Bookmaking with families

A Reading Celebration Guide

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**Hopa Mountain** is a Bozeman, Montana based nonprofit organization that invests in rural and tribal citizen leaders, adults and youth, who are improving education, ecological health, and economic development.

A growing body of research confirms that a strong early-learning home environment predicts children’s success as readers and students. Success in school strongly predicts good health and economic self-sufficiency in adulthood. With relevant information and resources, parents and caregivers across the economic spectrum can provide their children with the early experiences that lead to their children’s success.

Hopa Mountain’s *StoryMakers* program supports families of children with high-quality early learning resources and encouragement to shape home life for their children’s long-term success.

**Benefits of reading with children every day**

- **Reading together builds stronger relationships.** As children grow more independent, having a positive routine together will allow parents and children to slow down and connect with each other. A child that has a strong relationship with at least one adult is more likely to feel safe and confident, do better in school, and lead a healthy and happy adult life.

- **Reading together improves communication skills.** The contact children get with parents while reading allow children to feel more comfortable expressing their own feelings. This can help children communicate in healthy, productive ways.

- **Reading together promotes concentration and memory retention.** Reading aloud together, even after children learn to read alone, encourages children to concentrate on the story to remember what was read. These skills will serve children well both in and out of school.

- **Reading together encourages children to think critically.** As parents and children talk together about the characters’ actions and the plots of stories they are reading, children are learning how to apply logic and good judgment to their own lives.

- **Reading supports academic success.** Research shows that daily reading helps children build the foundational skills they need to excel in many aspects of school. Reading often and having access to books over the summer can also help a child retain the information learned throughout the school year.

- **Reading together fosters a lifetime love of reading.** Children who are exposed to regular reading view themselves as “readers” and see reading as a pleasurable activity rather than a chore.

- **Reading supports math and science learning.** Reading enables children to ask questions and investigate new math and science concepts.
Organizing a family reading celebration at your school or community center can be simple and fun. This guide contains everything you need to plan a successful event. It is designed to use a book-making activity to familiarize children and their parents while encouraging families to create rich early-learning home environments.

Two concepts will make this family reading celebration successful:

- **Breaking down the book’s parts** by introducing the different elements that make up the book allows children to get comfortable with books, which is an important pre-reading skill.

- **Modeling** storytelling for parents and introducing families to simple storytelling strategies allows them to use these tools to build literacy at home. Be sure to model reading books aloud during this event.

In this guide, you will find:

**Getting Started:** Materials and Books

**Schedule**
- Guide to Activity 1: Read Aloud & Model
- Guide to Activity 2: Bookmaking
- Guide to Activity 3: Book Sharing
- Guide to Activity 4: Food & Book Distribution

**Evaluation**

**Customizable Press Pack** (see separate document on website)
A Reading Celebration Guide

Bookmaking

Getting Started

Recommended Books
- *We Are In A Book* by Mo Willems
- *It’s a Little Book* by Lane Smith

Materials
- Book template
- Blank paper
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or string
- Markers
- Stickers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Old magazines
- Miscellaneous crafting supplies

Book Resources
You may choose to give away books during your event. Visit these websites to see if you qualify for books through their programs.
- **First Book** — A nonprofit providing new books at 50%-90% off retail price.  
  [www.firstbook.org](http://www.firstbook.org)
- **Scholastic Literacy Partnerships** — A program that supports literacy efforts of organizations nationwide.  
- **Book Drive** — Host a book drive in your community to gather gently used books to offer at your event.  
  Here are a few tips for a successful book drive:  
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Reading Celebration Schedule

Welcome
5 minutes
Welcome families, introduce yourself, and quickly review the event schedule.

Activity 1: Read Aloud & Model
15 minutes
Read aloud to families while you model asking questions and starting conversations. Then introduce the parts of a book, and demonstrate for families the steps to making a book.

Activity 2: Bookmaking
30 minutes
Parents and children will create books together.

Activity 3: Book sharing
15-30 minutes
Invite families to share their books with the group.

Activity 4: Meal & Book Distribution
25 minutes
Serve dinner or snacks, collect evaluations, and distribute books.

Wrap Up: Thank everybody for coming!
5 minutes
Encourage family reading at home.

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Guide to Activity 1: Read Aloud & Model
15 minutes

Activity 1: Read Aloud & Model
15 minutes

Before the Activity
- Prepare several examples of homemade books for examples.
- Gather a copy of *We Are In A Book* by Mo Willems

During the Activity
30 minutes

Parents and children will create books together.

Activity 3: Book sharing
15-30 minutes

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Activity 4: Meal & Book Distribution
25 minutes

Serve dinner or snacks, collect evaluations, and distribute books.

Wrap Up: Thank everybody for coming!
5 minutes

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