



LAKE WALES
CHARTER SCHOOLS

Media Release

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JHWilson writers follow Yellow Brick Road to FCAT success

LAKE WALES – Teachers at Janie Howard Wilson Elementary used elements from a 70-year-old movie classic to inspire students to do their best creative writing on the state FCAT Writing Test.

“Follow the yellow brick road to a 4 or more on the FCAT Writing Test!” sang the fourth graders, as they walked on a yellow brick road into the cafeteria on their way to The Wizard of Oz Writing Activities earlier this month.

Once students entered the cafeteria, they rotated through four writing stations in preparation for the FCAT Writing Test. (The test was administered a few days later, on Feb. 9.)

The first writing station was led by teacher **Holly Madore** who utilized brain food with a “Scarecrow” writing activity. Students used their senses to write and describe their food.

“Of course their favorite sense for that activity was taste!” said **Amy Caraway Harris**, the school’s writing resource teacher.

Teacher **Elizabeth Anderson** had a “Tin Man” writing station. Students wrote from the heart about what they already knew about being a 6.0 writer; 6.0 is the highest score possible on the FCAT test. They each molded their own face out of foil so that they connected that they were a 6.0 writer with lots of heart and the belief that they knew what to do on test day, just like the Tin Man knew what to do.

Sharon Kochanowski had a “Lion” writing center using figurative language. She wrote an original poem that she shared with each student. Last but not least, Caraway Harris hosted an activity where students made a “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” mobile with characters from The Wizard of Oz and shared their sizzling WOW words.

Soon after the writing activities were completed, Lady KitKat (who looked like pop star Lady GaGa but sounded like music teacher **Mirka Caban**) from the land of FCAT arrived in a hot pink limo and gave a private concert to the fourth graders, wishing them well on the FCAT Writing Test.

Below is teacher Sharon Kochanowski’s special poem for the fourth graders:

There once was a test known as FCAT,
Its roar was a terrible thing!

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The children frantically studied
For they knew it was coming in Spring!

In Spring the FCAT would stalk them
To devour and make them its prey,
But one student stood with great courage,
And rose up and exclaimed one day...

"You will NOT defeat us, oh FCAT,
For we are courageous and bold!
We will defeat you in battle,
And make your fiery breath grow cold."

"We'll fight you with study and purpose,
And defeat you with armor of pride,
For we are the students of Whitaker and Lynne,
So just come along for the ride!"

"We'll use swords of wisdom and power,
Armor of similes, adjectives, and verbs,
We'll fly on the arrows of geometry,
Algebra, measurement, and WOW words!"

"Our reading will silence the giant,
And victory will be our reward,
And the great Lynne and Whitaker leaders,
Will turn and lead us all forward."

"So, be quiet as a whisper, oh FCAT!
Be defeated and silenced and torn!
For we are the students of Janie Howard,
Watch out, you have been warned!"

For more information about Janie Howard Wilson Elementary, contact Principal Beverly Lynne at 863-678-4211.

The mission of the Lake Wales Charter Schools: to bring the best of public education to our community by providing innovation and choice within a continuous pre-school through postsecondary curriculum so that each child recognizes the benefits of life-long learning, constructive citizenship and personal happiness.

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Our schools include: Lake Wales High, Dale R. Fair Babson Park Elementary, Hillcrest Elementary, Janie Howard Wilson Elementary, Polk Avenue Elementary, and Edward W. Bok Academy middle school.