

Video: Students lend new meaning to 'chick lit'

By Mackenzie Ryan

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Second-grader Bethany Christiansen held a newly hatched chick close to her face on Tuesday and read it a book about chickens.

"I ask him what he thinks is going to happen" in the book, Christiansen said. "He goes: 'Peep, peep, peep.'"

Earlier this month, Chapman Hill Elementary School Teacher Maureen Foelkl decided to try something different, a twist on having students read out loud to fellow students.

With chicks already in her classroom for a science lesson, Foelkl asked students to read out loud to the birds.

"It's an amazing transformation," Foelkl said. "They're more motivated to read."

With chicks sitting in their laps or cupped in their hands, students take on the role of teacher and mirror techniques that teachers use as part of the school district's literacy model.

Christiansen said she asks the chick to retell a part of the story, or to look for picture clues.

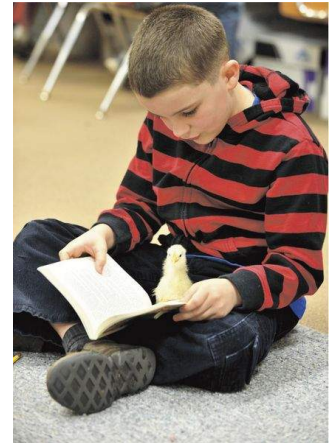
"He doesn't judge you or say, 'Wow, you're a bad reader,'" she said. "He listens and it's like he learns something."

Dylan I'Anson-Yount said he will pause and explain a word's meaning to the chick.

"He says: 'What's misadventure?'" I'Anson-Yount said. "Sometimes the one word you don't understand messes up the whole story. It happened to me once."

Paul Smith chose with care the book, "Wings, Stings and Wiggly Things."

"This chick really likes the worm page," he said. "It's always looking at the pictures."



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Dylan I'Anson-Yount reads to a chick during class Tuesday as part of a reading lesson at Chapman Hill Elementary School in West Salem.