

Press Release for Author Matthew Gollub's Speaking Event for Children
(for clip art or to request photos, please visit www.matthewgollub.com)

Five top tips for helping kids read for life:

- 1) Keep books and a reading light in your child's bedroom.
- 2) Keep the TV and videogames OUT of your child's bedroom.
- 3) Choose closed captions with your TV's remote so that kids get the benefit of reading words on the screen.
- 4) Listen to children's books on tape or CD when taking long car rides.
- 5) Try reading what your child is reading and talk about it over a meal!

Resources: For more reading tips from Matthew Gollub, see his latest book, *Give the Gift! 10 Fulfilling Ways to Raise a Lifetime Reader* and visit www.matthewgollub.com

Speaking in Tongues

Author Matthew Gollub Introduces Kids to a Wide World of Culture

"ZA-baza BOO-za-ba ZEE-zah RO-ni!" A Jazz Fly scats. Watermelons turn to frogs. And ten horned giants chase away a child's spooky dreams. These and other scenarios play out in author Matthew Gollub's children's books and performances.

Gollub calls his convocations 'story art,' a brief description for something much more involved. A native Californian, Gollub performs his stories while fluidly shifting between English, Spanish, and Japanese. He also delivers a unique approach to stimulating children's—and grown-ups'—imagination.

These days, in addition to providing author assemblies for students, Gollub conducts lively, bilingual presentations for parents. His latest book is titled *Give the Gift! 10 Fulfilling Ways to Raise a Lifetime Reader*. This picture book for grown-ups brims with practical advice for busy parents who want to encourage children to read more at home. “Reading is the key,” Gollub says, “to helping young people thrive.”

What excites young people about Gollub’s performances is the sense of fun and energy he brings to his award-winning books. He projects the beautiful illustrations of his books visually; acts out his stories audibly while playing drums, incorporates the emotion of the moment, all while engaging his audience with hand movements, chants, and rhythmic clapping.

“Different kids have different types of intelligence,” Gollub explains. “I try to throw lots of sparks at my audience in the hope that some will catch.”

Gollub credits his twelve-year old son as a major inspiration for his books. He also draws on his background as a drummer and his extensive travels abroad. In college, he majored in Japanese and International Studies then lived in Japan for three years, working as a translator, newscaster, and taiko drummer before getting involved with children’s books.

While living and working in Oaxaca, Mexico, Gollub also became fluent in Spanish.

“Understanding three languages has given me a much broader perspective,” he says. “I try to show kids that learning to speak other languages can be a big plus in one’s life.”

His knowledge of Spanish yielded six picture book collaborations with the celebrated Mexican painter, Leovigildo Martínez. His years in Japan inspired two more books with the Japanese artist, Kazuko Stone, including his award-winning introduction to haiku poetry, *Cool Melons--Turn to Frogs!*

But two of Gollub’s most popular books include his narrations set to music on audio CD. *Gobble, Quack, Moon* features blues, waltzes and rock ‘n’ roll, and draws the reader into the world of Katie the cow. Not one content to munch hay on the farm, Katie inspires other barn animals to stage a ballet on the moon.

The Jazz Fly, Gollub’s first book to contain an audio CD, was named the #1 Recommended Children’s Book by independent booksellers nationwide. It was also the project on which Gollub ran the biggest risk. When his New York publishers balked at packaging the book with a CD, Gollub elected to publish *The Jazz Fly* himself. “I conceived the story as a performance piece,” he explains. “It celebrates jazz as creative thinking and follows a rhythm I couldn’t leave to chance. The book had to have a CD, and I had to do it myself.”

So Gollub rounded up his jazz musicians, provided the narration and even played drums. He also made a wise move by enlisting the illustrator Karen Hanke. What resulted was a picture book set to a jazz quartet, teeming with insect musicians dressed in evening gowns and tuxedos.

Aside from its wild popularity among kids and teachers, *The Jazz Fly* also garnered a Benjamin Franklin Award from Gollub's newfound publishing peers. Reflecting on his success as an author, speaker, and publisher, Gollub says, "Sometimes, you just have to go to work and pursue your vision."

(Note: Parents can find free reading tips at www.matthewgollub.com. To set up a media interview with Matthew, please email him at mg@matthewgollub.com or call (707) 544-4720.