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# Around the World in Thirty Days Read-A-Thon

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## About this program

- This program supports the school's efforts to improve academic achievement by promoting reading while building an awareness of other lands and cultures.
- While it is a read-a-thon, there is no fund raising element of this program — its focus is entirely promoting literacy.
- It was developed by Franklin Middle School PTSA in Yakima.

### Washington State PTA

2003 65th Avenue West, Tacoma, WA 98466-6215, (253) 565-2153 or toll free 1-800-562-3804  
Email: [wapta@wastatepta.org](mailto:wapta@wastatepta.org), Website: [www.wastatepta.org](http://www.wastatepta.org)

The Washington State PTA is attempting to bring you "Programs to Go!" which will feature various successful PTA programs for you to pick up and use if you choose. These programs will come to you already organized, with minimal work on your part. Look for more "Programs to Go!" ideas in upcoming general mailings. If you have program suggestions, please call the Washington State PTA office at (253) 565-2153 or 1-800-562-3804 or email to [wapta@wastatepta.org](mailto:wapta@wastatepta.org).

**PROGRAMS TO GO!**

# A Program that Helps Kids Enjoy Reading

Reading ability is vital to the academic success of our children. Literacy needs to be a priority not only in our schools, but in our entire community. Kids need to read more and enjoy reading. The “Around the World in Thirty Days” read-a-thon program does all that and more.

It is a program that can be adapted for use in elementary, middle, or even high schools.

At the beginning of the program kids are given passports and a hot air balloon with their name on it. Hot air balloons are located on a map of the world in the classroom. Individual classrooms also have a hot air balloon on a map in the school gym.

For each 100 pages the children read, their passport is stamped, and their hot air balloon moves to another continent on the map in the classroom. As a class averages 100 pages for each child, the classroom hot air balloon moves to another continent in the school gym.

Children may read books from the continent where their hot air bal-

loon is stationed or books about nations on that continent. The goal of the program is for children to travel the world, visiting each continent.

Elementary classrooms can focus their social studies lessons on the continent their hot air balloon is on.

The program also encourages parents and community members to join in this journey around the world. Each book group that is formed in local businesses and organizations is given a hot air balloon with their name on it as well. These balloons are also located on the map in the school gym. Community groups can challenge other community groups or businesses to read more. Community groups move to other continents for each 150 pages the members of their group averages. They can also earn reading credit for reading to children in the community — whether elementary, middle or high school students.

Incentives are provided for students along their journey. Each Friday, reading records are checked by the classroom teacher or volunteer. For middle or high schools, the first period class or roll room class can record this. For the first “visa” stamp in their passports, students receive a cup with the name of the school on it, for example. Other incentives for students may include globe pencil sharpeners, bookmarks or special coupons from local businesses.

Community groups are encouraged to turn in their pages whenever they have enough to progress to the next continent.

After traveling the world, students and community groups receive certificates at the “Celebration Event” at the end of the program. This celebration also includes enjoying food from around the world, and a book fair. Students who have traveled the world more than once have their names put in a special drawing.

## Planning your program...

1. This program requires the cooperation of the teachers and school principal. Before deciding whether or not your PTA will sponsor a program like this, find out if teachers and the school principal would support it.
2. Determine the date of the program. (It should be 30 days long.) Invite interested parent (s) to volunteer to chair, co-chair, or participate in the following committees:
  - The **Graphics Committee** would be in charge of making the hot air balloons, maps and passports.
  - The **Kick-off Assembly Committee** would organize an assembly to explain the program in a fun way, distribute passports, suggested book lists for each continent (optional), and explain the different incentives. (Book lists are available by calling the WSPTA office 253-565-2153.)
  - The **Community Involvement Committee** would visit local busi-

nesses, explain the program and invite them to participate. This committee would also be responsible for keeping track of community reading records and moving the community hot air balloons in the gym and developing and organizing other incentives in the community involvement aspect of this program.

- **The Incentives/Drawings Committee** would organize the different fun incentives and drawings to encourage kids to keep reading and work to ensure those incentives are distributed to those who earned them. This committee would also be responsible for moving the classroom hot air balloons in the gym.
- **The Reading Records Committee** would organize a method of keeping track of reading records, either

through parent volunteers for each classroom or through classroom teachers, issue passport “visas” and move students’ hot air balloons in the classrooms. The classroom parent volunteer (or teacher) would also be responsible for tabulating the classes’ average reading records so the Incentives Committee will know when to move a classroom’s cumulative hot air balloon in the gym.

3. The **Celebration Day Committee** would be responsible for organizing ethnic foods for the event, preparing certificates, community involvement recognition, and the program for this event. This committee would also work with the **Book Fair Committee** if the PTA chooses to close the program with a book fair to encourage continued reading.