

Classroom Spotlight: Challenge inspires Lincoln Middle School students to read

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Reading 3,000 books in a school year is quite a task but that is exactly what Lincoln seventh-grade language arts teacher **Stacey Lipe** is doing with a #3,000 Reading Challenge.

Lipe teaches five language arts classes at Lincoln Middle School. This is Lipe's 27th year in the Edwardsville School District and 14th year at **Lincoln Middle School**.



Lincoln Middle School Principal Steve Stuart said he hopes the reading challenge will develop life-long readers who will continue to branch out and explore new authors and genres.



“I have seen the excitement these students have in finishing a book and then having the opportunity to share it with their class,” he said.

“Basically at the beginning of the year we were looking for year-long projects for the kids to work on,” Lipe said. “They are attempting to read as a group in all my classes 3,000 books. At mid-year, we were right around 1,380 books. Every time we read a book, we put the name of the book and a synopsis and glue it on the wall.”

Stacey has shown her own dedication to her craft by purchasing many of the books herself.

“With a few of the books, we have multiple sets we can use,” she said. “We have a literature group meeting and talk about what we have read so far and discuss questions

they have and try to give each other an understanding of the deeper meaning of what they are reading.”

Lipe said the key thing she thinks her students are learning from the challenge are skills in reading, listening and speaking.

“They come to the group and make notes or come up with questions they are going to ask and the questions aren’t yes or no,” Lipe added. “We want the questions to provoke them to come up with a question that can’t be necessarily answered in yes or no and will provide some discussion and opinions.”

The language arts instructor said she believes she has some students who will likely be talented writers one day.

“I would be surprised if a few of them don’t do something with writing,” she said. “We use authors as guides all the time in terms of our writing.”

Stacey has been married to her husband, Dave Lipe, an English teacher and the boys and girls tennis coach at Edwardsville High School. They two have two children – Emma, a junior, and Seth, a freshman.

Stacey graduated from the Edwardsville School District and went away to school, then came back and received her first teaching assignment here and has been here ever since. She graduated from the University of Illinois.

The language arts instructor she and her husband are both very dedicated to teaching.

“I think making kids engage in what they are doing is what we both enjoy most about teaching,” she said.

When the 3,000 books project ends, she said she hopes the students have a love of reading and writing.”

“We hope they will take these skills with them through high school and whatever colleges they attend,” she said.

