

Battle of the Books Presentation

Kansas Library Conference

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Purpose

To encourage students to read good books, to promote good authors, and to generate excitement about reading.

Objectives

- Increase reading participation across grade levels
- Provide for a variety of reading levels
- Expose students to
 - variety of genres
 - classics
 - good quality series
 - William Allen White nominees
 - Newbery winners and honor books and other award-winners
 - Newly purchased library books
 - *one difficulty has been how to include nonfiction

How it works

August: Booktalk books at beginning of school year; hand out bookmarks with titles and authors. Books are displayed in special bookcases.

January: divide classrooms into teams, 3-4 kids on a team, mixed reading levels.

- Each team chooses a captain and a team name. My favorite this year: German Cats vs. American Cats.
- Give teams time to talk about the books and strategize- hand out bookmarks with titles and authors again. Continue every week or two to give them time to discuss/strategize.

March: Conduct a practice session using the buzzers. Rules:

Each team has a list of titles but not authors. No pencils/pens.

Only the captain may buzz in and must wait until called upon to answer.

Only 2 chances to answer, then we move on to the next question.

+10 points for identifying the correct book

+5 for then naming the correct author (last name is accepted)

-5 for incorrect answer

Mid/late April: Classroom-level Battle during regular library skills classes, the top 2 teams advance to the grade level Battle.

Late April/early May: in library or multipurpose room, the top 2 teams from each classroom, for a total of 4 per grade level, have their Battles.

Other classes may come in to be the audience.

The winning team for each grade level wins a prize. We've done smaller (and cheaper) things like a free book at the book fair as well as more expensive/time-consuming prizes like a library sleepover with special T-shirts, food, etc.

Resources

Cook, Sybilla, et al. Elementary Battle of the Books. Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin: Upstart Books, 2005.

"America's Battle of the Books." America's Battle of the Books. 9 Apr. 2008
<<http://www.battleofthebooks.org/>>.

Changes over time

When we started, we had two Battles: 3rd and 4th, 5th and 6th, with the top team in each classroom participating in the final Battle. Because the 6th graders moved to the middle school, each grade level then had a separate Battle.

Then we realized that we need to service the 6th graders so now they are participating in the Battle of the Books again, but we've kept the individual class lists anyway.

Next year I will add more higher reading level books to the 3rd-4th-5th lists.

In which book does a mouse named Matthias attempt to defeat Cluny the terrible one-eyed rat?	Redwall by Brian Jacques
In which book does the main character create a new word for 'pen'?	Frindle by Andrew Clements
In which book does Sophie get kidnapped from her orphanage by a giant?	The BFG by Roald Dahl
In which book does a character not want to eat something in a box or with a fox?	Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
In which book does a man take a worn out jacket and turn it into a vest?	Joseph Had a Little Overcoat by Simms Taback
In which book do some of the characters keep saying "Not I"?	Little Red Hen (Galdone)
In which book set in a school library does the main character lose her scales?	The Library Dragon by Carmen Agra Deedy
In which book does the main character, who has ADD, actually swallow a key?	Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key by Jack Gantos
In which book does a mouse fall in love with the Princess Pea?	The Tale of Despereaux by Kate DiCamillo
In which picture books are two hippos two fine friends?	George and Martha by James Marshall