

Teacher's Handbook



Books on the Menu® is a Program Created by
Reading Is Fundamental® to Inspire Young People to Read and Learn



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Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. (RIF®) develops and delivers children's and family literacy programs that help prepare young children for reading and motivate older children to read. Through a national network of teachers, parents, and community volunteers, RIF programs provide books and other essential literacy resources to children at no cost to them or their families. RIF's highest priority is the nation's neediest children, from infancy to age 11.

Through a contract with the U.S. Department of Education, RIF provides federal matching funds to thousands of school and community-based organizations that sponsor RIF programs. RIF also receives private support from hundreds of corporations and foundations, thousands of local organizations and businesses, and countless individuals.

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Introduction

Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. (RIF®) is honored and excited to welcome you as a partner in the *Books on the Menu (BOTM)* program. *Books on the Menu* is a program in which your oldest elementary school students mentor your youngest elementary school students (their “bookmates”) in reading.

Through this themed initiative, children satisfy their craving for good books and stories that focus on food while building new friendships. The *BOTM* program seeks to increase reading motivation at two critical junctures: as young children are beginning to read, and at the stage where older children are expected to have achieved proficiency. *BOTM* presents upbeat, fun-to-do activities based on research into what best motivates children to read and to learn in a mentoring relationship.

In creating *BOTM*, RIF created this handbook as a guide to assist you in the decision-making, planning, and implementation of this program. If you need additional assistance in running this program, please call 1-(877)-RIF-READ/1-(877)-743-7323 or e-mail us at contactus@rif.org.

Thank you for providing vision, leadership and energy to this exciting and fun literacy program!

Books on the Menu Program Summary

In *BOTM*, students in the intermediate grades are recruited and trained to become reading mentors, or “bookmates,” to early elementary school students in the same school.

At the heart of the program are 24 scrumptious children’s books that have a common theme — food! Each title comes with its own menu of activities — ideas that “bookmates” can talk about and things they can do as they read and explore books together. Bookmates meet regularly at least once a week for approximately 30 minutes for “Read Togethers” — to read aloud and engage in discussion and activities centered on the 24 titles that make up the core *Books on the Menu* collection.

In preparation for the first Read Together, intermediate students receive orientation and training from their own teacher. They practice reading aloud, critique one another, and learn how to plan their reading sessions. During the training period, the primary teacher may invite the older children to observe as he or she models reading aloud to the younger students.

The primary teacher also explains the program to the younger children so that they will know what to expect, and offers guidance to older students about their younger buddies' skills and special interests or needs.

During the first Read Together, bookmates get acquainted, then read and talk about their first book. During the next session, they follow up with a story-related activity or project. Read Togethers continue to follow this cycle, with bookmates choosing books to read and planning things to talk about and do.

Throughout the program, older readers keep journals to reflect on their experiences reading with younger bookmates. The younger children may also draw and write in a journal. The journals, along with the program folders in which bookmates store their projects, can be used as portfolios for assessment.

Over the course of the program, bookmates attend two or more Book Feasts. During this special book distribution event, hungry readers are invited to help themselves to a new book that is theirs to keep.

BOTM can run indefinitely — but must run for at least 18 weeks.



Program Goals

The main goals of the program are to:

- Increase the amount of time children spend reading and talking about books;
- Promote helping relationships between older and younger children;
- Increase the confidence and self-esteem of older children as readers and mentors;
- Promote collegiality among upper grade and primary grade teachers; and
- Make reading a highly visible activity in the school.

Reading aloud to young children is an effective way to help them become readers. By listening to stories, a child's vocabulary increases. Also, the warm associations of reading with a caring older person motivate children to want to read themselves, and feel more confident about their reading skills.

Of course, not all children come to school with the same reading experiences. That's one reason Reading Is Fundamental has developed *Books on the Menu* — to help schools ensure that all their younger learners have plenty of book experiences and the support they need as they get ready to read.

But let's not overlook the benefits of *BOTM* to students in the intermediate grades as they take the lead in planning activities, reading aloud, and working with younger children during *BOTM*. Studies have shown that there is a sharp decline in reading for pleasure, and consequently reading achievement, among the least skillful readers when they reach the intermediate grades. And yet, this is precisely the stage at which children have an increasing need to use their skills. *BOTM* is designed to invigorate older readers at whatever level they may be reading. It gives them a chance to share, with someone younger, the kinds of books they once loved and an opportunity to choose and take charge — factors that will have a positive influence on their attitudes about reading and about themselves.

While the primary goal of *BOTM* is to encourage children to enjoy reading and spend more time with books, many other educational and social objectives, specific to each age group, are met along the way:

Younger children...

- Have regular opportunities to read and talk about books.
- Engage in activities that promote reading readiness, improve fluency, and deepen comprehension.
- Enjoy personal attention from an older schoolmate.
- Regard older readers as educational role-models — kids who have been through kindergarten or first grade and have succeeded.
- Feel more confident and motivated about learning to read.
- Begin to think of themselves as readers.
- Develop a positive attitude about books and reading, and turn more often to books for enjoyment.
- Have access to high quality children's literature and opportunities for book ownership.

Older readers...

- Have opportunities outside of instruction to read and talk about books.
- Take responsibility for planning and leading activities.
- Gain self-esteem by serving as educational role models, earning the respect and affection of younger children.
- Experience the satisfaction of helping others.
- Reflect critically on literature they have read over the years, discerning themes and patterns.
- Discover that they are more knowledgeable about books than they may have thought, increasing their confidence as readers.
- Rediscover reading as a source of personal enjoyment.
- Have access to high quality children's literature, and opportunities for book ownership.

And there are built-in benefits for your school community:

- *BOTM* encourages across-grade friendships that foster a spirit of community and a shared responsibility.
- It promotes collegiality between intermediate and primary teachers,

who work closely to set the program in motion.

- Teachers often enjoy cultivating relationships with a group of children they do not currently teach and take pleasure in reconnecting with former students.
- *BOTM* makes reading highly visible in the school.

Program Components

- **Coordinator Training:** Dependent on funding, RIF provides training to program coordinators and selected teachers. Training topics include choosing good children's books, managing the RIF book ordering process, planning the Read Together and Book Feast events, and reporting on the program's achievements.
- **Student Training:** You and your colleagues will provide orientation and training to both older and younger bookmates, preparing them to Read Together and build new friendships around a shared love of books. RIF has found that this training is crucial to the success of your program.
- **Read Togethers:** During the course of the *BOTM* program, bookmates meet regularly to read together and do fun, hands-on activities.
- **Book Feasts:** During the program, all participating children select books for ownership from among those ordered by the program coordinator and book selection committee and participate in a motivational activity (see section six for some ideas). These festive book distribution events may include a meal, a guest read-aloud, or other activities related to reading and food.



Who's Involved?

***BOTM* will not be successful unless all the participants listed below are involved and understand their roles. It is also crucial to the success of the program that the program coordinator and the classroom teachers work collaboratively throughout the project year. In addition, some of their roles will overlap.**

- **Program Coordinators:** Program coordinators manage the program by maintaining contact with RIF, coordinating the book selection committee(s) and book ordering process, planning Read Togethers and book events, and managing family and community outreach, with the help of teachers, parents, volunteers and school administrators.
- **Classroom Teachers:** Classroom teachers work together to encourage and excite the participating students, plan Read Togethers and book events, and serve on the book selection committee. They also train the older bookmates and prepare the younger children to participate in the program.
- **Book Selection Committee:** This committee, made up of at least three people, will meet early in the program year to select the books with the program coordinator. The committee should keep in mind that they are to select books that the children will want to read for fun. The selected books may not be textbooks or basal readers.
- **Children:** The older bookmates practice reading aloud, critique one another, learn techniques to share books with their younger bookmates, and plan their reading sessions. They also keep journals to reflect on their experiences reading with younger bookmates. The younger bookmates meet with their older bookmates, take part in events, and do their own version of journal-keeping, either through writing or by drawing pictures. Both ages will attend at least two Book Feasts where they will choose and keep books for ownership.
- **Volunteers:** Other school staff members and community volunteers can help, too. They may serve as guest readers, book sorters, event planners, or donate goods or services for the *BOTM* events.
- **Parents:** Parents work with school personnel and volunteers to support the program by making reading a habit at home, visiting the library with their child, and taking part in *BOTM* planning and activities. They may want to help plan motivational activities and be actively involved with the Book Feasts.

Program Materials

- **The Teacher’s Handbook:** This handbook assists you in setting up a *BOTM* program. It includes activities, reproducibles, guidance for training older students to become effective bookmates, tips for organizing events, information on selecting books, and ideas for assessing the program.
- **The Bookmate Planner:** Older bookmates receive this planner, which introduces them to the program and explains their roles, provides read-aloud tips and strategies, gives ideas for planning Read Together, walks them through a typical Read Together and offers ways to build a friendship with their younger bookmate. The planner also includes blank journal pages for recording their experiences as bookmates.
- **Classroom Collections:** Programs can acquire collections of food-themed titles, known as the *BOTM* collection, for use during the program’s Read Together.
- **Books for Ownership:** Each participating child selects free books to keep during *BOTM* Book Distribution Feasts.
- **Books on the Menu Items (optional and dependent on funding):** *BOTM* t-shirts for participating children help to establish enthusiasm around the program and identify the children as part of a special initiative. *BOTM* totebags keep the lending library books safe and bookplates identify the books children choose to keep as their own! Bookplates help children take ownership over the books they receive at the book distributions. (If you are a locally funded program and have funds available, please contact your RIF program specialist to purchase these items.)

Books

One of the main goals of this program is to increase the amount of time children spend reading and talking about books. To accomplish this goal, there will be at least two ways in which children will encounter books in this program. At various intervals of the program, your site will have a book distribution or Book Feast in which each participating child may choose a book to keep at no cost to him or his family. To aid in the Read Togethers, each classroom will have a collection of food-themed books to work up the bookmates' appetite for reading! Also throughout this program, bookmates will meet regularly to read and talk about books during Read Togethers.

Selecting Books

One of the joys and challenges of running a RIF program is selecting books for children to read and enjoy. Choosing good books is no easy matter, when you consider that more than 4,000 new books for children are published in this country each year, not to mention the tens of thousands of books already in print.

RIF recommends a process that will help your site get the books for your site while following the program's guidelines.

Book Selection Committee:

- Most importantly, responsibility for selecting books rests with your **book selection committee**, which must have at least three members.
- The book selection committee should reflect the diversity of your program's participants as much as possible. **It is the coordinator's responsibility to make sure that this committee is formed and meets early in the program year.**

Note: Since you are serving two different age groups, you must take this into consideration when forming your committee and when meeting with the members. For example, if your site is serving 1st and 5th graders, it would be helpful to have at least one 5th grade teacher and one 1st grade teacher on the committee. These teachers are around these children and are familiar with what they want to read and will have good ideas on what should be ordered.

- The committee should keep in mind that they are to select books that the children will want to read for fun. The selected books may not be textbooks or basal readers.

- The committee should be aware that the children must be able to choose from a variety of titles, in both subject matter and reading level.
- For more information about the selection committee and great book selection, please consult the *RIF Handbook*.

For *Books on the Menu*, you will be ordering books for two different purposes:

1. Books for Distribution at the Book Feasts
2. Classroom Collections, featuring books with food themes to be used during the weekly Read Togethers.

Choosing Books for Distribution at the Book Feasts

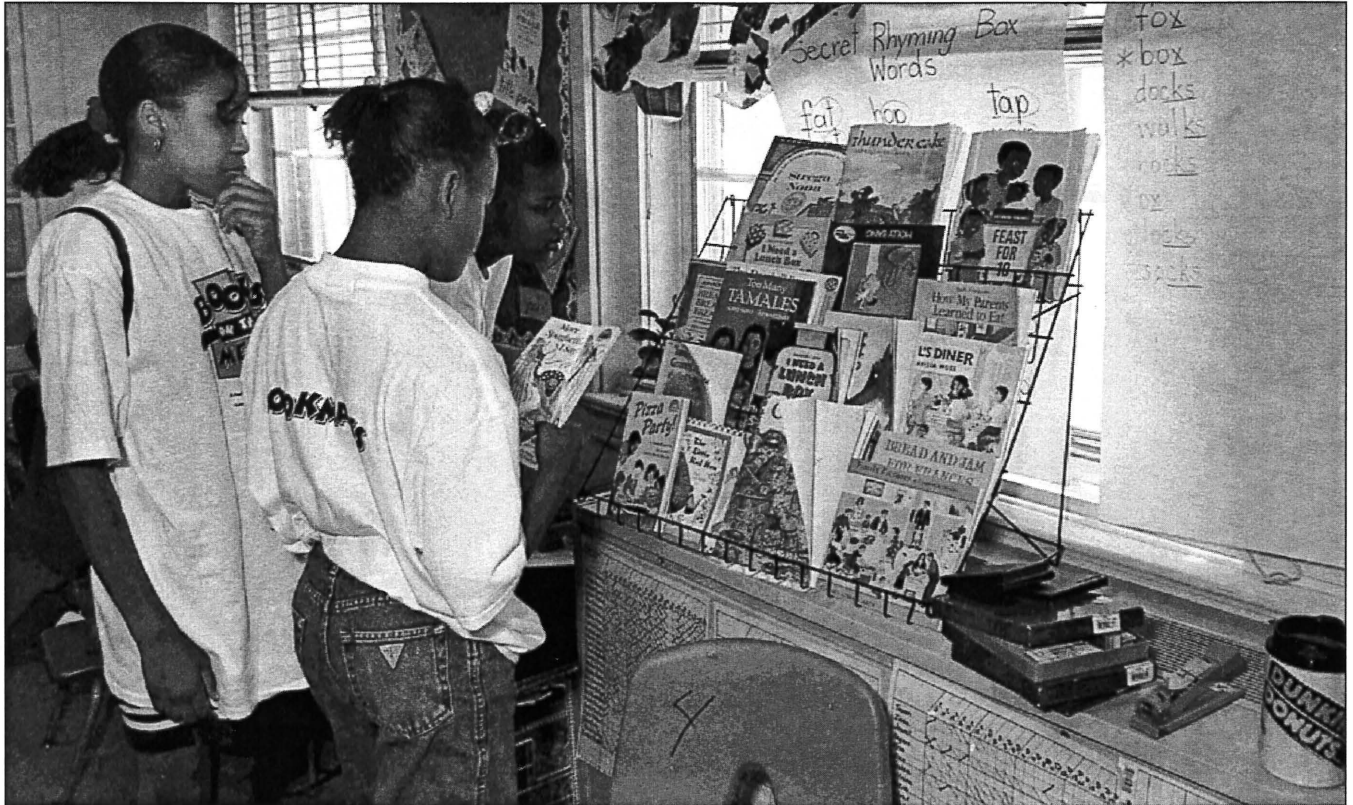
Throughout the project year, you will give children the opportunity to choose books at no cost to them or their families. You want to make sure that you order these books far in advance for your book distribution feast and that you have a 10% cushion. Please work with your book selection committee to make final decisions on your books.

When choosing the books for distribution, make sure that the books reflect the children's various interests, backgrounds, religions, etc. The books provided at the distribution are intended to encourage reading for fun. You want the children to arrive at the book distribution excited about the wide selection. If you are a new program or are a new coordinator, you might not want to order the books for the entire program year at the beginning. Buy enough books for the first distribution and see how the children react to the book selections. Based on that event, meet with your committee to determine your book order for the next distribution.

Choosing *BOTM* Collections

As mentioned previously, the *Books on the Menu* program is based on a collection of 24 books plus a list of alternate titles. When the bookmates meet together, they will need books to share during their Read-Together time. One of the first things you must do is purchase your classroom collections, since most book orders take 4-6 weeks and the children will need them to make their Read Togethers a success.

The following list of 24 thematic titles comprise the core collection. If you are running *Books on the Menu* for the first time it is encouraged that you order the core *Books on the Menu* collection. As you will see throughout this handbook, each of the 24 core books, as well as four alternate titles in the collection, have activity ideas and Menu Planners to assist you and your students.



If you have been running this program for years or find that one of the core 24 books is out of print or no longer available, you are able to choose from the list of additional/alternate book titles. This additional/alternate titles list may also serve as a substitute list when working with your book supplier on back-order problems. The list of the core 24-book collection appears with annotations in the Resources section at the back of this Handbook.

If there are a few books that your book selection committee wants to order for the classroom collections that do not appear on either of these lists, please make sure that they have a food theme and are within the appropriate reading levels. We do, however, highly recommend that you either purchase the core 24-book collection listed below or pick books from the additional/alternate titles list.

You might be wondering, how many books do I need to order for the classroom collection? Make sure that you have at least 24 books per classroom or per 25-30 children. That way there will be enough choice for each bookmate pair when they meet for their Read Together time.

Books on the Menu Core Collection

1. *Bread and Jam for Frances* by Russell Hoban
2. *Bread Bread Bread* by Ann Morris
3. *Chicken Little* by Steven Kellogg
4. *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* by Judi Barrett
5. *The Doorbell Rang* by Pat Hutchins
6. *Everybody Cooks Rice* by Norah Dooley
7. *Family Pictures (Cuadros de Familia)* by Carmen Lomas Garza
8. *Feast for Ten* by Cathryn Falwell
9. *Gregory, the Terrible Eater* by Mitchell Sharmat
10. *How My Parents Learned to Eat* by Ina Friedman
11. *How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World* by Marjorie Priceman
12. *I Need a Lunch Box* by Jeanette Caines
13. *The Little Red Hen* by Paul Galdone
14. *Mel's Diner* by Marissa Moss
15. *More Spaghetti, I Say!* by Rita Gelman
16. *Paper Crane* by Molly Bang
17. *Peanut Butter and Jelly: A Play Rhyme* by Nadine Westcott
18. *Pizza Party* by Grace Maccarone
19. *Sheep Out to Eat* by Nancy Shaw
20. *Stone Soup* by Tony Ross
21. *The Stories Julian Tells* by Ann Cameron
22. *Strega Nona* by Tomie dePaola
23. *Thunder Cake* by Patricia Polacco
24. *Too Many Tamales* by Gary Soto

Additional/Alternate Titles for *BOTM* Core Collection

These may be used as a substitute list when ordering your classroom collections. *Indicates those additional/alternate titles that have Menu Planners available in the Teacher's Handbook.

- *■ *Alphabet Soup* by Kate Banks,
- *Chato's Kitchen* by Gary Soto
- *Chicken Soup with Rice* by Maurice Sendak
- *Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco
- *Cleversticks* by Bernard Ashley
- *Corn Is Maize: The Gift of the Indians* by Aliko
- *Curious George and the Pizza* by Margaret Rey and H.A. Rey
- *Curious George Goes to An Ice Cream Shop* by Margaret Rey and H.A. Rey
- *Daddy Makes the Best Spaghetti* by Anna Grossnickle Hines
- *Each Orange Had Eight Slices: A Counting Book* by Paul Giganti
- *Eating Fractions* by Bruce McMillan
- *Frog Goes to Dinner* by Mercer Mayer
- *The Giant Jam Sandwich* by John V. Lord
- *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss
- *If You Give A Mouse A Cookie* by Laura Numeroff
- *If You Give A Pig A Pancake* by Laura Numeroff
- *If You Give A Moose A Muffin* by Laura Numeroff,
- *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Pie* by Alison Jackson
- *In the Night Kitchen* by Maurice Sendak
- *■ *Jalapeño Bagels* by Natasha Wing
- *The Magic Porridge Pot* by Paul Galdone
- *One Hundred Hungry Ants* by Elinor J. Pinczes
- *Pancakes for Breakfast* by Tomie De Paola
- *Pancakes, Pancakes* by Eric Carle

- *Pass the Fritters, Critters* by Cheryl Chapman
- *Pickles to Pittsburgh: The Sequel to Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* by Judi Barrett
- *Sip, Slurp, Soup, Soup, Caldo, Caldo, Caldo* by Diane Gonzales Bertrand
- *Stone Soup* by Ann McGovern
- *Stop That Pickle!* by Peter Armour
- *Ten Apples Up on Top* by Dr. Seuss
- *This is the Bread I Baked for Ned* by Crescent Dragonwagon
- *Today Is Monday* by Eric Carle
- *Tony's Bread* by Tomie dePaola
- *The Tortilla Factory* by Gary Paulsen
- *■ *The Ugly Vegetables* by Grace Lin
- *■ *Walter the Baker* by Eric Carle
- *Warthogs in the Kitchen* by Pamela D. Edwards
- *Watch Out For The Chicken Feet In Your Soup* by Tomie dePaola
- *Yoko* by Rosemary Wells

How to Order Classroom Collections

There is a preset grouping of 24 food related books that make up the BOTM Core Collection. They range in reading level and cover a variety of topics.

*You may order from your supplier of choice and titles of choice, though collection books must have a food theme. There is also a listing of substitutions for the core collection. Menu Planners have been included in the handbook for 4 of these titles.

Books ON THE MENU

Book Order

Bookmates:
.....

Title of our next book:
.....

Activities we have planned:
.....

What will we need:
.....

How to Order Books for Distribution

The process of ordering books is largely a matter of careful logistics. Accurate records are particularly important: You should keep a record of every order you place, every payment you make, and every contact you have (oral or written) with book companies. As you will see from the following list, there are many details to arrange when ordering books, so we recommend that you begin well before a book distribution. **Allow six to eight weeks, for the books to arrive (typically book orders don't take that long to get to you, but it is better to be safe than sorry).**

To begin the book ordering process, consider these steps:

1. Clarify your budget before you order anything. Determine the number of books needed (for **each** distribution multiply the number of kids x 1.1). You need one book per child per distribution feast, plus a few extras (10 percent is usually sufficient).
2. Determine your average book cost (to get this average, divide your budget by how many books you plan to purchase). Make sure that your books are of high quality, so please make sure that you spend at least \$4 per book for distribution.
3. Review the profile of qualified book companies that you currently use or may choose to use.
4. Make sure your book selection committee members read catalogs and sample copies of books (if available). Remember that review copies are complimentary; examination copies are books you must pay for or return to the company after reviewing.
5. Decide whether you want to place separate orders for each distribution or at one time for the entire program year. Check the titles the committee wants to order and the number desired of each against the number, ages, and interests of the children your program serves.

6. You may want to order multiple copies of popular titles for the books for distribution. If you do so, be careful to avoid being stuck at the end of a distribution with too many copies of one title. The important thing is that you should always have a variety of books from which children may choose.
7. Fill out the order forms provided by the company.
8. Many publishers offer free books with your order. Do not count these books as part of your stock for distribution because they may not meet the needs of your children.
9. If you need the books by a certain date, say so on your order. Allow six to eight weeks for delivery. It is sometimes possible to go directly to a supplier's warehouse and pick up your order.
10. If some titles you order are out of stock, do you want the company to substitute similar titles that cost about the same? If yes, write "substitutions permitted" on your order. If some titles you order are out of stock, do you want the company to keep your request on file and send the books when they are available? If not, write "do not back-order" on your order form and provide an alternative list. Note that most companies automatically back-order unless you tell them *not* to.
11. If your books do not arrive within six weeks or so, get in touch with the company's customer support office.
12. When the books arrive, check titles and quantities against your order, the packing list in the boxes, and your invoice when it arrives.
13. Check the math on your invoice.

Setting Up Your Program

We suggest that a class of the oldest children in the school be paired with a class of the very youngest. While some second graders would undoubtedly benefit from *Books on the Menu*, the titles featured in the program are geared for younger children in content and would be most successfully used in kindergarten and first grade.

Likewise, while some middle elementary-grade readers (third, fourth graders) may be responsible and skilled enough to plan and carry out activities for a Read-Together, they have fewer books under their belts, and less perspective than fifth or sixth graders, who are better able to consider a younger child's needs and point of view. The oldest students, who are preparing to move on to middle school or junior high, are also more ready developmentally to "leave something behind" — making a gift of their own time and talents to a new crop of learners.

Time: How Much? When Do I Fit It In?

After two initial training sessions (note: training is explained in the next section) for older readers only, bookmates meet on a regular basis for Read-Togethers. We recommend one 30-minute session each week, for at least 18 weeks — always at the same time and place. The smoother the routine, the more successful the program.

BOTM may be scheduled inside another program slot, for example, Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) time/Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time or a regularly scheduled library visit. The library can serve as one of the reading sites.

In general, bookmates will spend two sessions with each selection: during the first, they'll read aloud and talk about the book; during the second, they'll do a book-related activity or project to extend their shared reading experience. Occasionally, too, bookmates will participate in a group "Book Talk" to share their literary insights and activities with other pairs.

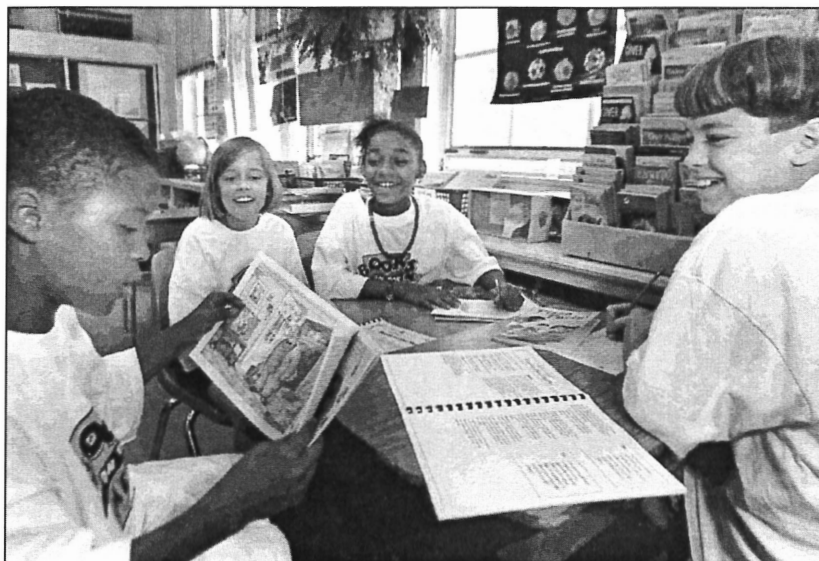
The program may be started at any point in the school year after receiving approval information from RIF. The maturity of the primary children or the skills and confidence levels of intermediate readers are factors to consider in deciding whether to begin the program in the fall or wait until later in the school year. But rest assured, there are enough titles and activities that bookmates can continue to read without repetitions for approximately 30 weeks.

Timeline

Before involving the children in this program, there are some things that need to take place:

- Make sure that every participating teacher receives a copy of this handbook.
- **Please read through this handbook.** It offers tips and suggestions for the coordinator and the participating teachers.
- Have a meeting with all participating teachers (coordinator arranges this). As a group you will want to discuss the program and determine each person's role and the program timeline.
- Gather book catalogs from various book suppliers mentioned in the RIF Book Supplier Profile.
- Identify who will serve on the book selection committee and meet as a committee.
- Order books for the classroom collections.
- Order books for at least the first Book Feast, if not all.

Once the steps listed above have taken place, you might want to follow the **sample** schedule listed below. Many of the items listed on the timeline have accompanying reproducibles that may be found in section nine of this handbook. Note: this program must run for at least for 18 weeks. It can, however, last longer than that amount of time.



WEEK #	PROGRAM ACTIVITY
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have older bookmates fill out the pre-implementation survey. • Introduce <i>BOTM</i> to the children and the school. • Older children observe the K-1 class. • Send home the reproducible parent letters.
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct two training sessions a few days apart for older bookmates. • First session is devoted to identifying and modeling good read-aloud techniques, having students critique each other, and having students read a book and menu for the next training session. • Second session is devoted to having students read aloud and critique progress, discussing the menus, figuring out how to use the Menu Planners, talking about the art of asking questions, and encouraging children to go with the flow. • Match bookmates.
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Read-Together. • Children get to know their bookmates through an “interview” process. • Reading of the first book takes place.
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Read-Together. • Bookmates complete an activity, choose the next title.
Weeks 5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat read togethers. • Invite parents and volunteers to your Book Feast coming up in week 7.
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Distribution Feast — Each participating child gets to pick a book of his or her choice to keep.
Weeks 8-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resume weekly Read Togethers followed by a Book Talk.
Week 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Distribution Feast - Each participating child gets to pick a book of his or her choice. • Have older bookmates fill out the post-implementation survey.

Matching Bookmates

As you read in the timeline, you might have noticed that matching bookmates is one of the first things that you and your colleagues need to do. There are several ways to match reading partners. Choose how you see fit, though here are a few suggestions.

- **Let teachers arrange the match.** Teachers confer before the children meet and match bookmates according to dispositions, special needs and skills.
- **Let older children choose their buddies.** Give kids a stake in their partnership from the beginning. Pass out a primary class list. Ask your students to identify younger children they know: “He rides my bus.” “She’s my sister’s friend.” “He lives on my street.” “She goes to my church.”
- **Let older children buddy up with younger children they know if they like; the rest can be assigned.** Interestingly, teachers have told us that children do not necessarily choose partners of the same gender or ethnic group.
- **Draw names out of two mixing bowls.** Random assignments means that no one was favored and all start with the luck of the draw.



Mismatches and Other Adjustments

From the very start, there may be adjustments you need to make. Be alert to inappropriate pairings and make new matches immediately. Mismatches may occur, for example, if both bookmates have short attention spans, or a bright and challenging primary student is paired with a weak intermediate reader.

Class sizes differ. Often intermediate classes are larger than primary classes. If this is the case, consider one of these solutions:

- Ask another primary teacher to identify a few students who might benefit from participating in the program.
- Have a few shy or reluctant older readers double up with a classmate. When their classmate is absent, they can be the “subs.”
- If the primary class is larger, let a few older readers have two younger reading buddies.
- Inevitably, some children are absent on the day of a Read-Together. It helps to have back-up activities for older bookmates who are missing partners. These might include:
 - Having them listen/work with another bookmate pair and participate with the small group as a reader
 - Cutting patterns for a bulletin board
 - Making decorations for a Book Feast
 - Tidying up the supplies area
 - Repairing torn pages in the books
 - Drafting a Menu Planner or an activity idea for a book in the collection

If a younger child is without his bookmate, invite him to join another pair of bookmates for the day.

Teacher Conferences

The more the older bookmate knows and understands his younger partner’s skills and needs, the better. Here are a couple of ways to introduce the younger bookmate to their reading mentor:

- Copy the form, “Teacher’s Comment Sheet” (reproducible found in section nine). This form is to be filled out by the primary teacher and may be reviewed with the older bookmate during a short conference with the primary teacher. The primary teacher should include as much detail about the younger bookmate as they feel is appropriate. For example, they might share that:

“Carlos is almost ready to read. He recognizes some sight words, like *the*, *and*, and *is*.”

“Tamika has a hard time sitting still. Let her color or move around while she listens.”

“Sarah has just learned to write her name. Encourage her to write more.”

- The primary teacher may request a conference with older students who are paired with children with special needs, for example, children who have learning disabilities, behavior problems, or who read well above grade level. The teacher may want to point out books that would be appropriate for these special-needs kids.



Categorizing the Collection Titles

In the chart below, the 24 books in the core *Books on the Menu* collection have been loosely categorized to help teachers match books with the skills of either the younger or older readers. In general, books are ranked from easy to challenging on the basis of words per page, length of text, and complexity of vocabulary or ideas.

An average fifth-grade reader may find that no book on the list is too challenging to read aloud, except for the occasional exotic vocabulary word or proper name. However, less able fifth-grade readers may feel more comfortable selecting books from the first half of the list. Emergent readers at the primary level can successfully tackle the first two categories with help from their older bookmates. Help bookmates choose wisely. You may want to copy the chart and post it in the intermediate classroom.

Easy-to-Read	<i>More Spaghetti, I Say</i> <i>Pizza Party</i>
Repetitive text, short sentences, fewer words on the page	<i>Bread, Bread, Bread</i> <i>The Doorbell Rang</i> <i>Feast for 10</i> <i>I Need a Lunch Box</i> <i>The Little Red Hen</i> <i>Peanut Butter and Jelly</i> <i>Sheep Out to Eat</i>
A slightly longer story, more words on the page	<i>Gregory the Terrible Eater</i> <i>Mel's Diner</i> <i>The Paper Crane</i> <i>How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World</i>
More complex ideas, longer story, harder words	<i>Chicken Little</i> <i>Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs</i> <i>How My Parents Learned to Eat</i> <i>Strega Nona</i> <i>Stone Soup</i> <i>Thunder Cake</i> <i>Too Many Tamales</i>
Most complex or lengthy text, more difficult words	<i>Bread and Jam for Frances</i> <i>Everybody Cooks Rice</i> <i>Family Pictures</i>
Chapter book	<i>The Stories Julian Tells</i>

Note: We have only outlined the level of difficulty with the books listed in the core *Books on the Menu* collection. If you do not order the core 24-book collection for your site, please keep these categories in mind. Make sure that you have a variety of titles that may be ranked from easy to challenging based on the words per page, length of text, and complexity of vocabulary or ideas so that you are serving all children and their needs.

Supplies

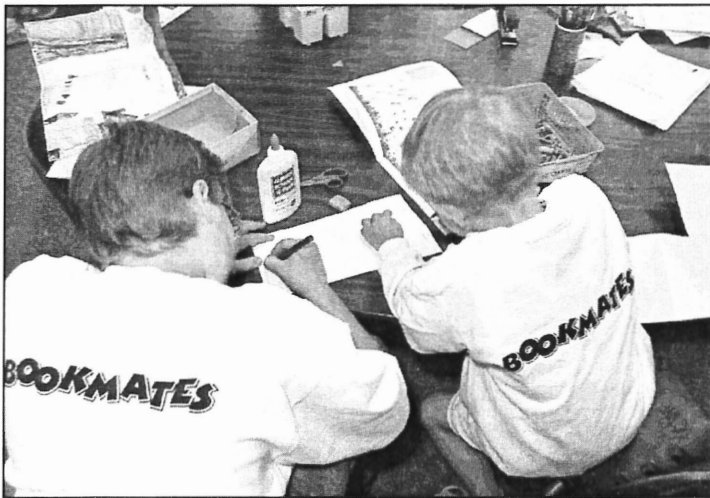
The reproducible send-home checklist (found in section nine) should include all the supplies children might need for activities suggested in the section “After we read” on the Menu Planners. Bookmates who come up with “another good idea” may need to bring supplies not mentioned on this reproducible.

Most supplies are already available in a primary classroom, so the primary teacher may want to coordinate the stocking and storing of materials for *BOTM*. A school cafeteria can provide place settings. Other materials, such as fabric scraps and chopsticks, can be brought from home or donated by local businesses or volunteers.

Many supplies on the list are for bookmaking, a frequently suggested activity. You might want to show the children some simple formats for homemade books (see page 27).

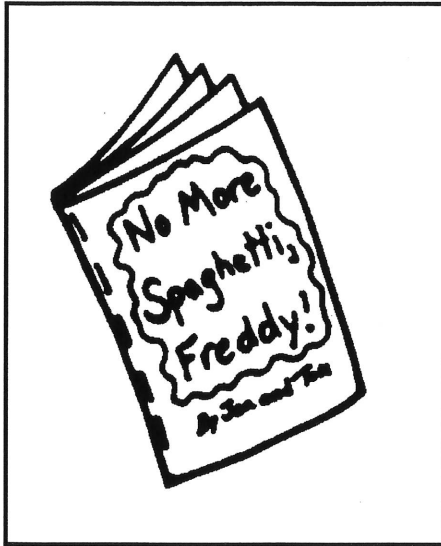
TIP

Keep all supplies in one place, whether in the primary or older classroom. Allow time for older readers to assemble materials before they set out to work with their bookmates

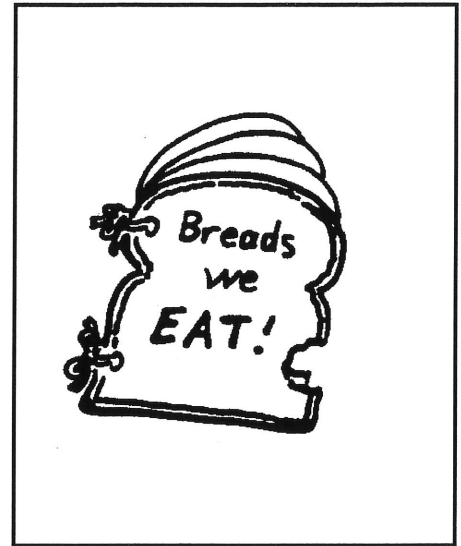


Book Bindery

Many of the choices on the Activity Menus include writing down stories your younger bookmate tells you. Here are examples of books you can make to hold these stories:



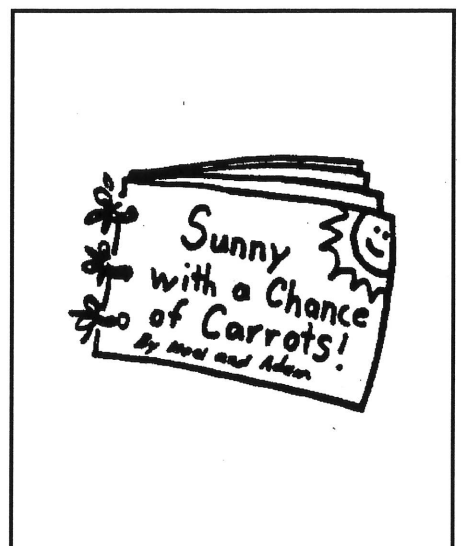
- *Side-staple folded sheets of paper inside a piece of colored paper.*



- *Use a pattern to cut pages for a shape book.*



- *Accordion-fold a long strip of paper. Paste on cardboard covers.*



- *Punch holes and use ribbons or rings to bind the pages.*

Collect menus from local restaurants that bookmates can use for comparison. They can also be the source of “data” for math problems. Keep track of the restaurants you and your students solicit, and make sure that only one request for a menu is made at any given restaurant.

You can also duplicate *BOTM*'s own “Kid’s Menu” and “Kid’s Menu Short Orders” activity pages (reproducibles found in section nine) keyed to them, and make them available to bookmates as time-fillers.

Keep canvas totes, paper bags, plastic bags, or shoeboxes in the supplies area so that older bookmates can gather materials and go.

Bookmate Displays

Let the rest of the school know about your program!

- Reserve a special bulletin board or wall in the school for *BOTM*. Take photos of bookmates reading together. Display them alongside copies of the completed form, “My Bookmate” (reproducible found in section nine). Give the display a catchy theme title, such as “We Have Big Appetites for Books!” or “Hungry for Books!”
- Display bookmate projects in both classrooms where children can see their own work. Ask for captions that give the bookmates’ names, a description of the project, and the title of the book it’s about.
- Create program badges or pendants that bookmates wear only on the days they have read together. Store these items in the classroom when they are not in use.
- Let parents of children in both classes know about the program. Send home versions of the “Parent Letter” (reproducible found in section nine), and put a note in the school newsletter. Invite family members to sit in on a Read-Together or attend a Book Feast.
- Inform the education editor of your local newspaper about your program activities. Invite a reporter to cover a Read-Together, or the food editor to “review” your Book Feast.
- Ask the reading coordinator or language arts supervisor from your school or district to attend a Read-Together.

Send-Homes

Regularly send families notices about your *BOTM* activities. The Program Helpers component (section nine) in this handbook include the following reproducible send-homes:

Reproducible Description

- Parent Letters introduce the program to both parents of the intermediate grades and the primary grades.
- “My Bookmate” helps introduce each child to their bookmate’s family.
- Invitation to a Book Feast easily allows you to invite each family to the book event.
- Supplies checklist can be sent home with all bookmates to help in the collection of supplies for the program.