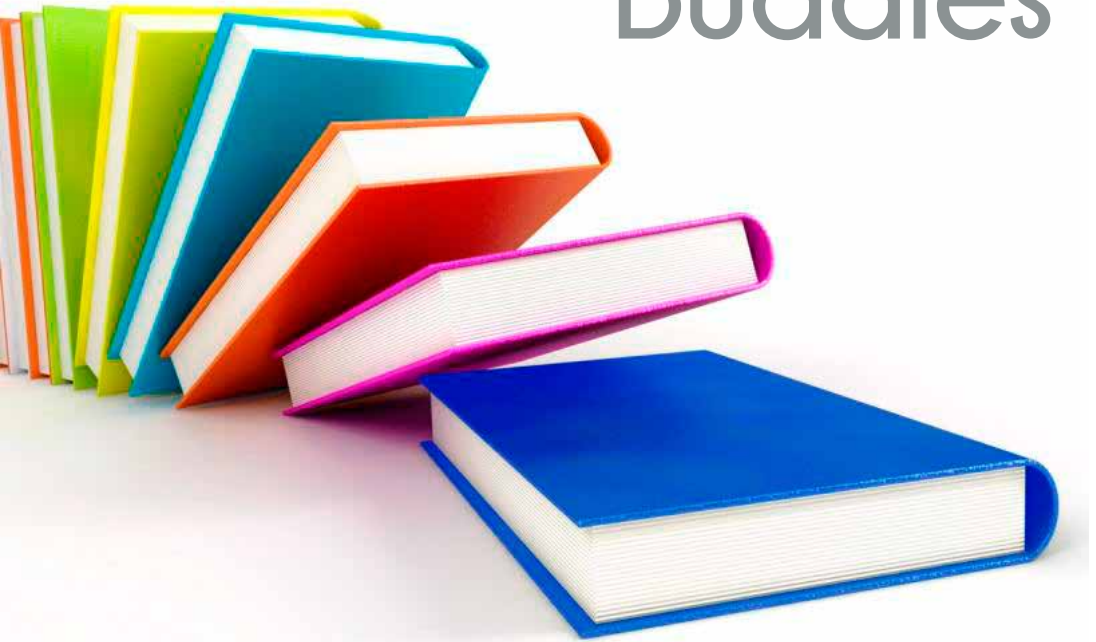


mates

mentor assist target engage skills

Reading Buddies



Developed by the Wimmera
Southern Mallee LLEN



Overview

What is MATES Reading Buddies?

Reading Buddies is a program that provides volunteer adults to listen to students from Prep to Grade 6 read at the child's school. Volunteers listen to children read one-on-one on a regular basis. Depending on the age of the children, volunteers may listen to anything from 5-10 students within a 45-60 minute time slot.

Why do we need reading buddies?

The Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN recognises the important role that literacy plays in a young person's education. We understand that if a young person struggles to master basic reading skills, they are at a much greater risk of disengaging from school when they reach secondary college.

The MATES Reading Buddies program has been developed to support students and primary schools in the Wimmera Southern Mallee region.

How do schools get involved?

If a school wants to implement MATES Reading Buddies the process is simple. The LLEN will source and recruit volunteers from your town or area with a passion for reading and helping young people.

These volunteers then dedicate a small amount of time out of their week to come into a local primary school and listen to a young person read. Their role is to simply listen, encourage, praise and assist children's literacy by providing them with an extra opportunity to read with an adult. Volunteers can come in for one day a week or five days a week, it's up to them, but we do encourage that they commit for at least the length of the school term.

We provide all volunteers with a short induction which includes tips and strategies for reading with a young person and covers basic issues of confidentiality. We can also assist volunteers with getting a Working with Children's Check if required by the school.

It is up to the school to determine when volunteers read with students. Some schools do all reading and literacy in the morning so volunteers come for 45-60 minutes in the morning. Other schools are happy for volunteers to come whenever they are able. Ideally if the school has a set time it can assist with making organisation of volunteers, staff and students a bit simpler. Once the school is ready and volunteers are ready then the program can begin.

How much does it cost?

Reading Buddies is cost free, easy to implement and has the added bonus of being a great opportunity for local communities to connect in with their local primary school.

Who can be a reading buddy?

Anyone can be a reading buddy. Age is no barrier. We encourage secondary college students to be reading buddies as part of school volunteering programs and also tertiary students who may use Reading Buddies as part of their studies in teaching or child care. We welcome retirees, stay at home parents, working professionals and anybody who loves and values reading.

What training is provided?

The LLEN provides a brief one hour induction that covers some of the basic tips and strategies for reading with a young person that can be found in this booklet. It also covers some issues of confidentiality and contact details for volunteers wanting further support. The LLEN can also assist with the application for a Working with Children check.

What time commitment is expected?

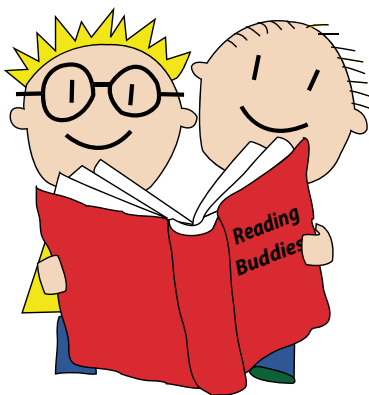
Most schools run Reading Buddies five days a week. Generally a session of listening to students will last for approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. Volunteers can come in for one morning a week or up to five mornings a week but a regular commitment is required. We also require that within reasonable circumstances the volunteer would commit for at least the entire length of a school term.

At which schools can I volunteer?

We want reading buddies in every primary school and P12 college in the Wimmera! If you live in a town where Reading Buddies is not running then we will do our best to make it happen in your local primary school.

How to volunteer

For further details please contact
Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN
03 5381 0122
info@llen.com.au
<http://www.llen.com.au/reading-buddies>



The remainder of this booklet has a variety of tips and strategies volunteers can use when reading with a young student.

WHAT I IF TOLD YOU



You read the top line
WRONG!

Making Mistakes

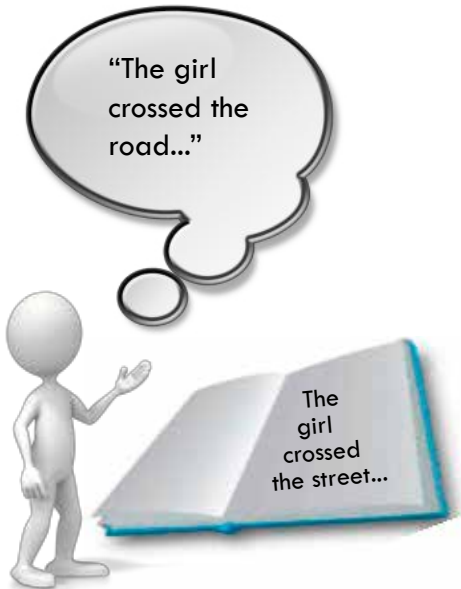
Reading is essentially about the student deriving meaning from the text. It is not just about understanding the sound and shape of letters but how they go together to form a meaningful word or sentence. Therefore it is very important to deal with mistakes correctly.



Getting stuck

If the student gets stuck, count to 10 before intervening. This is where the Pause, Prompt and Praise method should be used. (See page 6 for more details). If the student looks to you for help, keep looking at the book.

When a mistake makes sense



Like the illustration provided, sometimes a student may make an error that still makes sense—in this case reading 'road' instead of 'street'. The error does not impact on the meaning of the story and, therefore, for the sake of the student's flow and confidence, it is best to let them keep reading.

Only help the student if they can't keep reading, or if they've lost the meaning and their reading is not making sense.

Pause, Prompt... Praise

At a glance

You may have already heard of Pause, Prompt, Praise or the 3Ps as it is sometimes called.

These three catchy words describe a simple technique that, used well, will support the student to practise his/her reading and to develop more reading confidence.

The principle of Pausing - then Prompting - and then Praising is very useful to remember and apply anytime the student is reading aloud to you.

When the student encounters words that are difficult for them to read, the 3Ps technique will allow him/her the opportunity to have another go, self-correct, or if needed, find out (be told) what the problem word is.

Introduction

Two important things to remember from the outset when using the 3Ps:

- The goal of reading is to understand or make sense of what is read, so always keep this in mind when you are prompting and praising the student.
- Try to ensure that you are relaxed, interested and supportive, which in turn, will help the student feel OK when they make mistakes or just can't work out a word and need help to be told what it is.

This technique works best when the student is reading a text that is well matched to their reading level. Before reading, make sure that you are both comfortable and can clearly see the text that the student is

Pause...

Once the student starts reading aloud carefully follow the text as they read. If (or when) the student comes to a word they don't know try not to jump in straight away with the correct word. Wait and give the student time to work out the word.

In the first instance 'pausing' creates an opportunity for the student to try and self-correct or work out the word for him/herself.

Prompt...

If the student successfully supplies the word that they stumbled over, it's a good idea to suggest that they go back to the start of the sentence (to recapture the meaning) before reading on.

If they can not independently work out the word then some prompts may be needed. Say things like:

- *Try reading on for a sentence or two, miss out the difficult word, and see if that helps you.*
- *Look at the sound the word starts with. Does that help?*
- *Look at the pictures and see if they give you a clue.*
- *Go back to the beginning and re-read it and see if that helps.*

If prompts like these do not work then this is the point you simply tell the student the word. After a short time 'prompting' say:

'Would you like me to help you?' or 'How about I tell you the word?'

Praise...

The easiest and most important part is praising the student whenever you feel it appropriate during the reading process.

As well as praising their effort it is good to be specific in your encouragement. For example you might say:

- *Well done, I thought it was brilliant the way that you went back, re-read the sentence from the beginning and worked out the word you were having trouble with.*
- *That was great reading today, I know I had to tell you*
- *a few words but you also worked out some pretty tricky ones for yourself. Well done!*
- *You have been practising haven't you? You are getting better and better all the time.*

You can never praise too much, but the more specific it is to the actual achievements and progress of the student, the more likely it is to be meaningful for them.

The Five Finger Rule

It is counter-productive for a student to be reading a book that is beyond their ability. Constant mistakes can shake their confidence.

The following is a useful tool for helping determine if the book they are reading is too hard. As you read along or listen you can quietly count errors in your head and, if there are too many, then suggesting a book change is a good idea.



The Five Finger Rule

Find a 'just right' book with the **Five Finger Rule!**



Choose a book and read the first page or two



Put one finger up for every word you don't know



If five of your fingers go up while reading, chose another book



If only two, or three fingers go up, you've found a 'just right' book.

Happy Reading

About the WSMLLEN

Our mission

To create partnerships between industry, education and the community that develop positive futures for our young people.

What does the WSMLLEN do?

Some of the primary functions of the Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN are to:

- develop partnerships between schools, the community, parents and families, and training providers to improve education, training and employment outcomes for local young people and to close the gap in education, training and employment outcomes for indigenous young people
- take a strategic approach to developing pathways for local young people, especially those at risk of dropping out of education
- create partnerships to develop and promote initiatives and services with a focus on addressing disadvantage

Where is the WSMLLEN located?

The WSMLLEN incorporates the City of Horsham and the Shires of Yarriambiack, Hindmarsh and West Wimmera. There are some 36,500 people residing in the region with 11 Secondary Colleges, 24 Primary Schools, one TAFE campus and three Registered Training Organisations. The WSMLLEN's office is located in the Mallee Building at Federation University, 289 Baillie St Horsham.



For more information go to:

www.llen.com.au

or phone 03 5381 0122

Information in this booklet has been compiled by the Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN and sourced from:



Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development



Education
& Training



Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development