RAISING READERS IN STORY COUNTY

Story Pals Volunteer Job Description

Position Overview

Raising Readers in Story County (RRSC) is seeking volunteers to support the Story Pals program, which provides individualized literacy support to children who have been identified as struggling with language skills in school. Story Pals uses the Dialogic Reading method to create engaging one-on-one learning experiences that support children's language, literacy, and social-emotional development. Volunteers work with students at one of three Story County locations during morning or afternoon sessions.

Responsibilities

- Use Dialogic Reading strategies to engage children in conversations before, during, and after reading.
- Encourage children's language, literacy, and social-emotional development through reading and conversation.
- Follow the Story Pals lesson guides and activities to provide consistent and engaging learning experiences.
- Use age-appropriate strategies to help students stay focused and participate appropriately.
- Create a learning environment that promotes creativity, fun, and safety.
- Encourage students to develop positive attitudes toward reading and literacy.
- Complete basic program forms, including student surveys, observation sheets, and attendance sheets.
- Communicate student questions, concerns, or progress to the RRSC site supervisor.
- Complete other duties as assigned.

Maintenance and Safety Requirements

- Follow RRSC safety procedures and site supervisor instructions.
- Maintain a safe, welcoming, and organized learning environment.
- Follow all procedures and guidelines for working with children.
- Use books, educational materials, and program supplies appropriately.
- Maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of students and families.
- Report safety concerns, behavioral concerns, or incidents to the RRSC site supervisor promptly.

Qualifications

- Must be at least 14 years of age.
- Must pass a background check.
- English language comprehension.
- Effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills.
- Ability to problem solve and adapt to individual student needs.
- Ability to work independently while following lesson guides and program procedures.
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team.
- Effective interpersonal and relationship-building skills.
- Patience, enthusiasm, and interest in working with young children.
- No previous Story Pals or Dialogic Reading training is required.

Time Commitment

- Volunteers are expected to attend Story Pals sessions twice a week for at least 8 weeks.
- Sessions are held during morning or afternoon hours in Story County.
- Volunteers should arrive on time and be prepared for each scheduled session.
- Specific schedules and locations will be determined based on program needs and volunteer availability.

Volunteer Expectations

- Treat students, families, volunteers, site supervisors, and RRSC staff with respect and professionalism.
- Create a welcoming, encouraging, creative, and supportive environment for students.
- Follow RRSC policies, procedures, lesson guides, and site supervisor direction.
- Maintain student and family confidentiality.
- Be dependable and communicate promptly about scheduling conflicts or absences.
- Come prepared and engaged for each volunteer session.
- Encourage students and celebrate their progress while maintaining appropriate boundaries.
- Ask questions and seek guidance from the site supervisor when needed.
- Complete all required screening and onboarding requirements before volunteering.

Impact

Story Pals volunteers provide children with individualized opportunities to practice language and literacy skills in a supportive environment. Through shared reading, conversation, and positive relationships, volunteers help children build confidence and engagement with reading while strengthening skills that support their continued learning and development.