**Article of the Week (AoW) Directions**

1. Mark your confusion – either highlighting or underlining.

2. Mark up the text. Annotate the article with comments, questions, inferences, etc. You can use a variety of sentences, phrases, and symbols to show your thinking.

3. Write a developed paragraph response to one of the prompts below.

**'Read And Ride' Aims To Make Students Healthier and Smarter**

By Kim Bussing on May 4, 2016

Schools across the world are trying to come up with **innovative** solutions to keep students active and alert. Some are replacing **conventional** classroom chairs with exercise balls or standing desks. At Ward Elementary School in Winston, North Carolina students have adopted an**innovative** program that entails riding stationary bikes while reading.

'Read and Ride' is the**brainchild** of school **counselor** Scott Ertl, who came up with the idea while he was exercising and reading at the gym. Believing it would be a fun way to convince students to become more active, he placed one in the corner of his classroom and encouraged them to use it during independent reading sessions.

It was so popular that Ertl decided to add more bikes and offer the Read and Ride program to the entire school. Today Ward Elementary has a **dedicated** exercise room filled with bikes that can be used by students while completing their daily reading **assignments**.

Besides making reading more fun, the program also helps students exercise at a comfortable pace without the pressure that comes with regular sports-related activities. It is also a perfect way to release**pent-up** energy during days when the weather is not**conducive** to outdoor activities.

Most importantly, however, are the program’s academic benefits. A year after Read and Ride was introduced at Ward Elementary School, students actively involved in the program demonstrated an **astounding** 83% reading **proficiency**. Those that had not taken advantage of the exercise bikes tested at a much lower, 41%.

Similar results were achieved at Russell Jones Elementary in Rogers, Arkansas where the Read and Ride has been **implemented** in two fourth-grade classrooms. The participating students showed an average of an 113 to 118 point increase in state reading benchmarks, almost 40 points higher than the classes that were not involved in the program.

The cost-free (exercise equipment is acquired via donations) and easy-to-execute program is now at 30 U.S. schools, where aside from bikes, students also use under-desk ellipticals, Bouncy Bands, and exercise balls. Read and Ride is also the**inspiration** behind a recent in-school exercise initiative organized by the Europe Region Medical Command in Sembach, Germany.

In Canada, high school teacher Allison Cameron has been conducting a similar in-school exercise movement since 2007. Called "Movement Matters," it goes even further than Ertl’s voluntary training program. Three days a week, Cameron splits up her language arts lecture so that half of the 40-minute lesson is spent exercising on stationary bikes and treadmills. Cameron says the program has helped her students lose weight and also **drastically** improve their test scores. An eighth-grade class involved in the program saw their writing test scores increase by 245% over the school year.

Adam Boesel, the founder of Green Microgym, plans to take the Read and Ride concept to a whole new level by adding green energy to the mix. The **entrepreneur** has teamed up with a Michigan elementary school to introduce Green Microcycles — bicycles fitted with generators that save the kinetic energy produced by the students as they pedal! In addition to making students smarter and healthier, Boesel also hopes his green bikes will help pique students' interest in STEM and increase environmental awareness.

Though the substantial improvement in academic achievement cannot all be **attributed** to programs like Read and Ride, experts believe they are a significant contributor. That's because studies have shown that physical activity stimulates brain cells and helps prepare it for learning. As word of the difference made by this easy to execute exercise program spreads, don't be surprised to find schools across the country adopt "Read and Ride" for their students.

**Respond to one of the following prompts. Use a separate sheet of paper.**

1. What is the Read and Ride program? Who started it? How has it helped students at Ward Elementary School?
2. Write a paragraph either for or against implementing the Read and Ride program at Fitzgerald.
3. Pick a passage from the article and respond to it.