



# TUTORS FOR KIDS, INC

Celebrating 12 years of Tutoring Children

Excited children eager to learn

## SEPTEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

Tutors for Kids, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit community-based organization of volunteers who support the local educational process. Our Mission: Meeting student educational needs as defined by the teacher through suitable and trained volunteer tutors in the local, Tri-county Title 1 public schools as determined by the Board of Directors.

### WHEN CAN WE RETURN TO THE CLASSROOM?

Currently, we are not permitted to go back to tutoring.

When we can, we will let everyone know. What can we do in the meantime? Deb Wile has a suggestion

### What CAN we do???

By Deb Wile

We can't be in the classrooms. It's just not safe. Teachers are already more overwhelmed than ever with the additional burden of COVID protocols and worry. We want to help but don't want to jeopardize anyone's safety or make teachers' lives harder. *What can we do?*

I was researching something else when I came across inspiration for a potential answer to this question of what can we do. **Write letters.**

I cannot imagine a single child of any age who would not love to receive a letter. Imagine a whole classroom of children where each child receives a hand addressed letter written just to him/her. Imagine a teacher who receives a classroom set of letters in envelopes to distribute to her students. What joy!

A stack of letters would be a huge gift! They would be the basis for a series of writing lessons about letter writing. Students would suddenly have an audience to write to. They would learn and practice proper letter writing, which is part of the curriculum, but with a bona fide audience, the lessons would take on an additional, exciting level of meaning. The students would write back to you and begin a correspondence that could last all year... or at least until it's safe to return to in-person tutoring.

Can we make this happen? Contact a teacher whom you've worked with. If she's interested, just ask for a list of students. Then get out your stationery. Write them by hand or print them out. They can be pretty similar: short, with a bit of information about you and lots of questions about the student, with an invitation to write back with a promise that you'll respond when you receive a letter from them. Put the letters in envelopes and drop them off at the school. Then wait and see. When all the students have responded, the teacher can email and you can pick the letters up from school. Maybe we CAN do something!



Sandy Lynch is the School Book Coordinator for Beverly Shores Elementary and the Head Book Coordinator for TFK. She majored in Library Science at Shippensburg State College in Pennsylvania. Failing to get a job in a school library, she worked for 31 years as a computer programmer/analyst for the Department of Navy. She moved to Florida a few years after her retirement in 2011. In Pennsylvania, she volunteered at the Helen Krause Animal Shelter as a dog walker, volunteered at the county recycling center, and the local library, and was a Sunday School teacher.

After moving to Florida, she became chair of Missions at the United Church of Christ, and volunteered as a tutor for 4 years, before becoming the SBC at Beverly Shores.

She has been married 46 years and has 2 daughters. One is a chiropractor in Israel, and one works at the National Institute of Health. She has 5 grandchildren

*Thank you Sandy for sharing your story with us.*



A funny tutor story by Valarie Kamman

I have a funny tutoring story to tell you. When my youngest daughter (of four daughters) was in K and dyslexic, she had an older man as a tutor. He was probably in his 60's but old to Hope! They bonded and she loved to escape and work with him. One day she asked him, "Were you alive when they invented water?" He related this to me and said she made him feel as old as Noah or Moses! Isn't it amazing how young children have no concept of age.!

*How many of you thought your teachers were ancient?*

The Hoot has been **cancelled**.

It will be rescheduled.





An article written by Frank Russo

## My Student keeps saying "I can't do this!"

In the July issue of the newsletter we wrote about reading. There are other issues involved in reading which we will discuss in this article.

When we start back to the classroom don't be surprised if you hear your student cry out "I can't do this". Your student could be in Grade K or 8. Your student could be talking about reading, or math, or science, etc. It doesn't matter which subject it is. At some point you will hear this student's frustration.

How do I handle this statement and what can I do about it? As a tutor, now is the time to put your thinking cap on. Hopefully you will be able to find out over the next few sessions the source of this frustration. Remember last month we discussed the importance of a few minutes of 'chit chat' at the beginning of each session. This is a wonderful time to get the student to open up about "I can't do this". You may even be able to share some of your own learning difficulties on a particular subject and how you handled it and what you did about it.

But let's get back to the present. In response to your student's "I can't". Stop the student and add one word to the "I can't do this...". The word is "YET". Explain to your student that helping her/him to be able to say "I can" is why you are tutoring each week.

This month's and next month's articles will present some ideas on reading. We will then turn our attention to discuss math.

Obviously the "I can't" feeling is different at Grade K than it is at Grade 5 and up. Your student may be struggling to print the alphabet, know a letter's sound, print two or three letter words, etc. Here it may be a matter of simple repetition and encouragement.

In Grade 1 and 2 you will notice some other factors affecting your student. (Some of these you may have found out through your 'chit chat' time.) Your student may need something easier to read like Graphic novels or old fashion 'comic books'. Your school library and the Tutors for Kids 'book room' will have many samples for you to select. It is critical at these grade levels to get the student interesting in reading even stories that are not at grade level. To learn to read they must 'read, read' read. Don't start correcting every mispronounced word. Give positive encouragement.

In Grades 3, 4, and up, there could be two problems. Reading comprehension is one. If the student struggles with reading fluency, then comprehension is going to be a

problem. Lower the grade level reading to a point where the student feels comfortable. But the second problem at these grade levels is "answering the questions". This is one of the most overlooked parts of reading. Yet it is the area where most students are 'judged' on their ability to read. They fail test after test because of not knowing how to answer questions. This the biggest reason why you will hear: "I can't do this!".

The secret to reading is to help the student feel good about themselves and their ability to read. So select the book or article appropriate to their ability or current reading level. Remember you should not be surprised if a student, who has never had help and is at a higher grade level, can be one and a half to two years below grade level.

So next month's article will deal with answering questions.



## JUDGES NEEDED TO JUDGE SCIENCE FAIRS

This article and request is from Woody High (a member of the Wildwood Middle High School Booster Club) about upcoming science fairs at Wildwood Middle High School.

The Science Fairs for Wildwood Middle High School (on 11/17) and the Sumter County School District (on 12/1) are approaching. We need quite a few Judges to support these two Science Fairs, so we are asking you to be a judge at one or both of these Fairs.

Do you need to be a science heavyweight? That is not our role. The judging is done under 4 headings - creative ability, scientific thought, thoroughness and skill/clarity. So, you can see that our role is more along the lines of - how good a job did the student do from start to finish?

The two science fairs will run from about 10 till 3 but you would not necessarily be expected to judge during the entire time.

For the Wildwood Middle High School Fair, you will judge all projects.

For the Sumter County District Fair, when you arrive, you can pick which categories you want to judge. It's important to have a good number of judges in each category.

For the 11/17 Fair judges need to be there at the beginning of the Fair, but for the District Fair on 12/1 judges can arrive/start later in the Fair.

The award ceremony (optional) will be shortly after the 3 o'clock end time for the Wildwood Fair and the next day for the District Fair. There will be an area for judges to take breaks, with refreshments.

Before you can go onto school property, all judges need to be approved Sumter County volunteers via the "Raptor" system which is done online with this link – complete this application ASAP.

<https://apps.raptortech.com/Apply/MTM2Mjplbi1VUw==>

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## DID YOU KNOW

I'm excited to do this because of what past judges have told me. They say there is an air of excitement and a little tension when the students are presenting their projects and answering your questions. Being around these students is an uplifting experience that is well worth the several hours of our time.

Science Education is not only important for individual students but for our nation as well. I hope you will join me and others in supporting Wildwood Middle High School and the students with these Science Fairs.

Please call or email me if you are willing to be a judge for the Wildwood Middle High School Science Fair(s) or have any questions. Thank you - Woody High - Wildwood Middle High School Booster Club - 352-446-2052 [hmhigh@gmail.com](mailto:hmhigh@gmail.com)

Here is another Volunteer position. We are looking for two people who could take over our social media programs namely Facebook and Twitter and maybe other avenues that we have not yet attempted. This 'duo' would have to be familiar with Facebook, have good computer skills, etc. and be willing to work independently. We have a Facebook account but it is sadly neglected.

### *Behind the Scenes –Did You Know*

Tutors for Kids is a non-profit tax exempt organization. It is an all-volunteer organization. We have no paid employees. We do not charge a penny for our services. Before the pandemic, we had over 500 tutors in 12 schools working one-on-one with 2,600+ students each week. Additionally we give out approximately 15,000 brand new books each year to our students.

To keep things running smoothly there are about 75 volunteers working behind the scenes assigning tutors; ordering books, maintaining our database tracking system, answering phones, writing newsletters/correspondence, writing grants, raising funds, serving on the Board, etc. If you have any of these skills and would like to be a part of a great organization please contact us through our email newsletter: [news@tutors4kids.org](mailto:news@tutors4kids.org)

**Did You Know?** - Tutors for Kids gives out **15,000** new books each year. Imagine the cost of buying that number of books. Fortunately, we have been able to get many books from our distributor, First Book, at reduced prices. But each year we have a hefty invoice to meet our 15,000 book goal. –

To help plan for the future purchase of books we mentioned last month **Tutors for Kids, is a non-profit (501) (C 3) so we can accept tax deductible contributions.** Also for the future stability of our non-profit we have an endowment with the **Central Florida Foundation** which also **accepts tax-deductible contributions.** We that can take tax deductible-contributions asuch as stocks or other securities. One of the options for charitable giving is a charitable gift annuity. Based on your age you could receive fixed payments during your life-time. You should contact your CPA to discuss setting up opportunity such as a gift annuity or some similar instrument. It will be an a 'huge' help in funding our book program. Iso have an account with **Merrill Lynch**

### **Amazon Smile Contributes to Tutors for Kids**

Amazon Smile continues to fund Tutors for Kids based on your purchases through the Amazon Smile website when you place your order. You will pay no more than on the regular Amazon website but Amazon, through its foundation, will make a contribution to Tutors for Kids. Amazon donated over \$100 to Tutors for Kids recently. Thank you for using Amazon Smile to make your purchases.

**<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/45-4815598>**

## September Math Trivia:

1. There were some people on the train. 19 people got off and 17 people got on the train. Now there are 63 people on the train. How many people were on the train to begin with?
2.  $1+4=5$   
 $2=5=7$   
 $3+6=21$   
 $8+11=??$

In problem 2 there are 2 correct answers. Can you find both answers?

Answer in next months newsletter

Did you know WILDWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL has a new principal? **This is a copy of her biography from the school website.** Hopefully we will get to meet her in person.



Ms. Shirley

As a double graduate of the University of Florida, with a Bachelor's in Elementary Education and Master's in Education, I am proud to continue to serve the families of Sumter County School District since 2008. I have spent the last thirteen years in a variety of education settings, both elementary and secondary schools. I started my teaching career at Bushnell Elementary where I taught 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades until 2012. In 2012, I accepted a position at the district as a Teacher on Special Assignment for College Readiness. In this position, I worked with Sumter's schools to build not only the Advanced Placement program, but also the AVID College Readiness System. In 2018 I transitioned to a district administrator, serving as a Secondary Specialist. My most recent work focused on refining the accelerated programs in Sumter such as: AVID K-12, EPIC Future Teaching Academy, Dual Enrollment with LSSC, and Advanced Placement at South Sumter High School. In addition, I coordinated and supported Wildwood Middle High School in beginning their new accelerated program the Cambridge AICE Academy. During the 2020 school year, I served as an Administrator on Special Assignment fulfilling the role of Assistant Principal at Webster Elementary. Instructional Leadership, with a focus on student engagement is a personal passion of mine and I am afforded the opportunity to train educators all over the United States as an AVID National Staff Developer since 2016.

Through my work with many schools across the nation and my extensive work in Sumter County, I believe in the value of hard work and persistence. My role as the new Principal at Wildwood Elementary is to provide a supportive atmosphere where teachers, students, and families feel that their voices are heard, they are loved and appreciated, and that with high expectations, finding the winner within every child is possible!

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2020 Book Grant for Lake and Sumter Counties from:



Amazon Smile: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/45-4815598>

2019-2020 Book Grants for Tutors for Kids from:



Answer to last month's puzzle

The dog could cross the river and not get wet because the river was FROZEN.