

Education Commission



GAINS gives girls an edge!

In order to understand how GAINS can give girls an edge, you will need to know that GAINS stands for Girls Achieving in Non-traditional Subjects. This program helps address the under-representation of girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) fields. GAINS is a program in Santa Clara Unified School District that has helped educate middle and high school girls about college majors and careers that go beyond the “traditional” jobs for women. In GAINS, young women have the chance to explore different career options, visit colleges, and learn how each person can achieve their own dreams.

According to the Society of Women Engineers, women constitute 45% of the workforce in the U.S., but hold just 12% of science and engineering jobs in business and industry. In the Santa Clara Unified School District, GAINS gives girls an educational advantage, by exposing them to programs and opportunities that they might not otherwise have. GAINS offers high school and middle school girls a variety of educational opportunities, including monthly speakers, Success Camp, field trips to colleges and industry sites, college information days, math and science social night events, and One Step Ahead, a pre-engineering program at Santa Clara University.

Typical GAINS monthly morning meetings include a woman speaker who has had an unconventional career path. At these meetings the speaker will tell the GAINS girls about her career and how non-traditional subjects helped them achieve their career path. Each speaker has had a unique way of accomplishing their goals. Most of these women go beyond people’s expectations and prove that they can work in an industry dominated by men. Speakers may be engineers, teachers, deputies, mayors, or dentists, to name a few.

Education Commission

In addition, GAINS offers a Success Camp. Success Camp is a two-day program full of fun science and math-related activities. These activities include college visits, industry visits, engineering Olympics, financial workshops, and many other enriching activities.

For more information and ideas for starting a GAINS program in your area, go to: <http://www.santaclarausd.org/community.cfm?subpage=123059> or contact Tabitha Kappeler-Hurley at tkhurley@scusd.net.



Education Commission

Raising a Reader

How do you raise a child to be an enthusiastic and consistent reader? TV, videogames, computers, and other modern distractions sometimes make it difficult for children to focus on reading. Here are some strategies that the diligent parent can use to help motivate a child to read. Try them all -- what doesn't work one day may work well the next.

- Visit your local library often. Get your children their own library cards. Try a story hour or other free event at the library.
- Check out the local bookstore. A book or gift certificate always makes a terrific gift.
- At the library, let your child choose some of the books.
- Let your child see you reading, whether it's the newspaper, a magazine, or the latest bestseller.
- Encourage older children to read to their younger brothers and sisters. Or have the whole family set aside some time to read together!
- Show your child how people use reading all the time. Read aloud street and store signs, maps, billboards, menus, and labels on packages.
- Create a library for your child of new or used books. Look for affordable books at yard sales, secondhand book stores, and library book sales.
- Set up an area in your home where a variety of reading materials are within easy reach. Encourage writing by including paper, crayons, pens and pencils.
- Subscribe to a children's magazine. Read it with your child every month.
- Carry books to read to your child wherever you go - at the doctor's office, in line at the store, or on a long car ride.
(You can also listen to stories on

tape.)



- Encourage a love of words by playing rhyming and word games, singing silly songs, or writing poems and stories together.
- Talk about daily activities or tell stories about your family or culture to help children develop their language skills.
- Visit the *Between the Lions* web site (www.pbskids.org/lions) for more on children and reading.

Education Commission



Read Across America Day – March 2, 2012 Dr. Seuss Birthday – Date – March 2, 1904

Honoring Dr. Seuss, Read Across America Day is celebrated on March 2nd, Dr. Seuss' birthday. The National Education Association (NEA) sponsors events to inspire reading in children throughout our schools and communities.

In May 1997, a small reading task force at NEA came up with a big idea. "Let's create a day to celebrate reading," the group decided. "We hold pep rallies to get kids excited about football. We assemble to remember that Character Counts. Why don't we do something to get kids excited about reading? We'll call it 'NEA's Read Across America' and we'll celebrate it on Dr. Seuss' birthday." And so was born on March 2, 1998, the largest celebration of reading this country has ever seen.

The National Education Association is building a nation of readers through its signature program, NEA's Read Across America. Now in its thirteenth year, this year-round program focuses on motivating children and teens to read through events, partnerships, and reading resources.

Across the country, thousands of schools, libraries, and community centers participate by bringing together kids, teens, and books, and you can too! On March 2, the National Education Association calls for every child to be reading in the company of a caring adult.

Motivating children to read is an important factor in student achievement and creating lifelong successful readers. Research has shown that children who are motivated and spend more time reading do better in school.

NEA celebrates reading with the Lorax in 2012

Green is the theme for a very special Read Across America celebration in 2012.

NBC/Universal's *The Lorax Movie* (featuring the voices of Taylor Swift, Zach Efron, Danny Devito and Betty White) opens nationwide March 2, 2012 and Universal, Dr. Seuss Enterprises, and Random House are joining NEA's Read Across America in a special Read Across America campaign featuring new posters, teacher guides, events and activities on the RAA website.

Did you know?? Dr. Seuss wrote *Green Eggs and Ham* using only 50 different words. *The Cat in the Hat* was written by using 236 different words. The publisher, Bennett Cerf, bet him \$50 that he couldn't write a book using just 50 words. So he did, and it is the fourth most popular kids' hardcover of all time.

Begin planning now!

NEA's Read Across America Resource materials offer numerous opportunities for involvement in children's reading throughout the year. The only thing you need to do is plan how, where, and when you will read to a child or teen in your life - everyday. Don't forget to join the Read Across America Fan page and Cause page on Facebook and check out the Read Across America Channel on Schooltube.com for videos.

Don't forget to pledge

Check out the Read Across America Pledge site. You'll find readings large and small, readers tiny, readers tall. And don't forget to add your own, whether it's a school, library, classroom or home.

Taken from the National Education Association website - <http://www.nea.org/grants/886.htm>