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**VCSU class reads to St. Catherine students**

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February is National Reading Month and Valley City State University communications students have been providing oral interpretations of children’s stories for first- and second-graders at St. Catherine’s School.

Jonna Ziniel, who teaches oral interpretation at VCSU, said, “Part of the class is interpreting different parts of literature, and we got together as a class and interpreted children’s stories.

“The students are taking those stories over to St. Kate’s on Wednesdays, and they’re reading that story to the children and they’re interpreting it and using vocal inflection and gestures in order to tell the story.”

Every Wednesday in February, three members of the 12-student course read to the 25 students in Carol Gulka’s combined first- and second-grade class at St. Catherine’s. Gulka said her students are loving the experience.

“You’d think after three people reading to them they’d be tired of it, but they keep listening so they’re really enjoying it,” said Gulka.

While Ziniel said she has had the idea for the project for years, it was a letter Gulka sent home to parents that got the ball rolling.

“They had asked for readers to come into class during their reading month, and I thought that would be a perfect opportunity for the students here to get that experience to work with the kids, but also to have an audience other than us to read to,” said Ziniel.

The oral interpretation class is for education majors who are interested in coaching a speech team.

Ziniel, a former speech competition judge on both the high school and college levels, said, “They get that experience of what oral interpretation is like, what’s expected, how to cut a piece and how to perform a piece.”

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