

# Mrs. Dowd's Musings



Mrs. Dowd's  
Teaching  
Service

## WELCOME BACK!

Here we are again, back for another year of school! Can you believe how quickly the summer went by? It was just yesterday that we were welcoming kids into our summer program, playing outside in the hot, hot sun and enjoying the freedom of no school. But, alas, the time has come when we say good bye to our good friend the pool, and hello to our new



friend the textbook.

Here at Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service we had a wonderful summer and are ready to

jump feet-first into the school year. That means we will be starting our after-school programs soon! Check out the "Fall Module" article on page three for more information.

As if beginning MDTS tutoring wasn't enough, we have *more* great news! Right before the school year began we were notified that two of the schools we worked with over the 2005-2006 school year made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Congratulations to the students and staff of **Bladensburg Elementary School** and **Robert R. Gray Elementary School** for working hard and making AYP this year! We are so proud of you! We know that with hard work and dedication, all the schools that we work with will make AYP too!

Keep up the studies and we will see you soon!  
— Colleen Hooker

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### Special points of interest:

- *Kid's Art inside the White House!*
- *Baysox Night!*
- *SES Tutoring abroad!*
- *Fall Tutoring is right around the Corner!*
- *Hear from Mrs. Dowd!*
- *Did You Know That...*

## Freedom Letters

Over the Summer we asked our students what "Freedom" meant to them, and we got all sorts of answers! In fact, they were so special that I picked out a few and shared them with you in our last issue.

Well, Mrs. Dowd was so pleased with what our patriotic students wrote that she packed them up and sent them straight to the White House. She wanted President Bush to read what the youngest Americans felt about freedom. Two weeks ago we received a call to let

us know that the White House had indeed received our package, and even better, your kid's art is hanging in the halls of the White House. Isn't that exciting! Congratulations to the student's who wrote and drew so beautifully what Freedom means to them; your hard work paid off!

If you get a chance, maybe you could sit down with your child and let them talk to you about what Freedom means to them. I'm sure that you would want to hear all about their thoughts. Freedom

is a very precious thing, especially to those of us who were raised in different countries. So, hear what the children have to say about what so many people across the globe want: Freedom.



Freedom Letters in the White House!

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## Bowie Baysox Night

As the famous baseball anthem goes, "Take me out to the ball game, take me out with the crowd..." And that is just what we did! On August 1st, 2006 Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service rolled out the red carpet as all the students who had successfully completed the summer "Fun in the Sun" program were invited,



*A Young Student Caught One of the Baseballs!*

along with their families, to a night of *free* food, *free* baseball, and of course, *free* fun! Despite the intense heat and humidity ( I think it reached 110 degrees!), we had the pleasure of providing a Chick-Fil-A dinner, charter bus ride, and entrance to the Bowie Baysox

game to over 200 people! And not only that, each student was given a cool backpack and a MDTS "Fun in the Sun 2006" commemorative tee-shirt, while the parents were given MDTS travel mugs.



*The Dowd Family at Prince George's Stadium.*

I got a chance to talk with some of the students at the game and the overall consensus was "we looove it!". The kids were loving the food, the "Baysox Bucks", the backpacks, the tee-shirts and their friends! The parents were excited to have a free night of family fun! Heck, I'm not a parent and I had fun!

We had over 40 MDTS teachers come to spend the evening with their summer students and families. We even had our own little table with MDTS information to give to the public.

Colleen Hooker and Jackie Black had been planning the event all summer long. So when the day actually came everything ran smoothly! Thanks to all who came out, braved the heat, and enjoyed a night where we could celebrate **YOU** and all the hard work the kids put into this summer. We look forward to next summer when we can celebrate even more academic achievement!



*MDTS Families Watching the Baseball Game.*

Be sure to keep your eyes peeled for the next MDTS sponsored event. We are looking to plan an evening of fun in late November/early December for the families of students who complete their Autumn Achievers 27 hours of instruction with Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service.

It's sure to be another grand event, Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service style!

## In Search of Gold...

Ever wondered if leprechauns exist? When I was growing up, my very Irish family always said that if you caught a leprechaun then he would have to give over his pot of gold. Well, if the



thought of my very own pot of gold wasn't enough, the idea of my very own little leprechaun, now, that's what I call a good time! For many years my family led me to believe in the

'wee little men of Ireland, only to be told the sad truth at the age of ten: It was all make believe. Many good years were given over to this fruitless search!

Now, why do I write these things to you? One, to make you smile, and two,

*May the Irish hills caress you. May her lakes and rivers bless you. May the luck of the Irish enfold you. May the blessing of Saint Patrick behold you.*

— Irish Proverb

to let you know what Mr. and Mrs. Dowd are up to in Ireland, as we speak!

Early last week the Dowd's left for Ireland in search of leprechauns. No, no, no, they actually left to do a lot of work towards building a relationship between MDTS and the Irish Public Schools. For the first time the Irish Public School System is implementing an SES-like program for their schools. Who better to talk to them than Mrs. Dowd herself? Already they have met

with the Minister of Education, Inspector of Literacy and Numeracy, and numerous school principals along the way.

I know, strange titles, but they are equivalent to the State Superintendent and the people who report to



her. Their goal is to set up a rapport with the Irish School System that will allow MDTS to establish a "pen-pals" program between various Prince George's County schools and Irish Public Schools. That means that your child might be able to have a pen-pal friend over in Ireland! We'll be sure to keep you updated.

## Sign Up Your Kids!

Since school has begun Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service has attended numerous "Back to School" nights as well as SES provider fairs. It has been really exciting to get back into the swing of



things, and seeing the great number of parents come out to support their children at the "Back to School" nights has been very encouraging!

The 2006-2007 school year is a brand new school year and if you enjoyed your tutoring during the 2005-2006 year, then we would love for you to come back for another 27 hours of *free* tutoring.

There's nothing quite like an afternoon filled with free snacks, free tutoring, and of course, lots of fun. Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service teachers sure do know how to have a fun time during recess and during the lesson! But when push comes to shove, MDTS knows how to best get your student to better understand the world of math, reading, spelling, and writing.

Our reading curriculum: *Reading and Writing Sourcebook* by Great Source Education Group, a Houghton Mifflin Company, and math curriculum: the *After School Math Club Achievers* by Great Source Education Group, a Houghton Mifflin Company, is aligned with the Maryland State Voluntary

Curriculum, so that you can be assured what we teach your child is right along what they learn in the classroom.

Furthermore, we help your child learn based off of where he/she is at academically. Your child will be given a pre and post test to show they have progressed academically. MDTS also offers small group settings (teacher to student ratio 1:3) where students are encouraged to think critically, analyze, and re-learn basic to advanced math and reading strands of learning.

All-in-all, Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service offers your child what they need to succeed in the classroom. Be sure to sign your kids up today!

## Fall Module

As you are all well aware, Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service will begin the Autumn Achiever's 2006 Module shortly. We plan to be in the following schools by October 9th:

- Buck Lodge Middle School
- James H. Harrison E.S.
- Cool Spring E.S.
- Judge Sylvania Woods E.S.
- Gladys Noon Spellman E.S.
- Bladensburg E.S.
- Robert R. Gray E.S.
- Riverdale E.S.
- Lewisdale E.S.

If your child attends any of these schools then you might be eligible to receive *free tutoring*. Check with your school's main office to see whether your family qualifies.

If you qualify and would like Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service to tutor your child, indicate that on the SES Response Form and return it to the main office of your child's school. If you don't qualify, that's ok! MDTS has plenty of other options to choose from. Feel free to call us with any questions you may have regarding enrollment or after-school tutoring.



## Director's Corner

Dearest families,

Did you know that my family's heritage is Irish? In fact, my grandfather's grandmother, several generations removed, is the direct descendent of the Queen of Ireland, Grainelle O'Malley! Not only that, but she was called the "Pirate Queen" because she captured pirate ships and took the gold for Ireland!

Having said this, my husband and I just spent 10 days in Ireland meeting with educators all over the country. We learned so many things! First, that children everywhere love visitors from a different land! We spent a day at a small school in Galway, St. Bridget's School. The children wear navy blue uniforms and white blouses and they want to have pen-pals from America. When I told them about you, they were thrilled! All ages, from kindergarten to grade 8 wanted an "American friend." So in the next few weeks, we will be asking your permission to photograph your children and sending off a letter from them to an eager student in Galway, or Mayo, or Dublin.

The second thing we experienced is how friendly people are. Everywhere we traveled, we were offered what is known as Irish hospitality. Smiles, music, great food—different in every respect—was given to us. Let me explain. The Irish love to dance and they wear Ghaili's, soft leather shoes with black lacing up to the ankle; with popcorn like white socks and green kilt-like skirts, they are a beautiful sight to behold! The musical instruments are just as colorful—a guitar that plays like a small bagpipe is called "a hurty-gerty"! They love to play the Irish drum called "the bouraihn". Now the food is solidly fish. They loved salmon, and they are famous for their porridge and brown bread. The land is 43 shades of green—what a beautiful country and blessed people!

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*"Winter is an etching, spring a watercolor, summer an oil painting and autumn a mosaic of them all."*

— Stanley Horowitz

## Mrs. Dowd's Teaching Service

5411 Berwyn Road  
Suite 304  
Berwyn Heights, MD  
20740

Phone: 301-345-DOWD (3693)  
Fax: 301-345-4461  
E-mail: [chooker@christianteacher.net](mailto:chooker@christianteacher.net)

**We're on the web!**  
[www.christianteacher.net](http://www.christianteacher.net)

*Until every child in PG County is served...*



## Fun Facts to Know and Tell

This might be my favorite part of *Mrs. Dowd's Musings!* I hope your family enjoys these strange little tidbits of information as much as we do here in the office!

- Only one person in two billion will live to be 116 or older.
- An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.
- When opossums are playing 'possum, they are not "playing." They actually pass out from sheer terror.
- In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes when you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. That's where the phrase, "goodnight, sleep tight" came from.
- A baby octopus is about the size of a flea at birth.
- The average child will eat 1,500 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches by the time he/she graduates from high school.
- The U.S. Army accidentally ordered an 82 year supply of freeze-dried tuna salad mix for troops in Europe.
- A snake charmer does not charm snakes with a flute. The instrument he uses is a large gourd to which several bamboo stems are attached by means of a piece of beeswax. The sound of this ancient instrument is closer to that of the bagpipe than to the flute.
- The slowest land mammal is the three-toed sloth, which averages 6-8 feet per minute. Even the giant tortoise moves twice as fast.



Thanks to: <http://www.grose.us/html>, <http://www.nirula.com/kidszone/fun-facts.html>, and <http://www.nirula.com/kidszone/fun-facts.html> for allowing use to use some of their random facts.