

Guest Readers

FROM THE RIF MOTIVATIONAL ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK

Since its founding, RIF has emphasized the importance of motivation in becoming a reader. Show young readers how much fun reading can be with special guest readers and these RIF volunteer field-tested activity ideas!

TIPS FOR GUEST READERS

- Choose a story that can be completed in one sitting. Be sure to read the book in advance to develop a feel for the book's language and pace.
- Set the stage by asking a question that will engage children in the story they are about to hear. It can be a question based on the title of the book, the book cover, or some hint about what may happen in the story that will help younger children anticipate what is about to come.
- Use showmanship to get the story across. Modulate your voice as you move from character to character or perform a series of pantomimes to convey the story.
- Time most read-alouds for 15-20 minutes (10 minutes for preschoolers). Anything longer and the children could get restless.
- Do not rush through the story, but stop now and then to ask questions, to explain the meaning of an event, or to let children look at the pictures.
- Use props, costumes, or music to make the story come alive. Some volunteers wear crazy hats or dress up as storybook characters. At one RIF program, a father came as a "mystery reader"-wearing a cape and mask-and read a mystery book. At another, a principal came in the garb of Long John Silver and read excerpts from *Treasure Island*.
- Make your reading interactive by holding up a picture book and asking children to explain what is happening or predict what is going to happen. To get children really involved, choose a story in which they can echo a phrase or chime in on a refrain, like in Esphyr Slobodkin's *Caps for Sale*.
- Kids need a sense of closure, so be sure to leave plenty of time to finish the story.

GUEST READER ACTIVITIES

Celebrity Autograph Book

When you've extended invitations to local celebrities to read, add to the excitement of the day with an autograph book. At one RIF program, children made simple autograph books (out of file cards and construction paper) and asked guest readers for signatures. The students then discussed what makes a person a celebrity (special talent), decided they themselves were all celebrities, and then exchanged signatures.

Cheerleaders, Cheer-readers

Invite the middle or high school cheerleading squad in to lead reading cheers at a reading rally! Then have cheer-readers buddy up and read aloud with small groups of young children before helping them come up with their own cheers for reading.

