Literacy Mentor for Inner-City Kids

Writers’ Exchange Literacy Mentors are positive role models who help inner-city kids boost their literacy skills and self-esteem during super fun writing activities. If you are excited to learn how zombie scavenger hunts, sweet summer treats and explosive science experiments can get kids excited about reading and writing, then this is the perfect role for you! You don’t need to be a writer to be an awesome Mentor, or super outgoing and energetic, you just need to show up consistently and provide encouragement and support to the kids.

Mentors help kids (ages 6 to 13) read picture books and graphic novels and encourage creativity during crafts and writing activities. You don’t need to plan the activities or worry about managing behaviour – a staff programmer will be there to support you 100% of the time – just show up ready to have fun and cheer on the kids.

Many of the kids we work with have low self-confidence when it comes to reading and writing, but when Mentors like you make the kids feel safe and supported, the kids get excited about reading and writing and build self-confidence to set them up for long-term success!

In operation since 2011, every year the Writers’ Exchange serves 700 kids with the help of 250 Literacy Mentors. Our programs operate in the highest-needs neighbourhoods in East and South Vancouver.

Summer Programs
- Mentors work one-on-one or with small groups of kids to help them complete fun writing activities and awesome crafts
- Programs run at multiple locations across East and South Vancouver from July 2nd to August 23rd.
- Program times are usually from 9:30am - 12pm, and 12:30 - 3pm.
- Commitment: 2.5 hours/week with the same program for 6 of the 8 weeks of the summer term (final program details will be confirmed in June).

We also run programs after-school and in teachers’ classrooms during the school year.

THE IMPACT OF YOUR TIME AND ENTHUSIASM:

KIDS BUILD POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS!
97% of kids in our programs say there's an adult at the Writers' Exchange who cares about them
KIDS HAVE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE!
96% of kids in our programs love coming to the Writers' Exchange

KIDS ARE MOTIVATED TO READ AND WRITE!
98% of kids in our programs are excited to do the activities

KIDS SUCCEED LONG-TERM BECAUSE OF A HUGE SELF-ESTEEM BOOST!

WHAT YOU’LL DO TO CHANGE LIVES:
• Be a consistent positive role model for the kids
• Bring your creativity, enthusiasm, and kindness to all shifts
• Demonstrate compassion for the communities in which the Writers’ Exchange is situated
• Become familiar with the Writers’ Exchange and our mission and culture
• Commit to constantly learning how you can best support the kids

WHAT MAKES A GREAT MENTOR:
• Possess most or all 15 of the following qualities: adaptable, committed, compassionate, consistent, flexible, friendly, fun, genuine, kind, loves to learn, open-minded, relaxed, team player, trustworthy, and understanding
• Thrives in a space that is loud, fun, energetic, and constantly changing
• Previous experience working with children is great but is not required – a genuine enthusiasm to connect with awesome kids over glue and glitter is more important
• Eager to participate in ongoing training activities

HOW TO JOIN THE TEAM:
• Pinky swear to attend the same weekly shift in a summer program for at least 6 weeks. We encourage Literacy Mentors to make an even longer-term commitment to cultivate close, supportive relationships with kids as they grow up.
• Be at least 16 years old
• Provide two references
• Complete a BC Criminal Records Check (please note it can take up to 4 weeks for the province to process a criminal record check, so please apply ASAP for the upcoming term)

We encourage applications from people from diverse backgrounds, including LGBTTIQQ2SA folks, Indigenous peoples, people of all colours, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities or another equity-seeking group with which you identify.

WHY PEOPLE LOVE BEING A LITERACY MENTOR:
This is an especially great volunteering opportunity if you’re thinking about becoming a teacher, social worker, child psychologist or working with children or youth in any capacity and want to gain concrete skills, experience and hours working with kids.

It’s also an energizing break from your daily routine, a great way to make connections, cultivate a sense of belonging, and build community, and a fun, meaningful opportunity to work with kids who need your support.

“Writers’ Exchange creates community through literacy, intergenerational interactions, and creative fun!” – Tara, Literacy Mentor

HOW TO APPLY:
Please visit http://vancouverwe.com/volunteersummer2019 for all the details and to fill out an application form by June 3rd, 2019.

“At Writers’ Exchange we can do anything our mind wants to imagine!” – Erin, age 11