

ACA, Ohio Program Grant Application

Contact:

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Site Information:

Camp Oty'Okwa

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ACA Camp # 1002

ACA Individual Member # 59511

Project Title and Explanation:

Incorporating Literacy at Camp

In 2012, Springfield Promise Neighborhood, a placed-based and asset-based poverty alleviation project working with residents in a 110 block area in Springfield Ohio, approached us about providing a camping experience for the children they serve and layering in a literacy component to combat academic shortcomings they had identified as an issue for their youth. So we created Literacy Week. During this week, campers have had the opportunities to engage in many activities designed to enhance literacy skills. These activities have included creating newspapers, storytelling, song writing, and reading books as a group.

This year, we'd like to expand this program to serve all of our campers. By taking the lessons we've learned from Literacy Week, we can create positive experiences with books to foster a love of reading for all of our campers and address summer reading loss. To do this, we'd choose a few skill-appropriate chapter books to provide for cabin groups throughout the summer. These books would appeal to campers of different ages and skill levels, enabling every camper to succeed in improving his or her reading abilities.

We will provide several copies of each book (sets of 10) in a drawstring backpack with journaling supplies. Each session, we have 18 cabin groups, and will make 18 total sets. Each cabin group can pick out the appropriate book for their group's skill level and each child and counselor in the cabin group will have their own copy of that book for the week. Throughout the child's week at camp, his or her entire

cabin group will work along with counselors to read the book and complete hands-on activities that relate to its central themes. By structuring day-to-day activities around the narratives, campers will be more invested in the stories and eager to continue reading. An example of one such activity would be having an archery class for campers reading *The Hunger Games*.

The counselors will be responsible for organizing group reading sessions. Each group can choose a format that works best for its campers. Some counselors prefer to have each camper read a paragraph for a set amount of time. Other counselors might use the book as a bedtime story to read to the campers as they fall asleep. However the campers are engaged, they are actively involved with one story for the entire stay at Camp.

Throughout the day, counselors will facilitate camping activities prepared for them by the Education Coordinator that relate to the book the group has chosen. Some of these activities might involve making a shelter out of natural materials. Campers will also be journaling throughout the week with various prompts related to the books. For example, campers might be asked to journal in the point of view of their book's main character. Each activity will be appropriate for the book and skill level of the cabin group. Each activity will end with a reflection on how it relates to the developments in the book.

Each chapter book would deal with youth and nature. Campers will be able to read about people similar to themselves overcoming difficulties through resilience and clever use of natural resources. These messages play hand-in-hand with the overarching culture of camp to help every person succeed in whatever trials come his or her way.

The books we hope to use this summer would be:
(Information from Scholastic.com)

- *Hunger Games* *Suzanne Collins*
 - Grade interest levels: 7-12
 - Grade Level Equivalent: 5.3
- *Touching Spirit Bear* *Ben Mikaelson*
 - Grade interest levels: 6-8
 - Grade Level Equivalent: 5.4
- *Holes* *Louis Sachar*
 - Grade interest Levels: 5-9
 - Grade Level Equivalent: 4.6
- *Hatchet* *Gary Paulsen*
 - Grade interest levels: 5-8
 - Grade Level Equivalent: 5.7
- *My Side of the Mountain* *Jean Craighead George*
 - Grade interest levels: 3-5
 - Grade Level Equivalent: 6.7
- *Allergic to Camping, Hiking, and Other Natural Disasters* *Lenore Look*
 - Grade interest levels: 3-5
 - Grade Level Equivalent: 3.3

Purpose:

This project is new in that we at Camp Oty’Okwa hope to be able to increase the focus of literacy for all of our campers. By using these books with groups every week of the summer, we hope to give every child who comes to Camp Oty’Okwa a chance to improve his or her reading ability and love for reading.

This project will assist counselors by providing them with fun, engaging activities for their campers. These activities will help campers who might be reluctant to read feel more personally involved with the narratives of their particular books.

The camp experience will be enhanced for the counselors and campers alike through exciting stories of youth engaged in the natural world. Simple hikes throughout the day will easily turn to explorations of the wildernesses found in the books through imagination. The campers will be encouraged to think critically about themselves and their surroundings in a fun and safe environment where they will be encouraged to acquire new skills and develop emotionally.

After attending a session at Camp Oty’Okwa, campers will feel more comfortable and confident in their reading. They will learn how to think critically about the stories and engage in fun activities to help them remember the plots. Students who work with the literacy project will be given the skills to increase reading scores in school. Ultimately, Camp Oty’Okwa hopes to make all of its campers become life-long readers.

Budget:

Books:	\$1080
\$6/book for gently used paperbacks	
3 sets of 10 of each chapter book:	
Hunger Games <i>Suzanne Collins</i>	\$180
Touching Spirit Bear <i>Ben Mikaelson</i>	\$180
Holes <i>Louis Sachar</i>	\$180
Hatchet <i>Gary Paulsen</i>	\$180
My Side of the Mountain <i>Jean Craighead George</i>	\$180
Allergic to Camping, Hiking, and Other Natural Disasters <i>Lenore Look</i>	\$180

18 drawstring backpacks for each book set: \$20

Supplies for journaling for 700 youth: \$1400

Pencils, journal making supplies (\$2/youth)

TOTAL REQUEST: \$2500

Alternative Award Amount Ramifications:

Any award amount will be appreciated and will go towards fulfilling this project. Higher or lower funding will only affect the amount of supplies, and not jeopardize the project entirely. We are currently raising money through individual giving and events to support project curriculum development, related camp program activities and even broadening the project to include more options for books and activities.

Time Framework:

The project will take place from June 12 – August 13, 2016. Similar projects will continue in future years. Some books may be used again for future programs. If the project is funded, we would like to begin purchasing in May/June of 2016. This will allow us to make many purchases in advance to maximize funding dollars.