

Hopkins Hill reads all month

One School, One Book gets entire school involved

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COVENTRY — For the month of March, students at the Hopkins Hill Elementary School will once again participate in the One School/One Book program, according to Hopkins Hill Elementary School Principal Kathy Tancrelle.

This year, the book of choice is Tony De Terlizzi's "Kenny and the Dragon."

"It is a wonderful story about a rabbit and an unusual dragon," said Tancrelle. "We are asking that all families take time to participate in this special activity. Every child in grades K-5 will receive a copy of the book and we ask that families read it together at home during the month of March as we read it in school. Reading together at home is a valuable activity because it enables children to be effective readers in addition to being a fun, worthwhile family activity."

Teachers are excited about this year's initiative.

Lizbeth Widdifield said the beauty of reading is that reading can take a reader anywhere.

"Want to go to the Greek islands? You're there!" she said. "To be impassioned by a book or connect to a book is truly a gift. To see a student connect with a character in the story is also exciting to

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Program generates literacy

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see. When we cry and laugh with the character that is a sign of a good reader. Reading books opens up a world of imagining, wondering, and believing.”

Another teacher, Ann Lennox, whole-heartedly believes the One School, One Book program.

“Every student, parent, teacher and janitor will read the same chapter daily,” she said. “We’re incorporating the comprehension strategy, visualizing. This is where students make a movie picture in their minds to help them understand what they are reading. We will also have a ‘Question of the Day’ to promote a discussion at home and in school.”

“We wanted a book that everyone could develop a connection with the main character,” said Maureen Nadeau. “Whether you’re a parent, teacher, kindergarten, or janitor —everyone in the Hopkins Hill Family is reading this book. This is a book about a dragon-not a fierce, ferocious dragon. He is a dragon that likes Creme Brulee; what is not to like about that?”

Kim O’Connell said after reading “Kenny and the Dragon,” her hopes are that everyone learns something from Grahame the gentle giant, not to stereotype others and learn about peace-making

rather than violence.

“While we are reading we want kids talking about the book,” O’Connell said. “We want to see a first grader talking about the book to his peer, parents, maybe even a fifth grader or maybe the cook in the cafeteria — after all, we’re all reading it. We live in a world of texting; let’s get everyone talking. The Hopkins Hill motto for March Reading Month is ‘Let’s give ’em something to talk about!’”

“For me,” Tancredelle explained, “I think it’s important for children to adopt a love of reading because reading is the passport that will take them anywhere in the world and beyond,” she said. “I hope the book will inspire a sense of community within our school and among our families and students as part of the school community — coming together for a common purpose.”

By participating in the One School/One Book program, Tancredelle is striving to build a community of readers at Hopkins Hill School, including students, parents, teachers and administrative staff.

With the book, students received a reading schedule so parents can keep up at home. Generally, parents are being asked to read one chapter a night with their child — about 15 minutes.

“While reading, we encourage families to work on the reading strategy of visualizing, making a movie in one’s mind while reading or listening to the story,” she said. “This strategy helps to strengthen a child’s inferential thinking.”

Each night, students will go home with a blank piece of paper so they can draw a picture of what they visualize in the chapter.

They can color, paint, sketch, or however they would like to express themselves.

“As you are reading, ask your child to choose an image in his or her mind to draw and remind your child that the image must be supported by the text,” she said. “We will display pictures in the foyer each day.”

Tancredelle explained how the lessons will carry on through each day.

“In school, we will have a discussion question each day so we have a common purpose for school wide reading and discussion,” she said. “We hope you will enjoy the adventures of Kenny, Grahame, the dragon and Kenny’s family, and village. When a whole school reads one book, there is a lot to talk about. With your help, we can build a community of readers.”