

**SHINING WILLOW AWARDS:** The Grade three students in Room 107 at Elizabeth School participated in a Shining Willow Award project during the months of January and February 2006. Elizabeth School is a K-7 school with a student enrolment of 289. There are 19 students enrolled in our grade three classroom.

Each student was given a Shining Willow Award booklet containing a reading log, a *Choosing the BEST Book!* handout from the Willow Awards teacher's guide, various activity sheets and a jot-note sheet for each book. Every second day a different book was read to the students by our librarian, Mrs. Wagner, and students made jot-notes about that book in their Shining Willow booklets (Mrs. Edgerton read the chapter book to us). Mrs. Wagner left a biography sheet about the author which Mrs. Edgerton read to us & then posted on Our Willow Awards bulletin board. Mrs. Wagner also left other books by the author, and a number of related library resources in our classroom. Each book was a springboard for discussion and an activity.

1. We started by reading *A Poppy is to Remember* by Heather Patterson in November. Mrs. Wagner explained that we would read it again during January/February when we did the other Willow Award readings and activities. On a dove template we wrote about World Peace & what it means to us, these were hung on our hallway bulletin board, we made origami doves that were flying all over the bulletin board, and made tissue paper poppies to decorate the border. When the ballots were counted at the end of February, this book was the winner in our classroom.
2. In the December school newsletter and display cases, our librarian Mrs. Wagner featured Hazel Hutchins as her "Author of the Month". Mrs. Wagner thought it appropriate to start our Willow Award activities with *The Sidewalk Rescue* by Hazel Hutchins. We then read *Stella: Princess of the Sky* by Marie Louise Gay. Both books involved a variety of animals. Mrs. Wagner gave us a page of animal names and the sounds the animals make, for example lions roar and eagles scream. Did you know that the lion is our school mascot? We then went on our school website's library link and visited websites where we could hear actual animal sounds and we saw lots of fantastic sidewalk chalk drawings. If you want to try these website links please visit [www.sunwestsd.ca/elizabeth/](http://www.sunwestsd.ca/elizabeth/) and go to links and then Mrs. Wagner's Top Sites. She also gave us a page of animal names and what the baby, male, female and group are called. Also a hide and seek hidden animal page, a word search, a word scramble, drawing instructions page, and a creative writing sheet. In the spring, Mrs. Wagner & Mrs. Edgerton are going to bring chalk to school so we draw try our own *Sidewalk Rescue*.
3. After reading *You Can't Rush A Cat* by Karleen Bradford we each drew a picture and wrote about what we think will happen next. We put all our pages together

and made a book for Mrs. Wagner to read to the K-2 students when they visit the library. Mrs. Wagner left a number of books about cats and how to care for them in our classroom.

4. When we read *Drumheller Dinosaur Dance* by Robert Heidbreder we chanted along and it sounded very thrilling and exciting...almost scary. We followed the suggestions in the Willow Awards teacher's guide and created Hoo-Doo pictures using pastel chalk on either medium or dark blue construction paper, we used Q-tips to represent bones and created fossil skeletons among the hoodoos, and our border was made from 3-D paper dinosaurs from sheets Mrs. Wagner gave us. In our booklets we also got to color a Jurassic volcano picture which had lines on it so we could cut it into puzzle pieces, a Precambrian maze, a Saskatchewan's Ancient past word search, a Tertiary Age match the head bone (skull) of the ancient Saskatchewan animal with a picture of the animal, and we got to take home the materials to make a dinosaur mobile. We then went on Mrs. Wagner's website link under Dinosaur Valley and learned about Drumheller and dinosaurs.
  
5. Miss Anita Elliott a local dancer, Dance Studio owner, dance teacher and owner of Café Danse read *James the Dancing Dog* to our class. She then read *The Butterfly Believe* a book she wrote and her daughter illustrated (our librarian and secretary nominated this book for a Willow Award). Anita talked about her career as a dancer, dance teacher, dance studio owner and café owner. She talked about the training a dancer needs, how we can all have dreams come true, and the importance of believing in yourself & your dreams. She shared photos of various dances and costumes. She also brought dance shoes for us to see. Anita invited her dance students in our classroom to come up to the front of the room and under her direction they demonstrated various dance steps. Our local newspaper reporter took pictures of us, and interviewed Anita. She also interviewed Mrs. Wagner about the Willow Awards and there was a nice article in the paper.
  
6. After we read *Doggie in the Window* by Elaine Arsenault we sang the *Doggie in the Window* song. Mrs. Wagner remembered singing that when she was a girl so it must be an old song...Mrs. Wagner called it a classic. We made doggie paper bag puppets and we had many amazing costumes for doggie. These were displayed in our library glass display cases which have a window into the hallway. During March Mrs. Wagner read *Doggie in the Window* to all the students when they came for their library period and everyone loved the story and our puppets.

When our parents came for their parent teacher conferences they got to learn more about the Willow Awards from the display in the library and the special display Mrs. Edgerton made in our classroom. Our parents were very interested in learning about the Willow Awards and we are all excited about learning who the winner is. Of course, we think all of the books were winners, but we are hoping for our choice, *A Poppy is to Remember*, to win!

Well, these are just some of the interesting and exciting things we did for the Shining Willow Awards. When we are in Grade 5 we get to participate in the Diamond Willow Awards and we can hardly wait!!

Mrs. Edgerton's Grade 3 class

**PLEASE NOTE:** Mrs. Edgerton integrates the Shining Willow Awards into her Grade 3 Curriculum in Science, Art, Language Arts and Social Studies (the Decision Making Unit). She has found this to be very effective and enjoyable for the students.

**DIAMOND WILLOW AWARDS:** For the first time the grade five classrooms participated in the Diamond Willow Awards. The students were the first Elizabeth School grade three students to participate in the Shining Willow Awards and now we were first again! Our teachers Mrs. Jamieson and Mrs. Georget were very excited to participate and so were we. There are a total of 44 students in grade five.

We started the school year off by reading *My Name Is Mitch!* And then our teachers read a total of six novels to us from August through February. It was up to us to read the other four nominees on our own. Our teachers used the Willow Awards Teacher's Guide for our activities and projects. We used the Willow books for our Literature Novel Studies and IRPs. We covered characters, setting, plot, vocabulary and figures of speech. For each novel we chose an activity from the Willow Awards Teacher's Guide to present to the class. Our teachers posted the authors' biography sheets and we had to share one thing we found particularly interesting about each author. We also tried to read other books by the authors. We enjoyed learning about authors and participating in the various activities in the Teacher's Guides. When we tabulated our votes *My Name Is Mitch* was the winner and *Tunnel King* placed second in both classrooms.