



The Denver Public Library's Read Aloud Program

Thank you for your interest in the Denver Public Library's Read Aloud Program! This program impacts children in a meaningful and permanent way; by reading to children once a week, you will help to instill in them a lifelong love of books that will help them in school and beyond.

The Read Aloud Program asks volunteers to make a commitment to visit a classroom once a week, usually for 14 – 17 weeks depending on the school calendar. There is a fall session, which runs from September – December and a spring session, which runs from January–May. Visits typically last from fifteen minutes to a half-hour and take place during school hours. The books are carefully selected by Read Aloud staff and will be delivered to the Denver Public Library (DPL) branch most convenient to the volunteer. Over the course of the school year, children will hear approximately 140 books. We have substitute readers who can fill in should you need to be away during the session.

If you are interested, please send us a completed application and background check form. If accepted, there will be an obligatory training session for new volunteers. Please call us if you have any questions. Thank you for your interest in sharing the love of reading with children! We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

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Job Description for Read Aloud Program Volunteers Philosophy

A Read Aloud volunteer should feel comfortable promoting the major objectives of the Read Aloud Program, which are:

- To provide opportunities for children to experience the joy of reading and to develop a love of books.
- To promote the use of the Denver Public Library and its branches among preschoolers and their families.
- To develop pre-reading skills among Denver's children.

Responsibilities

As an ambassador of the Denver Public Library, a Read Aloud volunteer makes a commitment:

- To visit and read to a preschool classroom for approximately 30 minutes, once a week for fifteen weeks.
- To pick up the prepared Read Aloud book sets weekly at a convenient DPL branch.
- To prepare for storytime each week by practicing reading the books aloud.
- To read the stories and discuss the books with the children.
- To discuss books and share read-aloud techniques and prepared booklists with teachers.
- To add developmentally beneficial activities such as singing, rhymes or dancing into the storytime.
- To promote library services and library card registration to children and their families.
- To attend a yearly refresher training.

Time Required

Because the Read Aloud Program serves preschool classrooms, almost all volunteer opportunities are for weekdays between 9am and 4pm. The fifteen-week session includes the following time commitments:

- Training Session and Orientation 3 hours one time
- Picking up and returning book sets 10-20 minutes once a week
- Preparing for each storytime 30 minutes once a week
- Visiting and reading at classroom About 30 minutes once a week
- Travel time to and from classroom 15-20 minutes once a week

Qualifications

A Read Aloud volunteer should have:

- A love of books and of the library.
- A respect for children as unique, important individuals.
- A desire to help children learn about themselves and their world.
- A sensitivity to economically disadvantaged children and families.
- A library card in good standing (no overdue fines).
- Comfort with singing, sharing rhymes, and conversing with the students.
- Reliable mode of transportation.
- Must be 18 years old or older to be a volunteer.

Training and Benefits

A training and orientation program is offered before each **semester**. The program covers the benefits of being a Read Aloud Volunteer, the Denver Public Library's Read Aloud philosophy and techniques, volunteer expectations, and other logistics.

READ ALOUD: Frequently Asked Questions

Will I be reading at the library? The storytimes take place at various Head Start Centers and Early Childhood Education Centers in the Denver area. Reliable transportation is required.

May I choose the center where I read? Based on the time when you and the teacher are available, the program coordinator will match you with a center. We will try to place you near your home or office; however that may not always be possible. Most of the centers are about a 15 - 20 minute drive from downtown. To participate in this program, you must be willing to drive to any location in Denver.

May I choose my own books? The books are selected, for their excellence and importance in children's literature, by the Read Aloud staff. Each book set contains **4-5** stories and the books are carefully chosen to represent a variety of stories and styles.

Will I be teaching the children to read? The Read Aloud Program provides a weekly 30-minute storytime provided by you at the center. You will not be tutoring or teaching the children.

What ages are the children I will be reading to? The children are in preschool. They are 3-5 years old.

What is the program's philosophy? The program serves children from lower-income families who are attending Head Start and Early Childhood Education Centers. The purpose of the Read Aloud Program is to give these children the opportunity to experience the joy of reading, to develop a love of books, and to promote the use of the library.

Who does the Program serve? Educationally-at-risk children in the Denver area who attend government-supported agencies such as Head Start and Early Childhood Education Centers.

Where do I pick up my pack? You may select a Denver Public Library branch near your home or office or the Central branch and we will deliver your books there weekly.