://saltspringliteracy.org>. Happy reading!

Martha Taylor

Salt Spring Literacy Society One-to-One Volunteer and Board Member