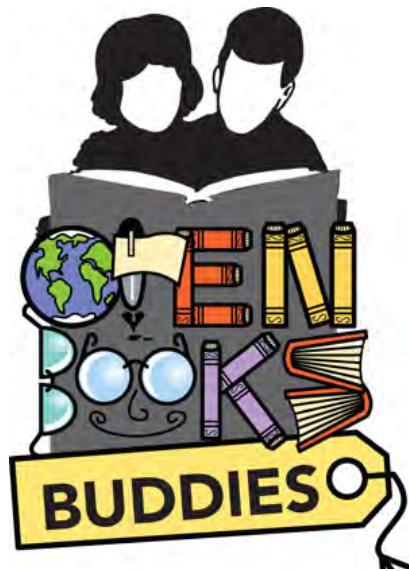




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The mission of **Open Books Buddies** is to help young students become fluent, confident, enthusiastic readers who can comprehend and discuss what they read; to develop a supportive, mentoring relationship between student reader and adult volunteer; and to foster a lifelong love of reading in children and adults. With those goals in mind, we offer these tips for our Big Buddy volunteers.

If you have teaching or tutoring experience and would like to offer more suggestions, we're all ears! Let us know at:
literacy@open-books.org

Special thanks to our partners at Chicago HOPES and WITS (Working In The Schools) for sharing some of the information below.

[10 Things To Do During An Open Books Buddies Session](#)

1. Greet your Little Buddy with a big smile and a high five, and allow for a little conversation before you start reading. Ask how your buddy is doing and how things are going in class and at home.* Ask about the books your buddy has been reading since you last met. (*NOTE: If a child tells you something of concern, please speak with the Open Books site leader and/or the child's teacher.)
2. After choosing a book with your buddy, read the title, author, and illustrator together. If there is information on the back of the book or dust jacket, bring the author to life with a short biography. ("Ooh, imagine you are an author like Stan and Jan Berenstain someday! What kind of books will you write? What will your biography say?")

3. Ask your student what they think the story might be about and discuss what clues gave him or her that idea.
4. Encourage your student to be expressive when reading and change voices for different characters. Draw attention to exclamation, question, and quotation marks. Go ahead and be silly!
5. Let your student look at the illustrations and remind him or her to take hints from the pictures when struggling with unknown words or concepts. (For example: "Hmmm, a long word that starts with E. Do you see anything in the picture that it might be?" "Do you see any clues for what might happen next? . . . OK, let's turn the page and find out if you're right!")
6. If you take a turn reading, go slowly enough for the child to build mental pictures of the story -- but make sure to read at a fluent pace, not the child's pace. Your Little Buddy needs to hear what successful reading sounds like!
7. Stop reading a book and pick a new one if you feel it is too difficult for your Little Buddy, especially if he is getting frustrated. You can say, "Does this seem more like a 4th grade book to you? Let's save it for another day after we've practiced more!" That way you demonstrate that reading takes practice while also giving the child a challenge to look forward to.
8. Ask questions that help your student connect the story with their own life or other books he or she has read. (For example: "Does this story remind you of anything that's happened to you?" "What characters from other books do these main characters remind you of? Tell me about them.")
9. Allow time for discussion after the story and encourage your child to talk about the book. (For example: "What would you have done if Brother Bear was teasing you?" "What would happen in your family if you didn't share like Franklin?") Try not to turn the discussions into quizzes about basic facts in the books. Instead discuss whether your Little Buddy's initial predictions came true, and why or why not.
10. Always end the session with lots of enthusiasm and high fives (or a little hug, if initiated by the student). Ask your Little Buddy what he has planned for the coming week and encourage reading at home. ("Next week I'm going to ask you about what you've been reading, so make sure you have some good books to tell me about!") If your student says he or she has no books at home, please feel free to bring some new or used books, if you have any extras at home.