

Reading Buddy Tips

Ask for assistance from CIS Program Staff for help selecting books appropriate for the student's reading level.

Take time to get to know your student. Part of what makes Reading Buddies successful is for the student to know that you're invested in them as a person. Have 5 minutes to check-in about one another's week before beginning your reading exercises, and a fun, personal closing ritual at the end of each meeting.

Take turns reading out loud to one another. When you read aloud to the student, you can read books at the student's listening level which is higher than his or her reading level. This gives you the opportunity to expand your child's vocabulary. The wonderful, unique words found in children's literature are often words we do not use in everyday conversations. A large vocabulary will improve your child's comprehension as he or she reads more sophisticated books.

Help with word skills by writing down and keeping a record of words that have caused problems and practice them each week for meaning and spelling.

Take breaks! Get a drink of water. Play literacy games.

Punctuation. Ask the child to count how many full stops (.), or question marks (?) or exclamation marks (!) there are on the page. By counting the punctuation marks, the child will be more likely to focus their attention on them when reading.

Listen, empathize, and be patient. Truly listen to the student's concerns and encourage positive behavior.

Don't take student behaviors personally. Just like adults, students have good days and bad days, and often test limits to make sure that their Reading Buddy won't give up on them.

Say Goodbye. Proper closure, whenever possible, is vital to the Reading Buddy process. For whatever reason, if you know you'll need to complete your volunteer commitment, please let CIS staff know so we can help you plan a meaningful closure with your student.

Behavioral Characteristics: Ages 6-10

Characteristics of this age group	What Reading Buddies Offers
High energy and need lots of activity	Take frequent breaks from reading to get a drink of water or move around a bit
Practice large and fine motor skills	Let students act out scenes from the book
Growing attention span	Quiet spaces help students focus
Responds to simple rules and limits	Set clear responsibilities
Eager to learn	The more enthusiastic you are about reading, the more excited students become!
Beginning to reason logically	Help students with logic skills by asking about characters and plots in stories
Feel their ideas count	Pay attention to student's needs and listen to their thoughts and ideas
Feelings are easily hurt	When volunteers don't show up, students suffer
Identify with their family	Ask about the student's families and emphasize and celebrate family strengths and diversity
Eager to please	Celebrate small successes and provide a lot of encouragement and praise.
Emphasize fairness	Make sure all students get opportunities to share and read aloud.
Music, dance, and drama opportunities	Act out scenes from the book

Developmental Reading Standards

Kindergarten Skills

- Understand that print goes from left to right and has meaning
- Say letters and point to letters of the alphabet
- Know all the consonant sounds and may know the vowel sounds
- Recognize simple words like "the", "and", "it", and "is"
- Start to read signs, food packages, and other everyday items
- Like being read to and has favorite books and stories
- Produce rhyming words
- Write their own name

First Grade Skills

- Read aloud slowly and deliberately (about 30 words per minute)
- Begin to use strategies to figure out new words
- Recognize words at a glance
- Have a 300-500 word reading vocabulary
- Begin to read silently
- Count the number of syllables in a word

Second Grade Skills

- Read about 60 words per minute
- Read both fiction and non-fiction written for their grade level
- Sound out unknown words of one or two syllables
- Re-read sentences when meaning is not clear
- Recall facts and details from the book
- Pose possible answers to "how", "why" and "what if" questions

Third Grade Skills

- Read about 90 words per minute
- Have strategies to sound out unknown words
- Summarize major points from fiction and non-fiction stories
- Infer word meanings from roots, prefixes and suffixes
- Read different types of children's books
- Use information from personal knowledge to learn words and understand stories
- Understand themes or main ideas