

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT:**

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## **What do Walt Disney, Cher, Sylvester Stallone, Henry Winkler, Orlando Bloom, and Tom Cruise all have in common?**

*They all struggled with reading.*

A student transitions from learning to read to reading to learn in third grade. What's disturbing is that according to the National Education Association two-thirds of our country's third graders aren't reading on grade level.

When the State of Arizona projects how many prison beds it will need, it factors in the number of kids who read well in fourth grade (Arizona Republic (9-15-2004)). Statistics show that children who do not read on grade level by third grade often fail to catch up and are more likely to drop out of school, take drugs, or go to prison. Because scores of nonreaders wind up in jail, Arizona officials have used the rate of illiteracy to help calculate future prison needs.

There can be many reasons why these children struggle: vision, dyslexia, learning delayed, but the consensus is that children need to read books that match their level of reading skill - books they can read comfortably, with a high level of accuracy and comprehension.

Lisa Riebe has written a sci-fi series called *Pond Punkies*, with the struggling reader in mind. She said, "Many times young readers are reluctant to finish a story because of how many words are on the page. Intimidation sets in and they close the book. That's where this series is a little different."

*Pond Punkies* is printed in a larger font with extra spacing between the lines. To really capture the struggling reader's attention Riebe also made sure there were eighteen to twenty full page illustrations in each book.

To further encourage the reading process and help parents and teachers along the way, the *Pond Punkies'* website [www.PondPunkies.com](http://www.PondPunkies.com) has a Primary Level Study Guide, an Intermediate Level Study Guide, a memory game, crossword puzzles, word search, and more to engage the reluctant reader.

Riebe said, "I have crazy dreams and an active imagination. I used both to create Pond Punkies with the hopes that it would capture the reluctant reader's attention. As Walt Disney said, 'There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island.'"

Riebe is the author of *Pond Punkies, The Arrival* (ISBN 978-0-9819493-2-1), and *Pond Punkies, The Unearthing* (ISBN 978-0-9819493-5-2; available November 1, 2011).