

Book Buddies: A Yearlong Adventure

This activity provides excellent opportunities to accommodate the needs of your at-risk students by carefully choosing who you pair children with and guiding the upper elementary students so that they will be meeting the needs of their “buddy.”

At the beginning of the year, a lower elementary (1st/2nd) and an upper elementary teacher pair up and plan activities that will benefit both grades and also target individual needs at the lower grade levels.

Take your time pairing a lower and upper elementary student and make sure you have strong upper elementary students with your struggling readers as well as your accelerated readers. You will find that this day becomes a special time that you and your students will look forward to!

Working With “Reading Buddies” and Making a Literature Log

1. You will be spending the first few months having the lower elementary students read to their buddies from reading folders, readers workshop bags or whatever vehicle you use for independent reading. The 4th/5th graders will keep a journal on their buddy that records the book they read, how fluently they read, and how well they answered re-telling questions(see attaché sheet). Teachers will guide and direct the students during sessions as well as prepping the upper elementary students before they meet their buddies. Sessions with buddies are usually 45 minutes to an hour, once a week or bi-monthly.

2. The next step involves going to the library and picking out an appropriate book for their buddies. With 1st graders, this shouldn't be done until second semester/early spring. Meet with buddies and have the younger buddies read their book to their partner to assure that it is at an appropriate level. Teachers should be circulating, listening and monitoring the book choices.

3. Now, the 4th/5th graders will begin to design a literature log that has a cover depicting their buddy's book with the author's name. Inside pages will include comprehension questions based on the MLPP retelling rubric:

Main idea/lesson learned

Main characters

Setting

Problem

Major events

Resolution

Put each concept on a separate page. Fourth/fifth graders can lay out pages as they wish as long as re-telling concepts are there.

4. Work on one page each time you meet with your buddies.

5. If you have time and would like a further extension, buddies can work on acting out the book and presenting it to the group.

“Buddies” Reading Fluency Checklist

Date _____

Book _____

Reading Fluency: Poor Good Excellent

Review your buddy’s literature log. Put a check next to the areas you feel are mastered (all elements were there) and circle the concepts that need work.

____ main idea/lesson learned

____ main characters

____ setting

____ problem

____ major events

____ resolution