



READ ACROSS STORY COUNTY

Program Guide

Raising Readers in Story County (RRSC) created this innovative program as an activity for the United Way of Story County Day of Caring. All students benefit from hearing charismatic adults read interesting books and tell how important reading is in real life and the workplace. PK-2 students who are behind in reading development and who may not have adults who read at home especially benefit.



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The Need for Read Across Story County

Families, communities and schools must share the responsibility for ensuring students become proficient readers and know the importance of reading for future success. There are few opportunities for community folks to have first hand experiences in school buildings with students and teachers.

Read Across Story County Overview

Raising Readers in Story County (RRSC) created this innovative program as an activity for the United Way of Story County Day of Caring. Children benefit from hearing charismatic adults read interesting books and tell how important reading is in real life and the workplace. PK-2 students who are behind in reading development and who may not have adults who read to them at home especially benefit.

Target Audience

In this program community volunteers are matched with classes of preschool children or early elementary students in safe, supervised locations.

Desired Results and Indicators

Our countywide end result is all “Story County Children Read to Succeed.” All Raising Readers in Story County programs contribute to these goals:

- All children enter kindergarten with basic language and literacy skills associated with reading success as measured by school districts.
- All students read at or above grade level by the end of third grade as measured by school districts.

Read Across Story County connects charismatic adult readers who share the joy and importance of reading with preschool and elementary students. It raises children’s awareness of how much community members value reading and increases community volunteers’ appreciation for today’s students and schools.

Performance Measures Examples

- Number of participating children PK – 2 in Story County
- Percentage of participating children PK – 2 in Story County
- Percentage of teachers who report children were inspired to read more
- Number of community volunteers and volunteer hours

Starting a Reading Across Story County Program

Step 1: Identify literacy needs

Contact leaders of local preschools and elementary schools to see if they are interested in participating

Step 2: Plan

- Select a coordinator
- Prepare a tentative schedule. Let sites know the date of the United Way Day of Caring
- Create a list of potential sites and contact information
- Develop a plan to recruit volunteers
- Consider handouts like book marks and brochures about your literacy programs for volunteers and children's families. Nice, but not necessary, would be having books to donate to participating preschools and classes.

Step 3: Implement

- Finalize a schedule with specific sites, time of day, number of classes, grades of classes
- Recruit volunteers from local businesses and community groups
- Provide each site and each volunteer with information about date, time, place and expectations
- Ensure each site will have age-appropriate and interesting books to read. Volunteers may bring a favorite book too.
- Arrange for a greeter who will support volunteers and collect

assessment information

- Arrange for a photographer at each site

Step 4: Assess

- Collect numbers of students from each preschool or school
- Take photos
- Collect quotes
- Collect feedback from volunteers
- Collect feedback from staff at sites

Step 5: Revise

Review the implementation and results and suggestions for improvements.

Planning a Read Across Story County Budget

- This program can be done at no cost.
- Handouts to promote your organization: If you choose to give these to the volunteers, the school teachers, and the administrators, there will be a small cost.
- Usually the site provides the books they know children would like. This is more likely at school and library sites and less likely at day care sites. Volunteers can also bring books they enjoyed as children.
- There could be a cost to hire a program coordinator, although it can be organized by volunteers.

History of Read across Story County

RRSC planned the first Read across Story County event in 2008 for the United Way in Story County Day of Caring. At that time, most activities involved outdoor work, and this offered an option for volunteers who preferred an indoor activity and who liked to interact with children.

At first we partnered with libraries to arrange for groups of preschool children to come to the library. Transportation of children and scheduling was problematic, so we moved to more school sites because volunteers could go to where children already were and there was built-in supervision.

APPENDIX A



“Helping Children Grow Up with Books and a Love of Reading”

Surefire Read-Aloud Favorites

These 15 books would be lively selections for volunteers to read to children.

1. Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
2. Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow
3. Five Little Monkeys Sitting in a Tree by Eileen Christelow
4. Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type by Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Betsy Lewin
5. Giggle Giggle Quack by Doreen Cronin, illustrated by Betsy Lewin
6. Bark, George by Jules Feiffer
7. Jump, Frog, Jump by Robert Kalan, illustrated by Byron Barton
8. Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin, Jr., illustrated by Eric Carle
9. If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Numeroff, illustrated by Felicia Bond
10. One Duck Stuck by Phyllis Root, illustrated by Jane Chapman
11. Duck on a Bike by David Shannon
12. Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina
13. The Gigantic Turnip by Aleksei Tolstoy
14. Over in the Meadow by Olive A. Wadsworth, illustrated by Ezra Jack Keats
15. Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus by Mo Willems

APPENDIX B



“Helping Children Grow Up with Books and a Love of Reading”

Tips for Reading to Groups of Children

by Carol Elbert

Reading to young children in a group is a little different from reading to one or two children who love you. Consider these hints.

Not every picture book is a great read-aloud. Choose good books:

- That you like. It will be more fun for you, and the children will see that.
- That have pictures large enough to be seen by a group.
- That have a good story as well as attractive illustrations.
- That are short, 5 minutes or less. It’s easier to hold the attention of preschoolers with several short books than with one longer one. School age children will enjoy longer stories, but when reading to a primary grade group you don’t know, about 8 or 9 minutes is long enough for one book.
- That are funny. In general, a funny book will be a better choice than a thoughtful book when you don’t know your listeners.
- That invite participation. Encourage children to make animal sounds or join you in saying a repeated refrain. Some books have simple flaps to lift, and you can ask children, “What do you think we will find in here?” Some books can be accompanied with motions.
- That rhyme. Rhyming and rhythm are great fun for children.

Preparing to read aloud to children:

- Ahead of time, read the book aloud to yourself.
- Practicing will help you read more smoothly when you have the distractions of a wiggly group.
- It will also help you see if you've chosen a book that's longer than you imagined. You may remember having loved a Dr. Seuss favorite, but don't wait until you're in front of a group of 4-year-olds to discover that it actually takes 25 minutes to read aloud.
- Think about the story's possibilities for participation. The text may not say, "The cow said moo," but you can say to the children something like, "What does the cow say?" Look for a repeated phrase in the story. You might tell the children that they have a line to say in the story and have them practice it before you start reading. "Every time I come to this part, you help me out. Let's practice."
- Think about the vocabulary. If there's a word that children may be unfamiliar with, be prepared with a quick definition.

Reading to a group of young children:

- Show the book's cover and say the title and author.
- Hold the book so children can see the pictures.
- Make eye contact with all of the children.
- Avoid reading too fast. That's the most common mistake adult readers make when reading to children.
- Read with expression. If you're comfortable making different voices for the characters, feel free to ham it up.
- Remember that participation helps hold children's attention.
- Point to things in the pictures and ask occasional questions, such as "What's this?" or "Look at his face. How do you think he feels?" or "What do you think will happen?" However, be aware that a group discussion can quickly get away from you if every child wants to speak.
- Feel free to shorten or skip a non-essential sentence if the children are restless or younger than you expected. Here's where you'll be glad if

you're familiar with the story so you know what can be left out. Don't try this with a book in rhyme.

- If there's a word the children may not know, read the word and then explain it briefly.
- Try to ignore any misbehavior and focus on the children who are listening. It may help to re-direct a restless child to participate such as by making animal sounds or joining in saying a repeated refrain.
- If you sing, consider including a song at the beginning or between stories. The children's librarians at the public library can help you find picture books that are stories to sing, like "Wheels on the Bus," "Old MacDonald," or "Five Little Ducks."
- If you have some favorite poems, consider sharing a poem in addition to picture books. Consider using Mother Goose rhymes.
- Have fun