

BE A READING MENTOR

Serving as a reading mentor is one of the ways you can help support RIF's mission and get involved with the students in your community. We can't understate the important role a caring adult has in a child's life, modeling good reading behavior and spending time with children and inspiring them to read. Whether you plan to volunteer as a classroom guest reader, a one-on-one reading buddy, or assist children in book selection during a RIF event, here are some useful tips:

- **Encourage choice:** If reading one-on-one, let the child choose the type of book or reading material to read during your time together. Choice is a key motivator in getting children to read.
- **Know your audience:** It is important to be familiar with the reading level and interests of the child or group you are reading with. This will help engage the child or group in conversation and show that you are taking the time to get to know what is important to them.
- **Model good reading habits:** If reading aloud, use different voices to represent characters, ask questions as you read to guide student thinking, and point out illustrations and details that may add to the story.
- **Make reading fun:** Turn reading in to a game of "popcorn." Listen to the child read out loud to you and then read out loud to the child, taking turns going back and forth.
- **Ask questions:** Questions that make a child think about the book or material read are best. Some examples of questions that encourage deeper thinking skills might be:
 - *Which character would you like to meet in real life and why?*
 - *How would you change the ending of the story?*
 - *If you could talk to the author, what would you ask?*

- *What would be another possible title for this book?*
- *What do you think the author wanted you to remember after reading this book?*
- **Strategies are key:** Many books offer new and sometimes difficult words. Encourage fix-up strategies to help a child figure out unknown words.
 - *Look at the pictures, they usually provide clues about what the word might be.*
 - *Get your mouth ready and try and sound it out.*
 - *Read on past the unknown word and look for clues within the rest of the sentence.*
 - *Look for word chunks – smaller words within a larger word.*
 - *Reread the sentence again, try and substitute another word and see if it works.*
 - *Always ask “Does that make sense?”*
- **Check out supporting materials on Literacy Central:** Visit RIF’s online destination for teachers, parents and literacy volunteers like yourself to get thousands of free digital resources tied directly to the books children love to read and teachers turn to everyday. Incorporate these resources when working with the children you mentor. Visit Literacy Central at RIF.org/literacy-central.