

November 15, 2019

To: **Scholastic Book Fairs**
From: **Patricia J. Murphy**
RE: **READING SKILLS AWARENESS Initial Concepts**

Per our recent meeting, please find some initial concepts/talking points that I'd like to explore with you and SBF.

Please let me know when you'd like to meet to discuss in greater detail. Of course, I would like to be the one to implement any--and all of these!

But, first, a little bit more about me: **Patricia J. Murphy**

- **MY HEART:** I am passionate about literacy, and learning, inspiring and empowering young readers/writers and learners, and spreading the love of reading and learning, families, and more. I am also a life-long reader and learner. I am constantly reading and learning new things.
- **MY PEOPLE SKILLS:** I am a people person. I meet people easily, find similarities, and celebrate differences, and work hard to foster and to maintain meaningful work relationships. My circles include editors, agents, authors, illustrators, and publishers, educators, librarians, and booksellers, literacy advocates + organizations, etc. Second only to storytelling, my greatest strength is building successful relationships.
- **MY ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT:** I am constantly planting NEW seeds for business, promotional/publicity/public relations' projects, developing and polishing proposals and presentations, watering/following up and "pinging" people regularly, and sealing all kinds of deals.
- **MY SOLID WORK ETHIC:** I pride myself in working hard—and smart. I know how to prioritize, to meet deadlines, to exceed expectations, and to give 110 percent. I'm also a whole lot of fun to work with! Ask anyone.
- **MY BIG IDEAS:** I am a fluid thinker, brain-stormer, ideator, conceptor, and creative strategist. I often come up with big (and I mean BIG) ideas—and I am not afraid to use them.

- **MY TEACHING BACKGROUND:** With eight plus years of full-time teaching and hundreds of author visits, writers programs, and museum/library and bookstore programs to my credit, I understand how children, middle school-aged children, and teens think, read, and learn. I know how to develop engaging curriculum, teacher guides, and programming for them, how to teach lessons to children/teachers/families that inspire, motivate, and empower, and how to speak with fellow teachers, librarians, parents, and administrators with knowledge and respect.
- **MY EDITORIAL EXPERTISE:** I am a professional writer/storyteller. I can write long + short compelling copy and stories about anything. I've been told that I can make anything sound understandable and interesting. I've also learned that EVERYTHING is story, and that it's all about telling a good one.
- **MY MARKETING AND PUBLICITY EXPERTISE:** I have been fortunate to be a part of many successful marketing campaigns through my work with: a Major League Baseball Team, (Go Cubbies!) and a National Football Team (DA BEARS!), an advertising agency, (Leo Burnett) museums, libraries, publishing companies, (e.g. Penguin Random House, Scholastic, Inc., HMH, and others) literacy organizations, literary organizations, (Authors Guild and SCBWI) and my own company--Pattycake Productions. More specifically...

1. I have developed both **creative objectives and strategies** and executed these through a growing list of marketing and promotional vehicles (e.g. FSIs, constant contact emails, direct mail pieces, newsletters, blogs and social media postings, POP displays, copywriting, advertisements, microsites, website copy, brochures, presentations, programs, events, and more!)

2. Most recently, I pitched a large professional literary organization (the SCBWI) with a literacy initiative idea: **SCBWI BOOKS FOR READERS**--to increase book access and ownership for readers in need. Soon after, I was hired to help develop the objectives and execute the strategies (e.g. through targeted letters and emails, white pages, info-graphics, web copy, FAQs, informational meetings/presentations, event planning, creation of the distribution celebration events, volunteer management, plus all of its internal and external communication and publicity/public relations efforts, etc.).

3. The result of #2 has been the **donation of thousands of books** by our members to six organizations in desperate need of books, plus recognition for SCBWI and its book creators, and the recipients' organizations. The initiative was so successful that we are currently working on our third--SCBWI BOOKS FOR READERS 2019 events. For more information, visit my website at: www.patriciajmurphy.com to see work samples, videos, and more.

4. In addition for over 10 years, I've been developing ideas, **presentations, and programs** for schools, libraries, museums, bookstores, and other venues (e.g. hotels and nature centers) **to help promote reading, writing, STEM/STEAM initiatives**, and to launch and to sell books, and my creative services.
 5. Two of my recent **book promotions** include those I created for my picture book "Mama, LOOK!" (little bee). These included: my "Mama, LOOK!" Walks, my "Mama, LOOK! It's a Book Giveaway" nationwide book giveaway, and my "ML First Mama's Day" Book Giveaways to the first mamas and babies of Mother's Day at hospitals in Chicago, NYC, Boston, LA, and Miami. (See my website for more details about these!) In addition to ideas for my books, I am forever coming up with ideas for book promotions, launches, and more for fellow book creators and friends.
 6. Additionally, I've been creating new **branding and marketing materials** and products for Gakken, USA, one of the top Japanese publishers now in the United States. From developing marketing sales sheets, cover and inside book cover copy, to naming products, adding new content, and product extensions, I am adding new value to their product lines, and helping spread the word about them. Also, I have been creating branding messages/web copy for Pearson Education's SLOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Program) and a new website to help transform all teachers into ELL teachers as our classrooms become more diverse.
- **MY PLACE IN THE CHILDREN'S LITERARY COMMUNITY:** I am an award-winning author/creator of over **150 children's books**, magazine stories, poems, and programs for kids' television. I stay on top of our ever-changing industry by reading all of the trade magazines, attending trade shows (e.g. ALA, IRA, NCTE, BEA, etc.), and **SCBWI** (Society of Children's Authors and Illustrators) events + conferences, and craft workshops including the HIGHLIGHTS FOUNDATION WORKSHOPS. In addition, I've become the **SCBWI Literacy Outreach Consultant**, envisioning the SCBWI Books for Readers Literacy Initiative and helping to execute and to promote this now yearly effort.
 - **MY GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE:** Through Pattycake Productions and my past charity, Joanne's Raggedy Ann Club, (a past charity I ran with my mother to make and donate Raggedy Ann Dolls to children in need worldwide), I have explored many different cultures, have worked with people from all around the world, have traveled domestically and internationally, and have always thought of the world as one big family with family members that I have yet to meet.

- **My Scholastic Pedigree:** I have Scholastic **red** running through my veins. I know Scholastic's products--its classic books, characters, products, services, goals--and mission! I have loved Scholastic, Inc. since I was a child with each and every book club order I received, have used Scholastic titles as an educator, have written several fiction/non-fiction titles for Scholastic, and have had titles of mine chosen by SBF for sale. I would love to explore new opportunities with SBF and you!

MY INITIAL IDEAS:

Below are a few ways I can help SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIRS spread **reading skills awareness** to help parents develop competent, life-long readers in their children. What could be more exciting or more important than this?

WHERE I WOULD BEGIN:

- 1) **REACH OUT TO THE EXPERTS:** To discover the latest research on READING SKILLS, I will reach out to: SCHOLASTIC Research Librarians, NCTE, ILA, ALA, Bank Street College (and other teaching colleges and universities), and top reading experts: teachers, librarians, reading specialists, researchers to get the latest research on helping kids become life-long readers, the value of reading--reading skills, and the LOVE Of reading!

- 2) **REACH OUT TO PARENTS, FAMILIES, KIDS: FAMILY/PARENTAL RESEARCH:**

--Focus on "families" to reflect diverse family make-up and reading influences: e.g. parents, grandparents, aunt/uncles, sisters/brothers, caregivers, etc.

--Hold focus groups to discuss what reading/developing reading skills look like at home--what types of reading/reading skill development is going on! And, what's not happening!

-- Interview parents/families and kids from the TOP schools in the US, as well as TURNAROUND schools to see what's working and what's not in helping kids become readers!

--Seek/create a board of parenting/literacy experts--Develop a new SCHOLASTIC RESEARCH PROJECT: STATE OF THE READING SKILL DEVELOPMENT!

--Tap PTA/APT groups for SBF school reading/reading skills' ambassadors to help organize family reading nights, programs, etc.

3) CREATE A READING SKILLS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN:

--With my research, develop a campaign around successful readers from all walks of life (e.g. the arts, sciences, commerce, sports, etc.)

--Interview/photograph these readers re: what role reading and developing their reading skills has made, and continues to make them today. Highlight them in this campaign with a variety of messaging tools. These could include newsletters, constant contact emails, essays, website copy, podcasts, seminars--and FAMILY LITERACY SUMMITS like your SBF SUMMITS for educators!

--Focus on building readers through the use of qualitative research for families. Use qualitative research studies that show the more we read and use our reading skills, the more we become readers, writers, thinkers, and human beings!

--Help promote the idea that developing reading/reading skills is a life-long gig. And, that helping to promote reading/reading skills in others can be, too! A world that reads is a safer, stronger, and kinder place for all of us! This way, we can help promote life-long + world-wide readers! READING: EVERYONE'S JOB--EVERY DAY.

--Let's create a tagline that sticks with people like AN APPLE A DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY! For example: TWENTY MINUTES OF READING, WILL HELP IN SUCCEEDING*. (I can come up with hundreds to choose from!)

TWENTY MINUTES OF READING--HELP IN BRAIN FEEDING!

FEED THE BRAIN: READ

FEED. READ. SUCCEED.

GOT SKILLS? READING SKILLS...

READING SKILLS--JOB ONE

--Create a campaign BIGGER AND BETTER than the PASS IT ON/FOUNDATION FOR A BETTER LIFE/PASS IT ON! It's everywhere! But, for reading, reading skills! Blow it out to include billboards, daily inspirational messages, ads, and more.

LINK: <https://www.passiton.com/>

-- Communicate that is reading (e.g. the act of reading, developing reading skills, etc.) is like BREATHING! Because it is!

4) DEVELOP MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TIE-INS/PARTNERSHIPS

--Possible tie-ins and partnerships could include ALA, NCTE, ILA, CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL, BANK STREET COLLEGE, HORN BOOK, top media outlets (e.g. NYTIMES/LA TIMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE), top reading research universities, literacy organizations, CORPORATE AMERICA, (Fortune 500 and Fortune 100 companies), professional sports teams and organizations (NFL, NBA, NHL, Major League Baseball, the PGA, USTA, etc.) and help strengthen and spread our message/campaign!

--For example, tie in with Tim Green's **Play60/Read20** campaign! Show the importance of developing reading skills is as important as staying physically fit!
LINK: <http://timgreenbooks.com/play60read20/>

5) Other ideas:

--Devise a READING "FIT BIT" BOOKMARK or gadget to track minutes of individual and/or family reading. I have a few ideas:)

--Design a SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR READING CALENDAR! Unlike other calendars, this would feature Scholastic characters and books--and would have READ printed on every day, along with a space where families can include their minutes of daily reading!

6) HIRE A SBF FAMILY LITERACY/RS AWARENESS INITIATIVE MANAGER--ME!

--Let's discuss! PJM

PJMJ 2019