



Battle of the Books!

Dear Fourth and Fifth Grade Parents,

Battle of the Books is a fun and exciting team reading incentive program. Student teams read books from a pre-determined list and prepare for a Battle competition in the spring. The Battle involves answering questions about the books and scoring points for correct answers. It is truly a team event with every child contributing through their own reading efforts.

Books are chosen within a range of difficulty and genres to include most reading levels and interests. Each child is expected to read TWO books from the list, but can read all six if they wish. Teams are formed by filling out a Team Request Form identifying other students they might like on their team. We will do our best to make sure that every student is with at least one child on their list.

As you know, and as Elementary Battle of the Books eloquently states, “Reading can teach students to use their imagination and to empathize with others who may live very different lives. In books, minds and horizons are expanded, roles are tested, values weighed. Beauty and truths are explored, barriers destroyed, imaginations set free. When an emphasis is placed on mastering literacy skills in cooperation with others, children learn to respect their own accomplishments as well as the abilities of their classmates.” (p 10, 11)

Each grade needs to attend a Kick-Off Meeting to find out what team they are on and the list of books they will read. The following dates are scheduled for the Kick-Off Meetings.

4th Graders: Tuesday, October 25th, 1-3 p.m.
5th Graders: Wednesday, October 26th 1-3 p.m.

We purposely scheduled these meetings during Parent / Teacher Conferences so as not to take away from class time. It is very important that your child attend the meeting for his or her own grade level as the teams will be meeting and choosing books. However, if your child absolutely cannot make the meeting, their team will choose books for them and fill them in on the details.

- The meetings will be held from 1-3 pm in the Music Room.
- Please send your child with a lunch to eat during the meeting.
- Because this is an early dismissal week, you must arrange transportation for your child. Pick up will be promptly at 3:00 pm. at the Gym doors.
- Children in the aftercare program will meet up with the aftercare coordinators at 3:00.

Books will be available in the LCS library as well as at the Bernards Township Library and the Bernardsville Library. Only one book at a time may be borrowed from each library to ensure that all children have access to these books. Children can also purchase their books, if they wish.

The actual Battle dates will occur during March conferences, after school, during a 1:00-3:00 p.m. timeslot. (Not the 7 p.m time previously indicated on PTO calendars.) There will be “check in” events along the way to monitor student progress and to maintain momentum through activities such as optional book discussion groups.

In previous years, there has been a wonderful response to this program from both students and parents. We are looking forward to working with your children on this exciting event. **Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions, or if you would like to volunteer to help.**

Happy Reading!

Battle of the Books Co-chairs and Committee
Debbie Marcus and Yvette Hober,
Nancy Herlihy, Michele Ivarone, Sheri Orr

Attached is a two page, multi-part form to be signed by both you and your child and returned to school no later than Wednesday, October 19th. Before signing, please discuss all sections with your child. These forms will also be reviewed at the afterschool information sessions:

- **Commitment** – Please talk to your child about the importance of honoring this commitment through to the end. Battle of the Books is a team activity, so it is crucial that your child not drop out once they commit to a team. *Other students are depending on your child.* We will talk about this during our meeting.
- **Sportsmanship** -- Please discuss with your child that this competitive event is for FUN, and good sportsmanship is EXPECTED during all activities that relate to the Battle.
- **Team Request Form-** Please fill out the top portion and return, even if your child has no preference.
- **Parent Volunteer Form.** – We will need help organizing the info sessions and battles. Please let us know if you can help make this program the best it can be. We may also need parents to read some of the books and compose Battle questions.

Please return NO LATER than Wednesday, October 19th
The two pages can be put in an envelope marked "PTO Battle of the Books"

COMMITMENT AND PERMISSION FORM

Yes, I, _____, can't wait to join The Battle of the Books!! I promise to honor my commitment to my team and read the books as scheduled. I'll be ready for the competition in March 2012!

Signature of student: _____

Teacher's name: _____

I, _____, give my child permission to join The Battle of the Books. We discussed the commitment involved, and I am confident that my child won't let his/her team down! I will review the timeline sent home next week and post it on our refrigerator.

Signature (parent/guardian) _____

SPORTSMANSHIP AGREEMENT FORM

Battle of the Books is a fun reading incentive program that is intended to promote the enjoyment of reading in our students. While it is a competitive event, the competition is secondary to the fun of reading and being part of a team. If you sign up to participate in Battle, you must agree to the following rules of good sportsmanship:

1. I will treat each member of my team with politeness and respect for their feelings and opinions.
2. I will never say or do anything that could potentially hurt another team's or team member's feelings.
3. I will be a respectful and supportive audience during the Battle and cheer on all participants.
4. I will never attempt to exclude any other student from a team, or from any Battle activity or event.
5. I will meet my commitments to my team to read my chosen Battle books and be prepared for the Battle event in March.
6. To the best of my ability, I will not schedule another activity to conflict with the Battle of the Books event in March 2012 and leave my team shorthanded.

Yes, I, _____, agree to follow the rules of good sportsmanship and be a positive member of my team.

Signature of student: _____

Battle of the Books: TEAM REQUEST FORM

Teacher _____ Grade _____

Student Name _____ Gender (circle) Male/Female

Parent Email address _____

I would be interested in being on a Battle team with *any* of the students listed below. You can leave lines blank if you have no preference.

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

PARENT VOLUNTEER FORM

YES, I would like to volunteer for the Battle of the Books Committee.

Parent Volunteer name: _____

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Parent E-mail: _____

Tel. No. (Home): _____ (Cell): _____

(Work): _____

Thank you for volunteering!