

imagination and are integral parts of the formal library program.

### INFORMAL PROGRAMS

#### READING PROGRAMS

##### Silver Birch and Red Maple Awards

Informal literacy programs in the library information centre rely on students being willing participants in activities run before and after school, at lunchtime, or during activity and study periods.

The OLA's Red Maple and Silver Birch Award reading programs are popular with students who like to read. How can these wor-

thy programs be marketed to engage students who are reluctant readers?

One way is to get a colleague to incorporate the program into the curriculum. The classroom for "Red Maple time" is the library and the teacher is the teacher-librarian. Hype for the program by ardent readers is one of the best ways you will find to get reluctant readers involved.

Colourful posters are also excellent along with bookmarks and book giveaways. Promoting a reading festival with piñatas, streamers, balloons, vocabulary crosswords, word searches, and character

matches with descriptors, actions and events, add to the fun.

If readers are reading-challenged, the teacher-librarian or teacher may wish to consider reading aloud to them, while they follow along in the book. Sometimes these students like to follow along listening to a taped version.

#### Reading across Canada

The informal reading program at Waterford District High School is called Reading Across Canada. The great part about this program is that it can be tailored to fit all students in terms of level of ability, interest and favourite genre. In the Reading Across Canada program, students may be involved voluntarily by individually signing up with the teacher-librarian, or whole classes may be involved with the subject teacher signing the entire class up to participate.

Each participant is given an outline of the program and a map of Canada to track her/his progress. As students read, they simply record the material with the teacher-librarian who asks the reader a few questions about the material to determine that it has, in fact, been read.

A program of equivalencies by number of pages read, parts of magazines, newspapers or whole books offers students a wide variety of materials to choose from. Reading may be accomplished at school or away from school. As long as the participant brings the material in to the teacher-librarian and can answer the questions appropriately, then the items count.

Each time a student achieves a level, he/she colours in a province. If all ten provinces are coloured in, the student may opt to continue to challenge and read to achieve the extra three levels representing the territories.

If an entire class is working on Reading Across Canada, an interesting, informative and fun activity to incorporate is to use the last five minutes to share what each person has been reading. Sometimes discussion ensues among students and often other students will want to read the same article or book.

The program continues all school year, and at the end of the year one or more participants are eligible to win the Waterford Wolves Reader Award presented at the end of the year. This program is very successful at WDHS because it allows all students to participate at their own level.

#### BRING A BOOK, TAKE A BOOK

"Bring a book, take a book" gets students

