

## **How I Survived Without Reading**

By: William Mitchell

There are several things that come to mind when I think about how I survived without reading. There are millions of people around the world who can't read or write. I spent a lot of time pretending I could read various papers, letters, and notes. If I ever got in a tight situation, I would joke and tease my way out of the situation. I survived by fooling others, crying, and taking one day at a time.

For years I survived by fooling others, but I was only fooling myself. I would always take a chance at answering questions. I had the gift of gab and I could talk, joke or tease my way out of any situation. I had a lot of common sense but I was only fooling myself. Next, I spent a lot of time crying and asking the Lord to help me learn how to read. I would often get very upset and angry at myself because I wanted to be able to read and write. It was only by the grace of God that I survived this far without being able to read. One day I decided to stop crying, take charge of my life and join the reading center. I survived by taking life one day at a time. I prayed and asked the good Lord to help me but I had to help myself first. I am very happy with how things are going. By this time next year I will be reading better than last year. In conclusion, if I can learn to read and write at my age everyone else can do the same. It doesn't matter how young or old a person is the same. It thank God every day for the programs that help us survive and live a better life by learning how to read. I survive because I will read and write anything I want before this year is out.

## **Reading Class**

By: Hazel

This is the third time that I have made an attempt to take a reading class. Now that I have more time, I am totally devoted to taking this class. My main goal is to be very good at spelling.



## My Journey to Read and Write

By C. Phillips

In the past 60 years of my life sometime I have wonder if I had been raised by my Mother and Father today my reading and writing would be much better. But in the olden days the oldest child was not allowed to go to school. I had to work on the farm picking cotton, fruit, and vegetables. My reading and writing improved greatly since I have been attending The READ Center these past years. My main goal is to read the Bible. That I can do now. Some chapters in the Bible I can read with no problem. With the help from the teachers and tutors at The READ Center my reading and writing has improved. I am thankful for this reading class.



## What Are You Thankful For?

Anonymous

I am thankful for another day. I am thankful for my family. I am thankful for my job. I am thankful for my home. I am thankful for you guys.

## READ

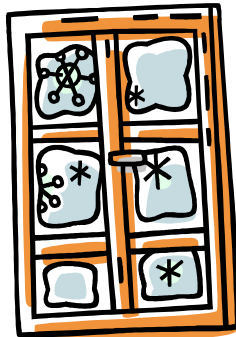
By: David Norfleet

The Reading Program has been a great help to me. I enjoy working with the teachers and students. Being in the program I have improved in my reading. I hope I will continue to do well.

## Future

By: Mohammad Nabizadeh

Last night  
There was a frost outside  
And my room's window  
Was misted.  
That I could not see  
Through it to the street  
Like future  
In my mind.



## Struggle

By: Viola White

The struggle to reach  
the top enough to fulfill  
the heart of men.

## California

By: D. Monroe

It is sunny in  
California. I want to live  
in California. It is  
beautiful on the beach.  
I think it is the biggest  
ocean on the water.



## What Are You Thankful For?

By: Priscilla Taylor

I am thankful for me and my son.  
I am thankful for A.G.'s June 30, 2005 birthday.  
I am thankful for the cheap turkey.  
I am thankful for my walk.  
I am thankful for my family.

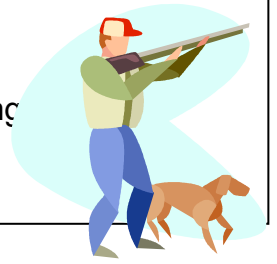
By Students

Summer 2005

## Hunting

By: William Johnson

I am a hunter. I love to hunt. Some people think hunting is dangerous. And it can be if the hunter doesn't follow the rules of hunting. You must see what you are shooting at and wearing blaze orange. No using alcohol or drugs. Like driving it can be dangerous if we don't follow the rules of the road. Following the rules, hunting can be safe.



## The Squirrel

By: Jammarr

One day a squirrel went home to his nest. He ate a nut.



## The Ramp

By: Hiram Hubbard

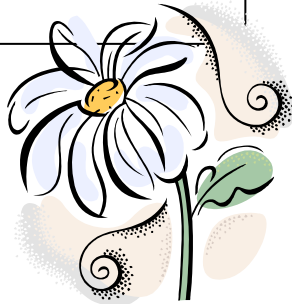
A school bus of children turned over in Chesterfield County on I-94. Last week a car carrying people turned over on the same ramp. Both were traveling too fast on the ramp. One child got hurt.



## Spring Break

By: Lauren Pelegrino

During Spring Break I went to church on Easter. I went to my friends house. I went to the movies to see Medea and we had a pizza party. I had a sleepover at my friend's house.



## My Goals

By: Keysha M.

I am learning to read better so I can get my driver's license this summer. Reading class is helping me with my reading and I am going to drive to class.



## What Are You Thankful For?

By: Crystal

I am thankful for my family.  
I am thankful for my pink boots.  
I am thankful for my nephew J.R.  
I am thankful for my brother.  
I am thankful for my Mom.

## Aunt Ebony

By: Ebony Edwards

I am an aunt. My sister had a baby girl on Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> 2011. I will be able to read to my little niece.



## **My Church Friends**

By: Viola White

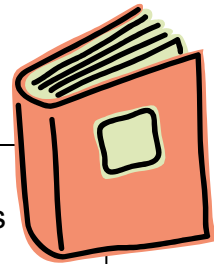
I mourned when my son died. People helped me by coming by and calling me on the phone. I thank God for church people like that. It took me two years to overcome my son's death.



## **What If...**

By: Calvin Phillips

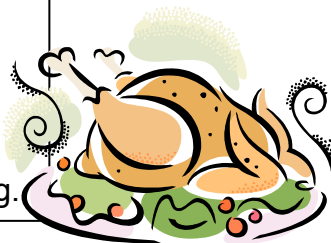
Sometimes I wonder if my Mom and Dad had raised me my chances going to school would have been better. Today I tell myself each time I read the Bible it is never to late to learn.



## **What Are You Thankful For?**

By: Hiram Hubbard

I like to go to Church on Thanksgiving Day.  
I like to sing to God.  
I am thankful for turkey.  
I am thankful for food.  
We are going to the country for Thanksgiving.



## **I Like...**

By: Calvin Braxton

I like to fish in the Outer Banks. My favorite spot is in Nags Head, N.C. I like to fish for dolphin fish and tuna. I have liked fishing since I was a little boy.



## **My Baby Brother**

By: Isabelle James

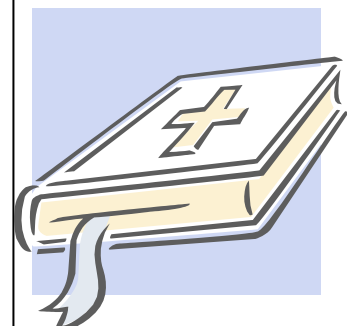
My brother has been to the Army. He's very good at fixing things. He works on cars. He also worked on the motor of his own car. Now his car runs like a kitten.

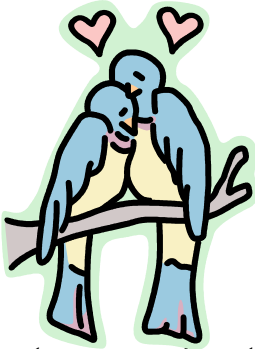


## **Change of Life – An Excerpt**

Anonymous

I grew up with my parents. Life was easy for me and my family, but after the death of my father, things became tough . . . . Things were hard for me. I stopped schooling . . . . I suffered a lot. During my suffering, I accepted Christ and became a born-again Christian. Up to now I still hold on to the Lord. My father knew the importance of education and he wanted his children to be educated. Thanks to God for a new life, I know the Lord has the best for me.





## **Walking in Love**

By: Emanuel Downs

I would like some feedback about love. Some people say love is a feeling And an emotion. Then you have others that say it is just a choice you make. Let's see if it is one or other, or both. Have you ever entered a room to see special one person that takes your breath away. That one when you look upon their face you see it glow and a smile that lights up the darkest room. As if God looked down and smiled his amazing majestic light upon you. Time stops, your heart races, your eyes meet, you dance and talk like you are the only ones in the room. You want that moment to last forever. You catch yourself daydreaming and fantasizing about making love and how your lives would be together. On the other hand you have choices you make. You choose to love that one special person that you are compatible with. You like the same things, you both like to take long walks on the beach holding hands while watching the sunset. You like watching the same exact movies and TV shows or have the same taste in clothes and food. Both of you like to be outside hunting in the cold, fishing in ponds and lakes while bugs are biting. You both like camping out in the wild and like playing the same sports; football, baseball, croquette and badminton. Both like the same music and dancing; ballet, hip hop and ballroom dance. You choose to move in together for various reasons and you even choose the same friends. You choose to love that one whatever they are big, medium, small, big eyes, no teeth, loss of hair, acne, don't talk, talk too much, disability or handicap. Do you choose to love that one person no matter what for their good and bad, for their ups and downs? Or could your feelings and emotions withstand the test of time to make it no matter what happens? If God chooses to love us the way we choose to love he wouldn't love no one, for we are selfish, stuck up, heartless, and judgmental. God's strong affection, desire, and emotion to love us is greater than his love for himself. He does not choose one over the other. God just loves us no matter our flaws. Can you say the same?



## **A Best Friend**

Anonymous

I believe the definition of a best friend should include qualities such as someone you can trust, someone being a supporter, and someone to encourage you.

For example, if you know your best friend is trustworthy and honest, you don't mind sharing your most deepest secrets because you can trust them. They won't tell anyone else about it. Furthermore, without trust it will be very hard to have a real friendship with someone. I think it is great to have someone to support you in hard times and to uphold you in times of trouble. Also, it is important to have someone there when you need them. This speaks a lot about a best friend.

An encourager will be there when life is falling apart all around you. They will be there to encourage you to keep going, and to let you know that trouble does not last forever. I think the qualities of a best friend are very important because without trust, being a supporter, and encourager, you won't be a best friend.

## **In My Thoughts**

Anonymous

I couldn't see you today  
So I sent you my thoughts  
Living and vibrant they sped through the air  
Out through the earth, through miles and through  
Time I hope you received them, and knew I was there

I couldn't see you today  
So I sent you my love  
It traveled through space like a brightly shooting  
Star. With the joy of the morning, the warmth of  
The sun to wrap itself around you wherever you are

I couldn't see you today  
So I sent out a prayer  
For I knew you were troubled, and heavy of  
Heart and so with my thoughts and my love  
And my prayers, though distance divides us,  
Were never apart.



## **Kim's Secret**

Anonymous

Mrs. Jan White walked into her room. "Ok class, please close your books and get out a clean piece of paper. It is now time for your test. Do you all remember that I sent home a paper for your parents to sign, and for you to bring back to school today? Before I start my test, I need for you to take out that paper and send it to the front of your row". Everyone in the class is going into their book bags to get the paper all but Kim. The papers are all sent to the front of each row. "Thank you class". Mrs. White said, "Now on your clean paper that is in front of you, I would like for you to put your name and date on your paper. Now class, listen very carefully to the first question of your test.

Did you send your paper up to the front of your row"? Everyone but Kim answered, "Yes!"

When class was over, Mrs. White said, "You may all leave now except for Kim. Kim can you tell me why your parents did not sign this paper?" Kim held her head down not looking at Mrs. White at all. In a very soft voice she said, "I don't know Mrs. White". "Well, Kim, I cannot take that as an answer anymore, I must speak to your parents this time". Kim began to cry for what her teacher did not know was that Kim was alone and homeless.

## **Fear**

Anonymous

I stand here looking through my fears.  
I see you.  
Do you see?  
Do you see me, I fear?  
I hide behind the trees, in fear that you will see me.

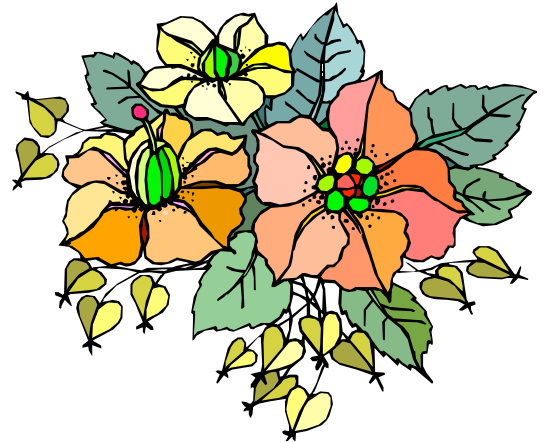
Success: why do you chase after me?  
"You do not have to fear me," Success said to me.

I stand here looking through my fears.  
I see you.  
Do you see me?  
Do you see me, I fear?  
I hide behind the hills, in fear that Success will see me.

Success: why do you chase after me?  
"You do not have to fear me," Success said to me.  
I stand here looking through my fears.  
I see you.  
Do you see me?  
Do you see me I fear?  
I hide behind the walls, in fear that Success will see me.

Fear will you protect me? I ask.  
"I am your best friend," Fear said to me.  
"I will stand between you and everything you try to do."

So I asked, Success: Why do you pursue after me?  
"You and me are meant to be," Success said to me.



## **Life Is All Around Us**

Anonymous

While walking through a field of flowers, strolling through the forest, playing at the beach, or driving your car in the city; all of these events are opportunities for you to observe and appreciate the beauty of life.

What makes the Earth and us so wonderful is the complexity of life. We all are different and unique in so many ways; from our hair to our skin color, our culture, to our beliefs. That's another reason why you can observe and see life is all around us.

You may think you don't know much about life science, but you will be very surprised at how familiar you already are with life. Life is also the study of living things and their environment.

Try to think of one thing that does not involve life; it's impossible. All aspects of our world have some connection to life.

## The Journey to Our Capitol

By: Milton Clayton



I remember when Dawn, my Read Center teacher, first told us that she wanted to plan a trip to the Capitol for us for February 15, 2011. She asked if we were interested in going. With excitement, I said “yes!” With only a few days left the excitement began to fill my mind with thoughts of “What will this day hold for me?” One thing I do want you to understand: I am a forty-four year old African-American male. I have lived my whole life with Richmond being my home. Not once had I thought of touring the State Capitol, so this really symbolized a big move forward. Tour day had arrived; I picked up my sister about seven-forty five and headed out to meet Dawn for our nine o’clock appointment.

We approached the Virginia State Capitol guest entrance on Bank Street; which is by the way, a newly built extension of the old building. The Visitor Desk at the Bank Street lobby was filled with terrazzo with granite steps from top to bottom throughout the underground extension. Imbedded in the floor in front of the Visitor's Desk was a bronze Virginia State Seal. We waited in the exhibit area where an acquaintance of Dawn’s was to meet us. I noticed among other artifacts our state flag with all her glory on display. Finally, the time had come for our tour to begin as we were introduced to our guide, the Deputy Clerk of the Senate of Virginia, who guided us on the first part of the tour.

On the first floor of the main building, the metal frame of the Capitol’s 1886 steam-powered elevator shaft greeted us. It was discovered, and turned into a stairwell during the Capitol's 2004-07 restoration. The decorative frame outlined an open shaft extending from the Capitol's first floor to its sky lit roof. From the west hallway, we entered the lower rotunda, where centered in the middle was the Capitol’s concierge desk. We passed through to the Senate staff offices to secure our personal items. After that was taken care of, our tour guide took us back to the Rotunda. Once there, we waited to board the elevator for the Senate Chamber located on the second floor. In the time that it took for it to arrive, I could not help but notice among the art one that stood out: a portrait of a young girl, Barbara Rose Johns Powell (1935-1991), leader of the Motion Student Strike, on April 23, 1951. Entering the second floor to the Senate Chamber, we were introduced to a few members and had the pleasure of sitting in some of their seats. Our guide explained to us in great detail what goes on in the Senate Chamber: the roles of the Lt. Governor and Clerk, press seating, voting, and a host of other details. After an hour or so, we left to visit the General Assembly building. As we exited the west-wing, we passed through security to enter the Capitol Grounds, walking north-west toward the General Assembly. Upon our arrival, as we entered the building, we were once again met with security and a slew of people. Our guide escorted us to the Finance Committee where House Bill No. 2314, was being presented. We had the opportunity to sit in on some of the readings of this bill. Subsequently, we left before the actual vote. This bill went on to pass with a 9 to 6 vote.

After leaving the General Assembly, we headed back to the Capitol where we met another guide. We picked up our personal items and headed toward the exhibit area. In a few minutes or so, we were finally introduced to our second tour guide. She led us on a tour and gave us the history of the Capitol.

In closing, I do regret ending without writing about the history of the Capitol. I would like to take the time to thank Dawn Ball, who thought enough of us to make this happen, and also our guides, for taking time out for an amazing historical tour.



## Virginia State Capitol

By: Janet Prowd

What I learned about Virginia's State Capitol is the Constitution of Virginia, the right of the citizen, and to identify the responsibility of a governor, mayor, House of Delegates, legislature, and senators, as well as the Parties. The most important thing is to know the law of Virginia, and the state government.

I can use this information to educate those who don't know much about Virginia's State Capitol.



## Virginia State Capitol

By: Linda Miller

In my packet, I received the Constitution of Virginia book. This book will help me understand how the law of the land was established. Also, I received Virginia's Congressional Delegation 2011 directory. This tells me who the United States Senators are and the members of Congress, and where they live. Then our Flag Guide contains up-to-date recommendations for displaying, honoring, and caring for the flag. Furthermore, it helps me to know the holidays it honors.

Virginia Government in Brief—this book helps me to understand the interrelations among the legislature, judicial, and executive branches of government. Verizon Virginia Legislative Directory—of course, this book helps me out with the names and addresses, and what district each Senator represents. The map of Virginia, this guides and directs me where I need to go in Virginia. Finally, the last book I received was the Virginia State Capitol. This book tells me where the House of Delegate, and Senate meet. As a result, in my package I received a lot of information that can help me along the way.



# What I Love About Springtime...



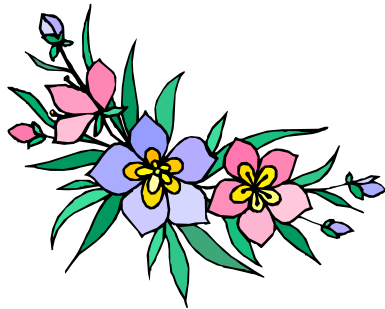
By: Walter

Spring is a good time to walk.  
Spring is a bad time for pollen.  
Spring is a time to cut the lawn.  
Spring is a bad time for mosquitoes  
Spring is a time for storms.



By: Lloyd

My spring break was good for me. I was not sick. I am very happy for my health, to be alive, to see another spring.



By: De'Ossey

Spring has come. I love spring. Why? Because it is so pretty and lovely. I like the colors of the flowers that grow, like the daffodil. Look at the baby animals, cows and turtles. Spring to me is like new life: a ladybug, a pretty butterfly and rainbows. Going outside and playing with friends and family is fun too. Spring is so much fun.

P.S. My family loves some carrot cake.

By: Henry

Spring is a time I love to smell the flowers. I work in my garden. I plant sweet peppers and tomatoes and corn and cucumbers. It is a beautiful day to be working outdoors.



By: James T.

The spring is a time of the year for planting in my garden. I love to walk in the spring. I have a hard time in the spring with the pollen.



By: Daniel

I am one to work in the springtime. Spring brings in the raining season.

## What I Love About Springtime...

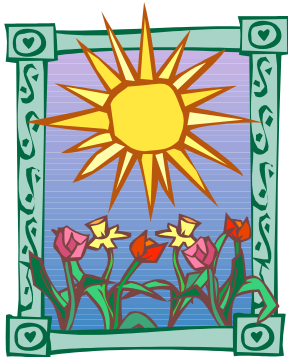


By: Priscilla

I like springtime. I plant flowers. I like summer. I like the Jazz Festival. I like the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. I like the Big Gig. I like the music. I like flies and mosquitoes. I do not like bumblebees.

By: Samuel

Spring is a wonderful season, it will be summer time and we will have a great time. People will enjoy their vacation in the summer time. People will have a cookout and have swimming pools for people to swim.



By: Ana

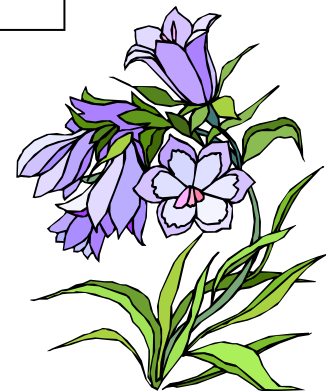
Spring is a season to pass quality time with your love ones, enjoy the weather, and have cookouts with your family at the lake. Also, while my family and I are spending time with one another we would plant seeds and watch the sunset glow.

By: Brenda

Spring is nice, cool and warm. Birds sing in the spring. I love to fish in the spring. I love to swim and go to the beach, and ride my bike. And watch the flowers grow. They smell good. Spring is the best time to grow spring onions. Spring is the best time to play ball.

By: Calvin

Monday was a pretty day for spring. It was cool and fun. Spring is a time for working in the yard.



# The READ Center

## READING and EDUCATION for ADULT DEVELOPMENT

Serving the entire Greater Richmond area  
including: Amelia, Chesterfield,  
Colonial Heights, Hanover, Henrico,  
Hopewell, Petersburg, and Richmond

2000 Bremo Road, Suite 102  
Richmond, VA 23226

**804-288-9930**

[www.readcenter.org](http://www.readcenter.org)

E-mail: [read@readcenter.org](mailto:read@readcenter.org)

Visit The READ Center on Facebook!  
[www.facebook.com/TheREADCenter](http://www.facebook.com/TheREADCenter)

## Teachers & Tutors

Please Read This Newsletter  
With Your Students

\* NOTE: In some instances very minimal, gentle editing has been applied in order to provide clarity, and to make the stories more understandable for the reader. However, these writings on the whole reflect the core substance of students' work.

## **The Dentist**

By: Hiram Hubbard

I am Hiram. I fell down cracked my back tooth. It has a rough edge. My tooth hurts. I need to find a good dentist.

Maybe the dentist can fix my tooth. Maybe he will fill my tooth? Maybe he will pull my tooth? I hope not! I want to keep my teeth. My tooth hurts so bad I want to go to the dentist's office this Saturday to pull my tooth. Maybe he will let me go home tonight.

