

Extra Credit Summer Reading Program  
Summer, 2011  
DeCarlo Library Media Center



**The Book: ZigZag**  
**By: Ellen Wittlinger**

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-12-Robin feels totally unworthy of her rich, smart boyfriend, Chris. So, when her divorced mother starts dating and Chris goes off to Rome for summer school, the 17-year-old accepts an invitation to drive from Iowa to California with her newly widowed Aunt Dory and her cousins, 13-year-old Iris and 10-year-old Marshall, taking a circuitous route to see the country. Cramped in a car with a family still grieving, Robin finds herself in the middle of every conceivable sibling and parental dispute. *Marshall* and Iris are realistically nasty and unkind to one another as well as to their suffering mother and Robin. As every dysfunctional episode ensues, the teen finds that she has the ability to help them all, and with that discovery she finds the way to help herself. There is nothing new about a novel that uses the plot device of a journey as a rite of passage. *Zigzag* has that commonplace plot filled with plain, everyday people experiencing plain and ordinary problems. Yet all four of the extended family members on the trip move from self-doubt to self-knowledge, from chaos to order. With gentle wisdom and remarkably true characters, Wittlinger's writing conveys a fundamental truth: life is a nonlinear journey that everyone takes and it is the simple choices that define a person.

*Jane Halsall, McHenry Public Library District, IL*  
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Directions:

Read and enjoy the book!

Taking a road trip this summer? Whether your journeys take you to far distant lands or to the Inner Harbor, pick up postcards and send them to me.

Send one postcard or several...be sure to use as many adjectives as possible to paint a picture of your destination. If you can't find a stamp, bring your postcards back to school when you return in August!

During the first weeks of school, a picnic/book discussion in the outback will be scheduled to discuss *ZigZag*. Upon completion, you will receive your (10) *Extra Credit Point Coupon* to be applied to your Humanities grade during the first semester.

Questions? Please see Mrs. Sunday or contact me by email.

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