

Thank you, Mr. Lee!



From Marta at Read Ahead

A little bit about me:

I work at Read Ahead, managing relationships with our corporate partners, and have been a Read Ahead mentor this past year. My mentee is in 4th grade and his absolute favorite thing to do during our time together is to read Captain Underpants books!

My message to you:

While I know this time is challenging for everyone, having spoken to friends who work in schools, I know that educators like you are dealing with a great deal of change and pressure at work. I want to let you know how much I appreciate everything that you're doing for the students at P.S. 1.

My memories of educators in my life:

In third grade my teacher, Mrs. Burns, read aloud to us every day. I already loved reading as a kid, but the act of gathering together and the voices and embellishments she used made that time especially meaningful. I went on to major in English in college and teach English abroad, in large part because of how magical she made books and stories for me that year.

Reading recommendations:

One of the best books I've read recently was Bangkok Wakes to Rain (layered novel set across time periods in Bangkok). I also reread the third Harry Potter book which was really fun and nostalgic!

Other recommendations:

One of my favorite things to watch is Bon Appetit's Test Kitchen videos on YouTube. They're lighthearted and full of delicious food. The Brooklyn Brainery has been putting on some interesting and inexpensive virtual classes (brooklynbrainery.com/courses). I've also enjoyed Headspace's meditation app. Finally, a few friends and I had a "formal" dinner a few weeks ago where everyone got a little dressed up and caught up online. This was a nice spin on the video calls we've been having lately.

Advice or wisdom during stressful times:

I wish I could offer something more profound, but for me, like many people, keeping connected with friends and family however possible (for me, mostly over video calls) and getting outside at least once a day have been important. Reading has been a great escape for me too, and I find I'm reading more non-fiction and historical fiction. This has been helpful in thinking about the challenges and obstacles of the past, and hopeful in knowing that things evolved, changed, and settled then, as I hope they will now.

I think NYC public schools are important because...

they are staffed by extraordinary teachers like you. I hope you know how much New Yorkers, not only students and their families, appreciate all of the work you do for the kids you teach, especially now. I'm so grateful for your commitment and dedication and am sending all my best wishes and thanks to you!