

Read to Your Dog!

And your siblings, cousins, stuffed animals, dolls, and other pets!

WHAT AND WHY: Reading to pets, stuffed animals, and others can help:

- Support students by providing easy non-judgmental reading partners;
- Helping students practice reading 'in their heads';
- Supporting students in showing concepts about print, such as pointing to each word as they read it;
- Developing confidence and belief that they are readers.

Read this article about students reading to dogs in pet shelters.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/children-read-aloud-to-dogs/2012/12/27/9cc2a34a-4c55-11e2-8758-b64a2997a921_story.html

WHO IS THIS FOR: Reading aloud supports fluency for all students. This can provide special support for:

- 1) Transitional readers: Reading to non-judgmental partners can help students use early strategies such as 'pattern + picture' to gain success.
- 2) Early conventional readers: Having students read aloud to different partners can help develop fluency and confidence.
- 3) Students who are nonspeaking: Reading to pets, etc can support students

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN:

What NOT to Do: Do NOT program the book into a communication device / app for the student to try to 'read' it from symbols. The goal of this activity is for students to look at the text and read it aloud or in their heads. Using an AAC device to read text can actually impede fluency.

Brown Bear Brown Bear	What do you see?	I see a	blue horse
yellow duck	purple cat	red bird	Looking at me

Encourage, Don't Force. Model reading aloud to partners such as pets, dolls, preschoolers, etc. Encourage students to take a turn reading. This is NOT about correct articulation; it is okay if students point to a word and make a sound to represent that word. This should be an enjoyable activity that supports students in learning how it feels to be a reader. This should not be something that students are required to do every day, but rather an opportunity, with a reading corner set up with stuffed animals and dolls. Fun programs are available such as "Tail Waggin' Tutors, a project from Therapy Dogs International.

