

French Reading and Book Club

The French Reading and Book Club was an initiative of the Hammonds Plains-Tantallon Chapter of Canadian Parents for French-Nova Scotia (CPF-NS) in conjunction with the Halifax Regional Library in Tantallon.

The program started in May of 2002 and ran for four weeks, pairing groups of children in grades Primary through Grade 4 with a Grade 9 student. The program was deemed a huge success with over 70 children registering for the book club!

Due to the success of last year's club, the chapter has plans to continue with minor changes to make the program easier to manage.

First things first

The most important conversation you will have when trying to set up a French Reading and Book Club is with the principals of the local schools. Get their permission to go ahead. Assure them that they will have to do nothing but distribute and collect the sign-up sheets. Assure them that the forms will be photocopied **before** you bring them to the school so that it is not work put onto the secretaries. This gives you access to the students. Without this access, it might be very hard to get the numbers to run the club.

Who attends the French Reading and Book Club?

First of all, 70 students were far too many to handle at one time! For the second year, the chapter has decided to have five different month-long sessions with a limit of 25 children to a group. They have decided to offer the French Reading and Book Club to students in Grades 1 through 4. The sessions will be as follows: October, November, January, February, March and April. If a child participates in the October session, they are ineligible for the November session. The same rules apply for the February to April sessions. This allows a child to participate twice during the school year. The January session is reserved for Primary students only. This gives the Primary students a chance to get used to being in school and learning in French before attending a French extracurricular activity!

Where could we hold the French Reading and Book Club?

There are many options for chapters who are interested in implementing their own Reading Club. The local library, school, or service group might be willing to donate the space for the club.

What do we need on a Sign-up sheet?

The sign-up sheet was very important, as the Hammonds Plains-Tantallon Chapter had only a few days for registration once they decided to go ahead with the club. They decided to make one page fun and interesting to catch the attention of the children and then on the back put the information for the parents.

The back page of the sign-up sheet is crammed with information because there were many things that needed to be asked such as:

1. *The reading level of the child.* The chapter wanted to ask the parents because asking the teachers is creating more work for them; the teachers are nice enough to send the notices home with the children. Sometimes the parents don't realize the French reading level of the child. Be prepared to make changes to the groups if the child seems to be experiencing difficulty. A child may be reading an early chapter book in English, but the same book in French might not be suitable.
2. *Allergies.* This is necessary if the chapter plans on serving a snack during the program. It may be a good idea to steer away from any snack which contains nuts, to be on the safe side.
3. *Emergency contact information.* The chapter needs to know how to get in contact with the parents in the case of an emergency.
4. *Email address.* This allows the chapter to send information on the French Reading and Book Club home to parents without having to call everyone or sending home another notice (which might not make it!) with the children.
5. *Don't forget to ask if they are a member!* This is a great opportunity to talk about CPF because the parents can see first-hand the sorts of activities which are organized and the benefits of being a member. This is especially true for the second year of the book club because of the success of the pilot session. The chapter can now give preference to CPF members and they may even be able to, in the future, limit it only to CPF members.

Who reads to the children?

The Hammonds Plains-Tantallon Chapter of CPF approached a teacher from the middle school in the area with the idea that Grade 9 students come to the club to read to the children. The teacher thought that is was a great idea and offered 'bonus points' to the students who offered to participate. The chapter decided to write letters to the students asking them for their help and describing what they would be responsible for at the Reading Club. As a thank you, the chapter wrote reference letters for each child to use when applying for jobs, as many were looking for their first part-time job that summer.

The First Day

Make sure the readers are there before the children. Give them the books and activities for them to look over. Have nametags for all the children. When the children come, give them their nametag and point out their reader. This person will be the reader for the four weeks of the club. Have the children all sit in one large group and explain how the club will work: 25 minutes of reading followed by 10 minutes to do an activity and then another 25 minutes of reading. Call out the names of the children in one group and introduce their reader and have the reader take them to the designated area to start.

What to buy

There is not much cost to running a French Reading and Book Club. Things that a chapter might want to consider when preparing for a club is bottled water and small cups for the children who might want a drink. Also, pencils and a sharpener! Finally, don't forget to factor in photocopying costs into your budget, this may be the largest expense for the chapter.

One last thing!

On the last day of the French Reading and Book club, the chapter sent home a survey for parents to fill out and return to their child's teacher. Another idea might be to send home the survey on the second to last day of the French Reading and Book Club. Parents can simply fill out the form and return it on the last day of the club. No matter what day you chose to send home a survey, remember that it is an easy way to identify what improvements you can make for the next session.

The Hammonds Plains-Tantallon Chapter of Canadian Parents for French – Nova Scotia has generously provided attachments that they used while planning the first French Reading and Book Club. You will find most of them below. If you are interested in having the Excel or Word documents for your own chapter please email cpf liaison@ns.sympatico.ca and we will get those to you right away, or download them off our website at www.cpfns.ednet.ns.ca. These attachments have been provided to give others an idea of how to go about implementing a successful French Reading and Book Club. They are not rules to be followed but guidelines to help. Each chapter can use them as a basis for starting their own book club.

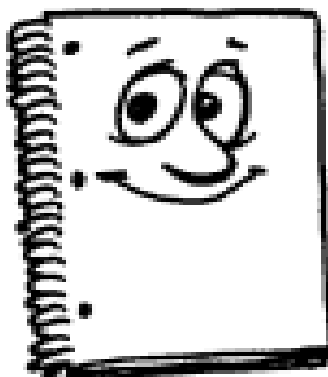




French Reading and Book Club

Hey kids! ***How would you like to join in the fun of a French Reading and Book Club? The Hammonds Plains – Tantallon Chapter of CPF , in conjunction with the Tantallon Public Library, would like to invite you to join us in May for our pilot Reading Club. What does “pilot” mean? It means that if we have fun, we’ll do it again next year!***

Please have your parents and/ or Guardian complete the information form on the reverse and return it to your teacher as soon as possible but no later than April 17th for sure. We need to have your information so we can let your reading buddy know your name. We have some really neat Grade 9 students from Tantallon Junior High helping us and they are really anxious to meet you. So, be sure to have Mom and Dad take a look at this and sign up as soon as possible! Hope to see you there!



CPF *Canadian Parents for French*

Hello parents! I hope you are as excited about our new book club as we are at your local Chapter of CPF! And more importantly, we hope your son or daughter is excited about it too!

We will start our club on **Wednesday May 1** and will meet every week through May 22 from **3:30 – 5:00**. Our club will meet in the Conference Room at the Tantallon Public Library. CPF will provide an after school snack and the library will provide the books. Based on the information you provide below, and with guidance from the library staff and teachers, books will be assigned and the volunteers from the Grade 9 French immersion classes will work with the children on reading in French. If this pilot is a success, look for the program to recommence in September. If you have any questions, or any suggestions for further programs, please call 'Chapter Contact' at (902) 555-5555 and share your thoughts. (Email chaptercontact@anychapter.ca)

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**YES! My son/daughter, \_\_\_\_\_**  
**would like to join the Reading Club. His/her French reading is at**  
**the Easy Reader \_\_\_\_\_ Beginner + \_\_\_\_\_ Early Chapter \_\_\_\_\_**  
**Chapter \_\_\_\_\_ level. I will insure that he/she brings a current**  
**library card. I realize that transportation to and from the library is**  
**my responsibility and that the volunteers are only responsible**  
**for my child between 3:30 and 5:00. In the event of emergency, I**  
**can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_ and/or call**  
**\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ as an alternate.**

I would like to volunteer to assist with this program and can be available during club time. (A current Police Record Check is required to work with the children)

\_\_\_\_\_

I would like more information on how I can help make this project work and expand for next year, 2002-2003. \_\_\_\_\_

I would like more information on how I too can become a member of Canadian Parents for French. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

April 25, 2002

Hello Grade 9 students!

My name is Joanne Chase and, through Canadian Parents for French, I am coordinating the French Reading and Book Club with Tantallon Library.

I first want to thank you for volunteering to assist in this program. We are very excited to bring this to our younger immersion students and could not do so without **YOUR** help. You are very much the key to our success.

To set your mind at ease, I would like to give you a general idea of how we would like to approach this. Please feel free to offer your comments over the next few days if you like, by replying to chaptercontact@anychapter.ca

We have approximately 72 students registered and they are divided into 4 groups. There are approximately 5 reading Chapter books, 7 reading Early Chapter books, a number in Beginner Reading and the vast majority at the Easy Reader Level. What we propose is 1 student each for the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 levels mentioned, doing a read together/book study approach. For the remaining children, we will assign 5 children to each of you to read to and together with the children. The books are being gathered by the library and will be available on May 1<sup>st</sup>. For the latter 2 groups, we will rotate books among all. Snacks will be provided as well as some 'at level' word searches to enhance their vocabulary. You will not be reading the entire 1.5 hrs as we will try to vary activities to hold interest and also allow you a break. There will be adults assisting with the snack and any problems that arise, be they a general question or disciplinary, you may seek out an adult to handle. You are there for interested readers and we are there to support you in this effort.

The children will have name tags and will be assigned a group based most likely on a commonly known animal, i.e. the Eagles, the Lions etc. and you will be assigned your group to work with for the 4 weeks. We are most interested in recommending this program again in September and actually expanding upon it so your feedback during and at the conclusion will be invaluable. Please do not hesitate to come forward with your thoughts, concerns and suggestions at any time.

Thanks again, on behalf of the students, parents and Canadian Parents for French.

Sincerely,

Joanne Chase  
(902) 555-5555



## Book Club Review

Hello fellow parents! As today is the final day of our Reading and Book Club, we at Canadian Parents for French would like to thank you for your participation in our pilot program. We have learned a great deal from this experience and will use this knowledge and your suggestions in our planning of programs for the future. Based on this pilot, we hope to see the Reading Club offered twice per week, in two separate groups of approximately 25 in number. In order to continue with funding, we may have to offer to members of CPF first.

As is the case with any such venture, in order to establish how we go forward in September, we need your thoughts on whether this was a success, how we can work together to continue, and what you would like to see from us in the future.

*Please take a few moments to answer the following questions and return this form today or via your child's teacher to Joanne Chase. I will be preparing a report on the club for the Tantallon Library and would ask that you do return the form as soon as possible so I may include your thoughts in said report.*

- 1. Would you be interested in supporting CPF in further ventures of this nature in September?**
- 2. What further programs would you support us in offering in our community?**
- 3. Would your child(ren) be interested in French summer camp(s)? Day long?  
Week long?**
- 4. What suggestions might you have to make the Reading Club program run smoother when we begin again in September?**

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Ph: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age(s) of children \_\_\_\_\_ Do you or your spouse speak/read French? \_\_\_\_  
Are you a currently a member of CPF? \_\_\_\_\_  
May we contact you about further programs and initiatives? \_\_\_\_\_

# CPF *Canadian Parents for French*

May 27, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to advise that **Student's name** participated as a volunteer Reader in the Canadian Parents for French Book Club (Hammonds Plains-Tantallon Chapter) held at the Tantallon Library in May 2002.

The student worked directly with the students, reading to and with them and assisting with their French reading skills. We greatly appreciated the cooperation and assistance from The student and our readers who helped make the program a success.

Yours truly,

Your Name  
Your Title  
Your Chapter  
Canadian Parents for French

