**BASIC STEPS FOR CREATING A READING BUDDIES PROGRAM**

1. Start by finding your educator buddies! Work together to determine outcomes for both older and younger Buddies and decide how often Reading Buddies will meet. (Plan on having the program run weekly for at least 8-10 sessions.) Also buddy up with your school librarian for help in getting plenty of great read aloud titles, reserving library space, and to brainstorm ideas to keep reading pairs engaged.
2. Figure out whereyour Reading Buddies will meet. Consider classrooms or common spaces (library, gym, cafeteria, multipurpose room, auditorium) or plan to head outside to the playground or outdoor learning space.
3. Come up with a schedule for regular reading sessions but also consider dates on the calendar for Reading Buddies to do special activities together or work on projects. Your schedule should begin with dates for orientation and training for older students.
4. Provide read aloud tips, literacy training, and resources to help older students successfully interact with their younger Buddies. The social connections made between Buddies are key to motivating readers.
5. Make sure that younger students what to expect so they feel comfortable with their older, bigger Reading Buddy. Holding a class discussion about making friends may help younger Buddies feel more at ease when meeting their older Reading Buddies.
6. Pair up students based on the personalities, interests and abilities of both older and younger students. In some instances, you may need to try different student combinations or, if you have an uneven number of younger and older students, create a trio.
7. Launch your Reading Buddies program with a special kick off session, like at a Read Across America celebration!

**More Reading Buddies Resources**

* [Reading Buddies](https://www.edutopia.org/article/reading-buddies/) and [Developing Literacy Through Reading Buddies](https://www.edutopia.org/video/developing-literacy-through-reading-buddies/) from Edutopia
* [MARTHA SPEAKS Reading Buddies Program Guide](https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/msrb12.ela.rbprogguide/martha-speaks-reading-buddies-program-guide/) from PBS LearningMedia
* [The Other Buddy: How Partnership Programs Help Older Readers](https://choiceliteracy.com/article/the-other-buddy-how-partnership-programs-help-older-readers/) from Choice Literacy
* [Creating an Effective Book Buddies Program](https://www.shanahanonliteracy.com/blog/creating-an-effective-book-buddies-program-no-more-magical-thinking) from Shanahan on Literacy