Matthew Gollub acts out a mosquito flying while demonstrating how he reads to kids on Wednesday. (John Pekcan / Daily Titan)

Author integrates music in reading
BY JENNIFER NGUYEN – POSTED ON MARCH 14, 2013
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Award-winning children's author Matthew Gollub demonstrated how incorporating rhythm, props and human interaction while reading to students results in a successful tactic to encourage students to read more often.

Gollub emphasized the importance of reading to young children during his presentation, "Drumming Up Readers at School and at Home," on Wednesday at the Pollak Library.

Gollub merges his passion for jazz music with his multilingual background in English, Spanish and Japanese.

With a variety of instruments on hand—drums, a tambourine and a shaker—Gollub performed his musical stories to the audience by singing the story instead of reading.

He said adding musical elements to his style of reading allows children to participate in some way whether it is singing along, playing an instrument or clapping their hands.

Throughout his presentation, Gollub reiterated to the audience: "Always give kids something to do."

"Appealing to students’ different senses and 'intelligences' essentially gives you more hooks as a presenter (and) more ways to get kids to take an interest in words and stories," said Gollub.

Audience members consisted of students aspiring to be writers and teachers, employees of the CSUF Children’s Center and members of the community.

Martha Leonard, a member of the Victorian Society of the Fullerton Arboretum, is a writer who works as a children’s service librarian at the Fullerton Public Library.

Though she had taken a break from writing some of her stories for over a year, Leonard said she felt inspired to continue after the presentation.

"I'm glad that I came here because that means motivates me," said Leonard. "It's very motivational when you hear another writer, so I'm going to be inspired."

Gollub also discussed parents who do not find the time to read to their children.

One recommendation he made was for parents to have their children read a restaurant menu and identify a food item. From there the child should read aloud the dishes the item is used in. This activity is meant to help the child read and expand their vocabulary.

Gollub also suggested that children should watch television with subtitles on as well, allowing them to improve their reading and literacy skills.

He also focused on students' parents who may not be able to read as well due to low education levels.

Gollub recommended that students have their parents place bilingual Post-it notes and labels on various household items and home structures around the house.

This is meant to help both parent and child learn how to read in both english and a foreign language.

"Sometimes it's not just Spanish," said Gollub. "It might be Korean, or Punjabi, or Japanese."
Cheryl Wood, 23, a single-subject credential student and future educator, said she enjoyed the presentation.

“I thought it was very entertaining,” said Wood. “I feel like there’s a lot of useful information that he gave me.”

Gollub is the author of 15 books and publisher of the Tortuga Press, an independent press that publishes children’s books.

**TAGS:** author, books, children's author, CSUF, reading

About Jennifer Nguyen

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