



Turn OFF the TV
Turn ON to Reading Challenge

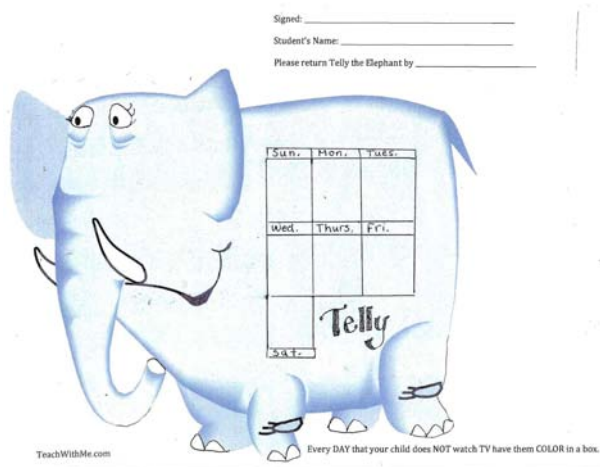


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Turn off the TV! March is Reading Month Challenge



My final idea for *March is Reading Month* is a CHALLENGE! I tell my students that during the Renaissance, knights would challenge each other by throwing down a gauntlet. I define these terms and then throw down my glove and say: “*I challenge you to a Reading Contest; who’s interested?*” I now have their attention, and many, if not all, of their hands are raised.



Then I explain my “*Turn OFF the TV and Turn ON to reading*” week-long challenge and show them Telly the elephant. Each day that they go without watching television, they COLOR in the appropriate box on Telly.

The student, who colors in the most boxes, hopefully all 7, or an entire week of no TV, wins a really cool prize!

I show the girl and boy prizes I have selected for this specific occasion. They are inexpensive enough not to break the budget, but cool enough to be quite motivating. I stock up after Halloween and Christmas when things are slashed and on sale for ridiculous 80% off prices.

I also inform them that anyone who participates will get a certificate and have their name thrown into a basket. I'll pull out two names and those two students will get to select a book from my birthday book box. (I give students a book on their birthday.) As a surprise to them, I will also be taping a "You're a super-star lollipop" on each certificate as well.

I send a letter home explaining the contest to parents along with Telly and a reminder note that they can tape to their TV, so they don't accidentally forget and turn the TV on.

I let them know that I will also be participating right along with them. It's not that hard for me to give up TV, as I'm a voracious reader. I do have a few favorite programs tho' so I'm thankful that I'm able to record them, but it is nice to turn the squawk box off entirely and have some extra quality time with my family.

I show them the video *Arthur's TV-Free Week* to further motivate them. It's a cute video that reinforces the importance of giving up TV as well as the fact that it's not that easy.

They enjoy Arthur so I also have several websites that they can independently visit for my computer center. They can print off 2 Arthur reading books, bookmarks

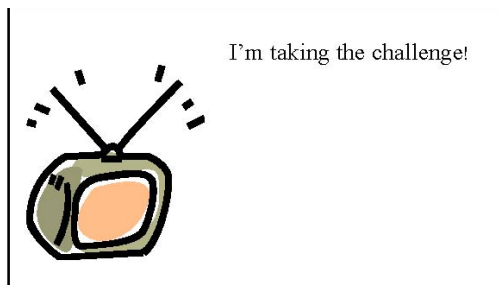
at: <http://pbskids.org/arthur/print/bookmarks/arthur1.html>

<http://pbskids.org/arthur/print/bookmarks/arthur2.html>

and an Arthur mask at:

http://pbskids.org/arthur/print/masks/arthur_mask_b.html

I have a book basket with some "No TV!" related books in it for them to read. For a list of these, check out my [Books of the Month](#) side blog; scroll down to the **March Bibliography** and click on the link.



My students write their name on an "*I'm taking the challenge!*" badge and I pin it to their shirt. I give faculty a "head's up!" to ask my students what the challenge is, so my Y5's have an opportunity to explain and "shine".

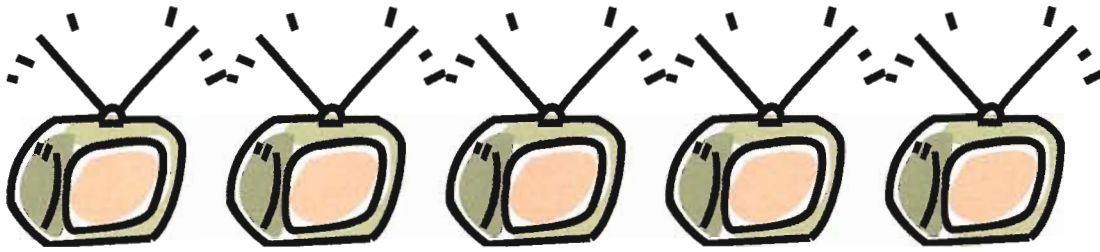
They also sign a contract that they accept the challenge. "Promises" are big with young people and this helps reinforce their commitment.

I send a reminder note home on Friday that Telly is due. Students bring their elephant in on the following Monday and share it with their classmates, explaining what they did on the days that they didn't watch TV.

I graph whether they liked doing this activity or not, whether they thought this was difficult or not, and how many days everyone gave up TV, and then I award the certificates and prizes.

I've gotten quite a bit of positive feedback from parents that they were glad that I was the catalyst behind giving up TV for a week. They say it's something that they wanted to do, but felt it was easier to do coming from the school. They also shared that having a family game night was something that they were going to continue to do.

All in all it's something that I will continue to promote each year and hope that you will jump on the ***“Turn OFF the TV and Turn ON to Reading”*** band wagon.



Dear Families,

Because it's **March is Reading Month**, I'd like to offer a challenge to my students and their families to turn off the TV and tune in to reading. I'll be running this "contest" for an entire week. It's up to you how many days you want to participate.

Attached you will find Telly the Elephant. Each day that your child does NOT watch television have them COLOR in a box. The child with the most boxes colored in will receive a prize. If more than one child gives up TV for an entire week they will each receive a prize. Anyone who participates will receive a certificate of participation. Besides reading books, there are other fun activities that you can do with your child that involve reading:

- Play a board game, or a card game and have them help read the directions.
- Cook up something in the kitchen and have them help you with the recipe and then allow them to add the ingredients step-by-step.
- Take a nature walk and identify signs.
- Take a little trip some place fun, like to the park, and play "I Spy" the letters and numbers on license plates and billboards when you're riding in the car.
- Visiting a large bookstore is a fun place to go; many of them have story hours and special children's sections.
- Go to the library and get a library card if you don't have one.
- Visit a children's museum or an art museum or other educational place.
- Plan a scavenger hunt for them and make a list of things for them to find.
- Do some arts and crafts.
- Do a science experiment.
- Let them help you make a shopping list and help you grocery shop.
- Let them help you clip and organize your coupons.
- Make a card for grandma and grandpa; allow them to take a photograph with the digital camera and include it in their card.
- Help them write a letter to a loved one, or simply a note of appreciation to someone special.
- Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

If you have any questions feel free to give me a call.

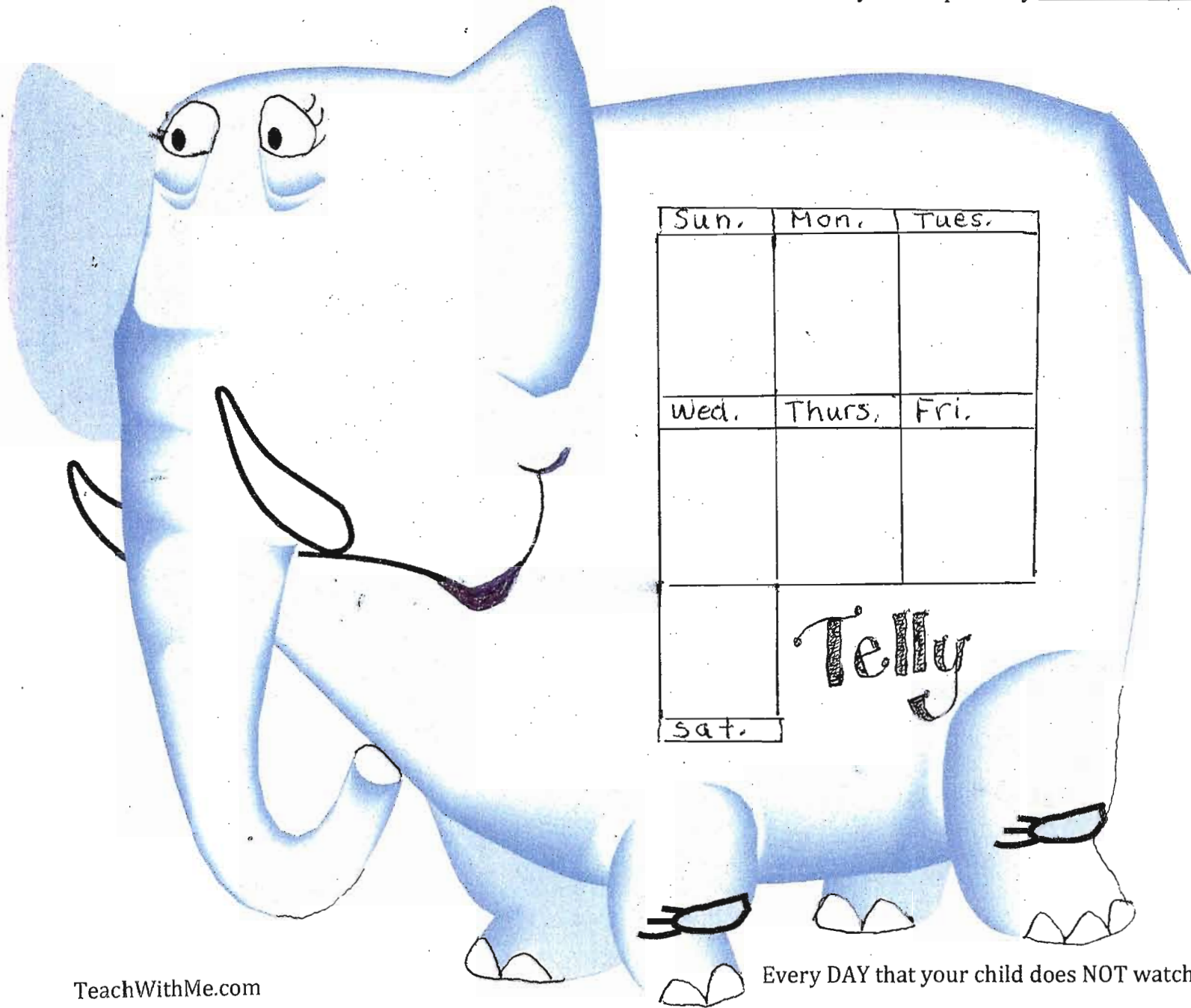
Please sign the bottom of your child's elephant and return it on: _____

Educationally Yours,

Signed: _____

Student's Name: _____

Please return Telly the Elephant by _____





Just a REMINDER it's TURN off the TV week and TUNE in to READING!
Put this hot-pink elephant on your TV as a reminder.
Thanks in advance for your cooperation.



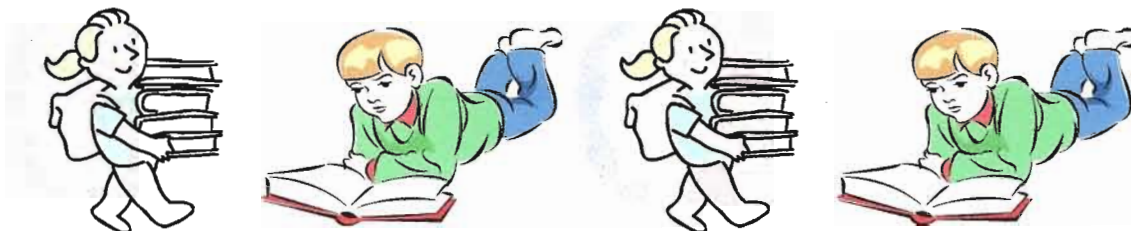
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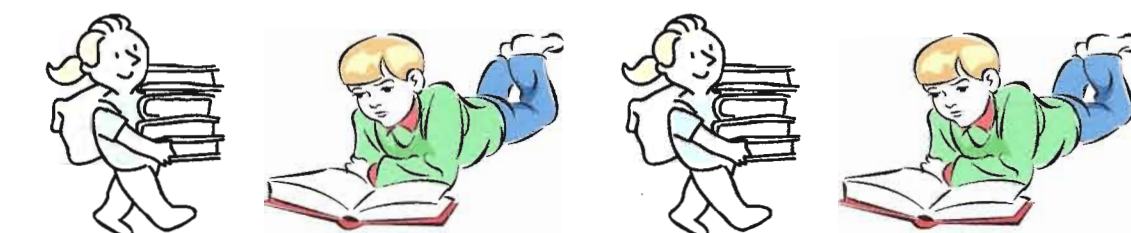
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Put this hot-pink elephant on your TV as a reminder.
Thanks in advance for your cooperation.



You're on! I accept your reading challenge! I will participate in the TURN OFF the TV and TURN ON to books!

I promise to watch less TV this week.

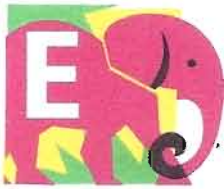
I'm going for the prize.
I'll try not to watch any TV this week!



You're on! I accept your reading challenge! I will participate in the TURN OFF the TV and TURN ON to books!

I promise to watch less TV this week.

I'm going for the prize.
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Just a reminder that your child's Telly the Turn OFF the TV and Turn ON to Reading Elephant is due _____. We will be sharing them with the class and awarding certificates of participation and a prize for who has filled in the most boxes.



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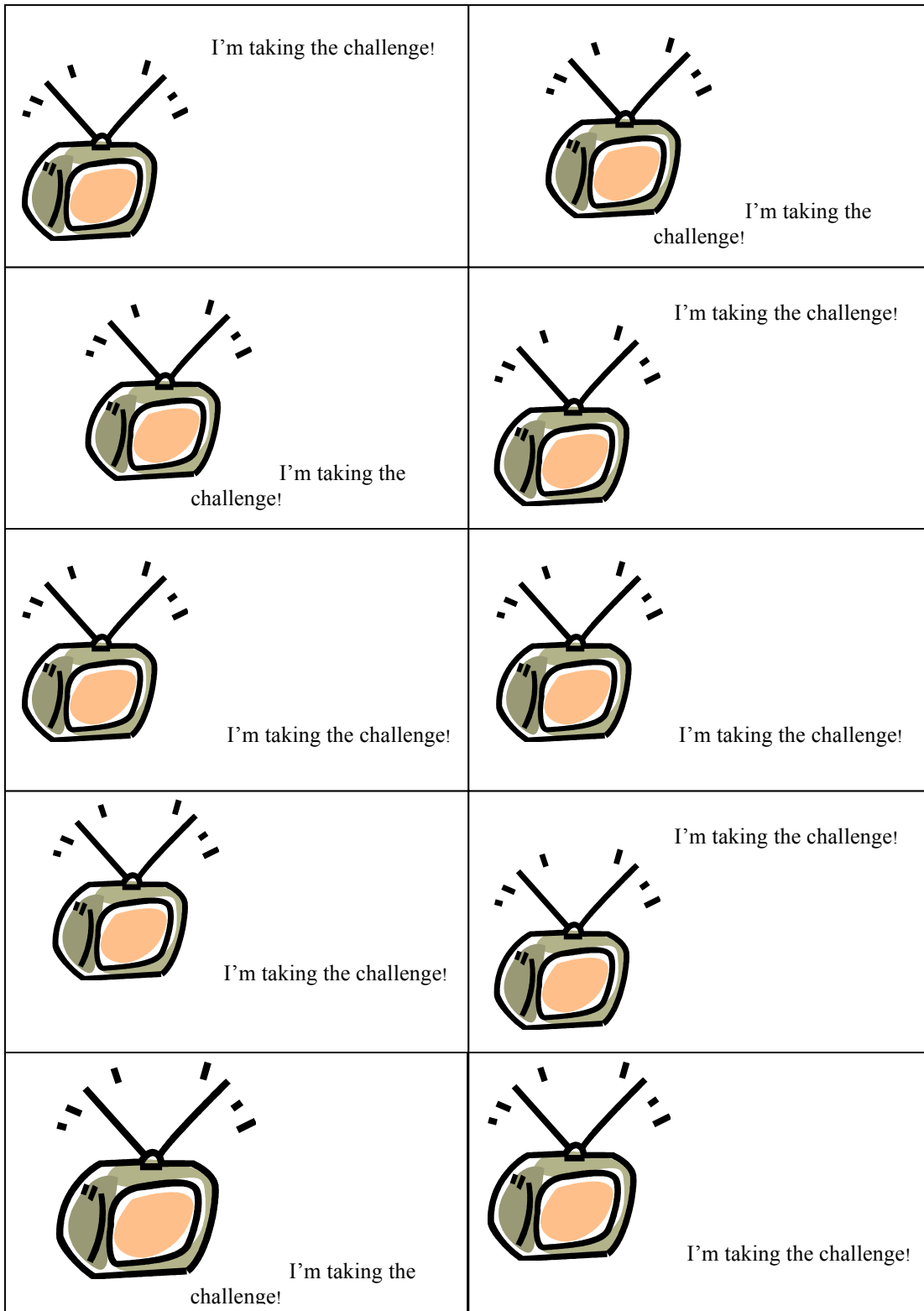


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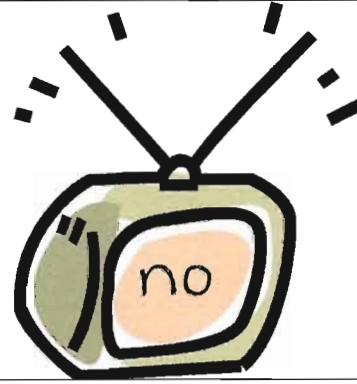


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TV-Reading Challenge Badges for students to wear.



A cartoon illustration of a television set. The screen is orange and displays the word "yes" in black lowercase letters. The television has a greenish-yellow body and two black antennas on top. There are several short black lines around the antennas, suggesting movement or sound.



[illegible]

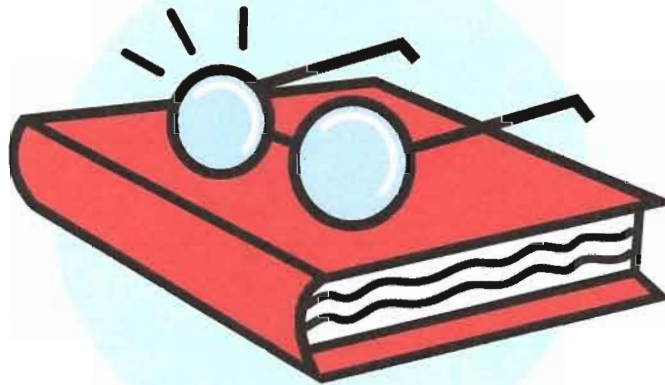
How many days did you give up watching TV?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total



Congratulations

has participated in
Turn Off The TV Week & Tune In To Reading!



Keep up the great work!



Teacher: _____

Date: _____

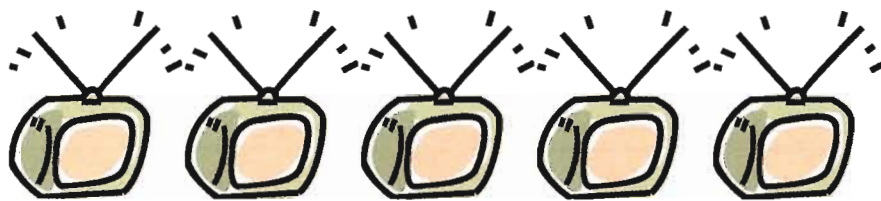


Congratulations

_____ has won our
Turn Off The TV Week & Tune In To Reading contest!



Keep up the great work!



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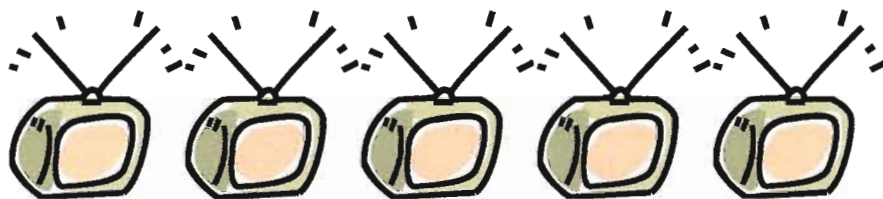


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