

# Imagine the Fun

AT YOUR LIBRARY

## WINTER READING PROGRAM

In response to requests from our libraries to offer a winter reading program (WRP) we're providing some resources and guidelines to help you get started. The winter program is aimed at preschool age children (ages 3-5) and their parents/caregivers, in order to strengthen the skills young children need in order to learn to read when they begin school. However, parents/caregivers of babies, toddlers, and older children can also participate.

The following guidelines are suggestions only. Use the resources and ideas as they work for your community and staff, and customize the program to fit within your library's budget. The key is to keep it simple and fun.

**Objectives:** There are two main objectives of this preschool winter reading program:

1) To instill a love of reading in young children by having the child's parent, or other special adult, read to them. Meeting this objective will be facilitated by parents:

- Participating in the program and turning in an activity sheet and/or reading log
- Having their child attend programs offered by the library
- Checking out books from the library



2) To teach parents and caregivers to provide age-appropriate activities to encourage reading and language development. Meeting this objective will be facilitated by parents:

- Participating in the program and turning in an activity sheet and/or reading log
- Attending and participating in programs with their child, or subscribing to the monthly parent newsletter, *The Bookworm* (see flyer in the Library Resources section).

**Timeframe:**

We would suggest you run your program anywhere from 4 – 8 weeks, in order to give families enough time to complete the activity sheet. If you choose to launch your



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program during Family Reading Week keep in mind that December tends to get very hectic for folks, and completion rates may be low during this time. You might see better participation by launching your program in January when you begin preschool programming after the holidays.

**Materials provided on our website:**

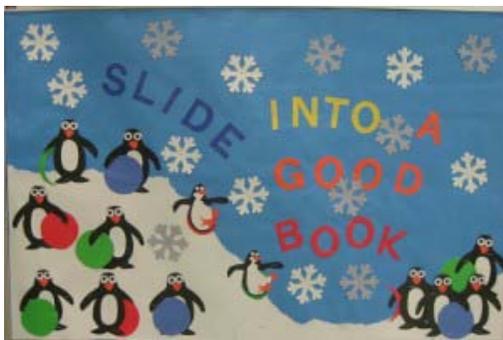
- Preschool Winter Reading Program Activity Sheet
- Certificate of Completion

**Activity Sheet:** This is a winterized version of the Read to Me Summer Reading Gameboard for preschoolers – the activities are based on the six early literacy skills. The sheet is available in two formats: a use “as is” PDF document, and a customizable Publisher document. You can individualize the adult instructions and decide how many activities are required for “completion”. This should depend on how long your program runs, but we suggest you give parents/caregivers a choice of activities by only requiring 10 – 15 of the 20.

**Certificate of Completion:** Also available in two formats. Customize electronically in Publisher, or print the PDF and handwrite or type names.

**Additional Resource Available: Reading Log**

A new generic WRP reading log has been developed and is available to order through



the ICfL’s Read to Me program. These can be used with any age group, and you can decide how to use them. You can order reading logs at no cost by using the Read to Me Support Materials order form on our website:

<http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/read-to-me-support-materials-order-form>.

**Prizes:**

When a parent/caregiver turns in their completed activity sheet, you might consider supplementing the Certificate of Completion with a reward such as:

- Entering their name in a drawing for a large gift, such as a basket of books, certificate to a local business, etcetera (contact businesses and sponsors to donate).



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- A paperback book (use leftovers from another program, or purchase them inexpensively through Scholastic Literacy Partnerships or National First Book).
- Dedicating a picture book in your library's collection to each child (or child care center) that completes the program (use bookplates or shipping labels that say something like, "In honor of --child's name--, for completing the Winter Reading Program." Let the child choose the book if possible.
- Leftover summer reading prizes from past years.
- Bookbags with your library's name and location, or other branded library items.
- A ticket to a special library dinner/celebration for everyone that completes the program.

### Promoting:

- During storyhours or programs – hand out activity sheets and explain the program.
- Family Reading Week – have posters/flyers available announcing the dates.
- Child care providers – can use one sheet for all children in classroom or home.
- Local newspapers/ magazines
- Head Start/ Developmental Preschools – send blurb for their parent newsletters
- In conjunction with other Read to Me programs, such as My First Books or Every Child Ready to Read Family Workshops.
- Library staff – make sure all library personnel are aware of the program so they can help promote and answer questions.
- Create a "community of readers." *Ideas:*
  - Put a snowflake, quilt square, or teddy bear on a bulletin board for every book families read together.
  - Create a snowflake for every book read during your Winter Reading Program. Make them into chains and hang them from the ceiling and create a winter wonderland!
  - If you have ALA's Read<sup>®</sup> Design Studio software, take photos of parents with their children, make a poster, and post those around the library. Encourage local celebrities or figureheads to come in to the library and read with their children/grandchildren for a Read poster as well.



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