

Hooking the Highly Unmotivated



GRANT RECIPIENTS

Sandra Athans & Denise Devine

Chittenango Central School District
Bolivar Road Elementary School

Athans@ccs.cnyric.org
Devined@ccs.cnyric.org

NYS STANDARD

ELA 1 – 4

GRADE LEVEL

Grade 4 & 5

STUDENTS SERVED

45 students piloted; 120 altogether

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the grant was to engage the hard-to-please student in literacy-based activities by encouraging their participation in several distinct areas: self-selecting texts based on individual criteria, becoming familiar with new reading materials, many reaching beyond the boundaries of traditional formats and genres, and considering literacy in terms of a global perspective by participating in literacy improvement initiatives through the Magic Yeti Library – a library building program to assist the children of Nepal. To develop the grant, we attended the NYSRA Conference to preview new and relevant reading materials. We also arranged a book-drive with representatives from the Magic Yeti Libraries. To implement the program, we met with students twice monthly from October to February where we initiated a ‘gently-used’ book drive, read new works collected from the NYRSA Conference, and discussed other literacy issues that aligned with the grant objectives. To evaluate the grant, we compared pre and post Rigby Benchmarks and Motivation to Read Profiles (Gambrell), as well as informal reading behavior observations.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

As a result of this grant, students demonstrated improved skill (+1-2 reading levels) and an improved attitude toward reading and other literacy-based activities. Specifically, students developed a criteria-based selection process for making independent reading selections, became familiar with new and unique works, many nontraditional in format – such as graphic novels, reader’s theater, and small-format readers, and students gained a renewed appreciation for the importance of literacy as demonstrated by their desire to add a pen-pal writing activity to the Magic Yeti Library agenda and also by their wish to continue working with these literacy activities at the close of the grant period. Believing themselves to be strong contributors to others’ successful reading ventures seemed to propel their own self-improvement initiatives.