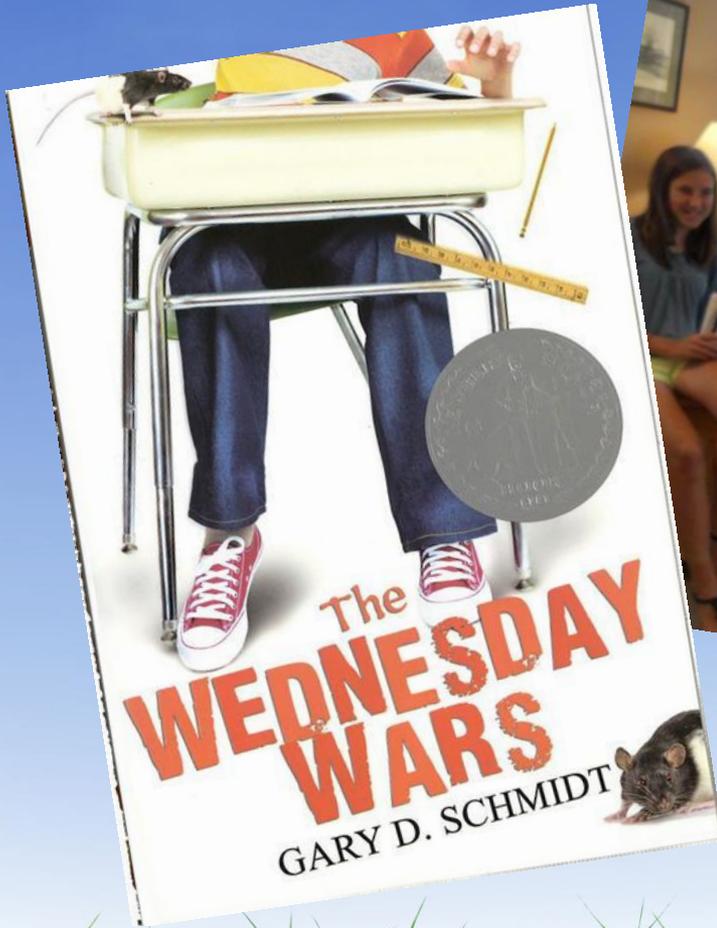


Classical Connections



At The Charlotte Library



Classical Connections: Taking Middle School Reading Out of the Box

Our Mission: To encourage and challenge middle school students to read and enjoy classical literature. To nurture a love of good books and foster the connections between modern-day children's books and the canon of world literature.



How We Got Started

- With a generous grant and the seed of an idea from a local patron we started a week long
- summer reading program for middle school
- We realized this program would **ONLY** be successful if we had the support of the local school librarian and middle-grade teachers.
- An incentive for the students was their summer reading requirements were fulfilled at the completion of the program (this was especially attractive to the long-suffering parents!)



SUMMER
READING
TAKING ON
EPIC
PROPORTIONS?

JOIN THE CHARLOTTE LIBRARY'S
LITERARY TIME MACHINE AND YOU WILL

- Follow *The Lightning Thief* from Camp Half-Blood to Ancient Greece and back
- Create your mythic adventures
- **Complete the requirements for CCS Summer Reading**
- **WHEN:** June 27-July 1, 10 am to Noon
- **WHERE:** Charlotte Library
- **WHO:** 6-8 grade students at Charlotte Central School
- **HOW:** Call the Charlotte Library to sign up: 425-3864

A Typical Day

- Incoming seventh and eighth graders join us for one week, every day for two hours.
- We center discussion around the student's reading of both works, how they relate to each other and to the contemporary world.
- Following a presentation about the Young Writer's Project, the students journal and blog on the [YWP](#) site.
- We connect related information through videos, guest speakers, play-acting and art projects.

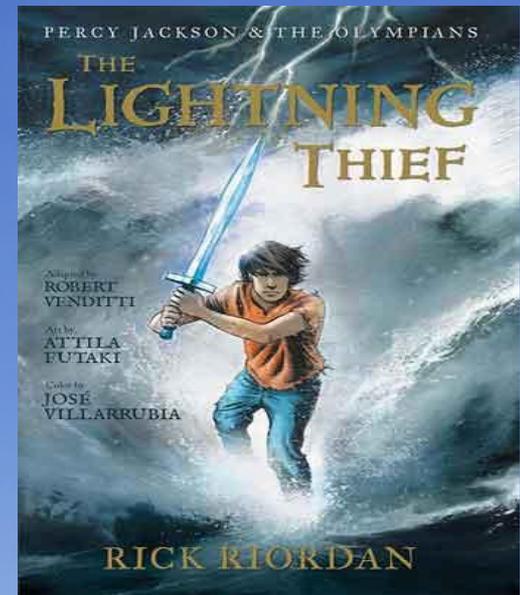
Student Enrichment

- Students remain fully engaged throughout the session thanks to the multiple activities and lively discussions.
- They become better communicators as they study past and present issues with their peers.
- Students develop the ability to make associations and comparisons across the centuries and genres of literature.



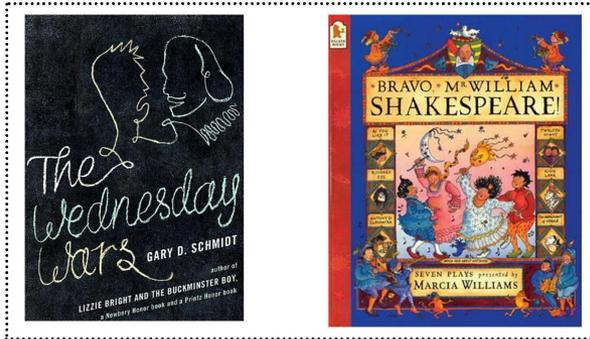
Summer 2011: Literary Time Machine

- *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan was our starting point for exploring Greek mythology.
- Using Edith Hamilton's *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes* and D'Aulaire's *Book of Greek Myths*, students created a timeline of related adventures between ancient and modern worlds.
- Building on our discussions, we made character trading cards and played "lightning" bingo.
- Concluding activities included a character mural depicting modern day versions of the Greek gods and goddesses and an e-toon retelling a Greek myth featured in Percy Jackson's story.



Summer 2012: Wednesday Wars Meets Shakespeare

*Middle School Reading 2012:
No Midsummer Nightmare!*



- *The Wednesday Wars* by Gary D. Schmidt provided limitless discussion points for this program.
- The students were introduced to Shakespeare as the book's main character, Holling, reads and relives the bard's plays.
- We paralleled Holling's experiences by reading *Tales from Shakespeare* by Marcia Williams, a graphic novel retelling of the famous plays.

Making Connections

- Using video clips, the students learned about the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, the Cuban Missile Crisis, Jesse Owens, the Apollo missions and other key moments in 1960s history.
- With YWP technology, the students created audio performances of some great Shakespearean insults.
- The culminating art project was a t-shirt silkscreened with artwork by the students that reflected connections made through the week.



Where Do We Go From Here?

- For the summer of 2013, grants will be available to other Vermont libraries to implement Classical Connections.
- The grant is designed to fund a week-long middle school reading program, including background materials, lesson plans, and art project details. The Vermont Department of Libraries will provide 15 copies of each book used.
- Grant funding is available up to \$450.00. \$150 must be used for the Young Writer's Project blog-writing workshop.
- For 2013, the Charlotte Library will pair *Jip* by Katherine Paterson and *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens.



Wednesday Wars Meets Shakespeare Summer Reading
Program Exit Card



Shakespeare

<p>"What I learned" 3 new things I learned this week because of the program...</p>	<p>I learned about shakespeare, lots of history about the time and about new kinds of art.</p>
<p>"What I wonder" At least one thing I wonder about because of what I learned...</p>	<p>I wonder were shakespeare got all of his ideas.</p>
<p>"Don't change" Things I liked about this program...</p>	<p>I liked how we did a mixture of art, writing and pe</p>
<p>"Take a look at" The program would work better for me if...</p>	<p>If we split up the reading better</p>

Wednesday Wars Meets Shakespeare Summer Reading
Program Exit Card



Shakespeare

<p>"What I learned" 3 new things I learned this week because of the program...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare is fun to read • That two strong opinions can live under one a blood sport • That architecture is a roof
<p>"What I wonder" At least one thing I wonder about because of what I learned...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many plays Shakespeare wrote? • are flower children the same as hippies? • how old did Shakespeare live to be?
<p>"Don't change" Things I liked about this program...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the doing the blog posts • reading the book • Talking about the book
<p>"Take a look at" The program would work better for me if...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we could perform a Shakespeare play • reading more of his plays • If we had more time to do the blog posts

The End

