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## Book Buddy Readers

There is an alarming literacy crisis in America today and it begins with children. According to Reading is Fundamental (RIF), a leading children's literacy non-profit, twenty-five million children in the U.S. cannot read proficiently. Millions of children from low-income areas don't have the tools they need to learn.

You can help by volunteering to read to younger children. According to the non-profit Reading Rockets, a national multimedia literacy initiative offering information and resources on how young kids learn to read, reading aloud builds many important foundational skills, introduces vocabulary, provides a model of fluent, expressive reading, and helps children recognize what reading for pleasure is all about.

Check with after-school programs and your local library to see if they have opportunities for you to come and read aloud to younger children.



### What You Need

- A good read aloud book
- Enthusiasm!



### How You Do It

- 1 Preview the Book:** Your story time will be much richer if you have read the book at least once beforehand. This will also ensure that there are no "surprises" that might trip you up as you read.
- 2 Prepare a Comfy and Roomy Read-Aloud Area:** It's important that your area is large enough that everyone can sit and see comfortably.
- 3 Introduce the Book:** Look at the book cover together and ask children to guess what they think the book might be about. Name the author and illustrator to reinforce the concept that people write and draw books.
- 4 Notice How You Hold the Book:** Children need to see the illustrations, so be sure that the book is wide open and held to your side so that you can read the story and share it at the same time.
- 5 Give It All You've Got:** Dramatic and fun sound effects, hand motions, facial expressions, and changes in tone invite children to become a part of the story with you.
- 6 Involve Your Listeners:** Give children a line to repeat, a hand motion, or a sound effect that they can add at the appropriate time.

- 7 Help Children "See" the Story:** Children who are attentive to the visual details of a book are learning how to use visual clues to get meaning from everything on the page. Point out details in illustrations and characterizations to help children become keen observers, and discuss what they notice.
- 8 Invite Children to Use Their Senses:** Help children imagine not only the sights in a story but the sounds, smells, tastes, physical sensations, and emotions, as well. Periodically, stop and ask children to pretend to use their senses to explore a part of the story: "Can you pretend to pet the puppy? How does the puppy feel? What do you think the characters hear? What do they smell?"
- 9 Develop Ways to Respond to Questions:** Children love to ask questions while you are reading. Some questions are important and need to be answered right away so the child will understand the rest of the story. Other questions will be answered in the story itself. Stopping too often will break up the flow of the story.
- 10 Take Time for Discussion:** Children love to talk about a book you've just read. Use creative questions to encourage in-depth thinking and discussion.



**Before the project**

#### **READ ONE OF THESE BOOKS.**

##### ***Thank You Mr. Falker* by Patricia Polacco**

Patricia Polacco is now one of America's most loved children's book creators, but once upon a time, she was a little girl named Trisha starting school. Trisha could paint and draw beautifully, but when she looked at words on a page, all she could see was jumble. It took a very special teacher to recognize little Trisha's dyslexia: Mr. Falker, who encouraged her to overcome her reading disability. Patricia Polacco will never forget him, and neither will we.

##### ***More Than Anything Else* by Marie Bradby**

From sun-up to sun-down, nine-year-old Booker packs salt at a salt work, but more than anything else, he wants to learn to read. Set in the fall of 1865 in Malden, West Virginia, this story is based on the childhood of Booker T. Washington. Although his stomach rumbles, his real hunger is his intense desire to learn to read.

#### **Gabe Eggerling 2014 Hasbro Community Action Hero**

Gabe was an avid reader from a young age so he joined a club where he went to different schools to read to kids. At one school, he met a girl whom he learned had no books at home which made him sad because he felt that she was missing out on so much. So at 8 years old, Gabe founded Mission:HERO (Helping Everyone Read Outloud) and has since donated thousands of books to kids in need.

Gabe, now in high school, is still donating books to kids and also doing audio versions for kids with reading challenges. He is an actor, author and TEDx speaker. Gabe's work was recognized in a celebrity charity book *100 Making a Difference* and he was nominated for the 19 Under 19 by TigerBeat. Gabe uses his successes as a platform to bring awareness to the importance of the written word and storytelling as a literacy advocate.