

Teacher's Guide to SMART

S M A R T
START MAKING A READER TODAY[®]



This guide provides information to educators on the mechanics of the SMART reading program. For more in-depth information on the program concept and supporting research, please request a copy of the *SMART Program Overview* or download it online at www.getsmartoregon.org.

Books

SMART provides an on-site library of children's books for volunteers and students to read. Every year, SMART selects and purchases new books which are provided to the SMART program in each school. SMART carefully reviews and follows guidelines to ensure high quality age appropriate reading materials in a variety of subjects and types. SMART does not include books with holiday or religious content. Students receive two books per month to take home and share with their family.

Volunteers

The Site Coordinator is a volunteer, engaged by SMART to administer the program on site. Some sites may enlist teams of volunteers assigned to coordinate the SMART program. In addition to training, supporting and retaining volunteer Readers, SMART Site Coordinators are always on-site observing and providing support. Please speak with the Site Coordinator with questions about the program, if problems arise, or to share successes of participating SMART students.

Volunteer Readers are recruited and trained by SMART to read with the children selected by K-3 teachers. From college students to working professionals to community elders, SMART Readers come from all walks of life. They have all generously donated their time and experience to the SMART program in order to promote children's literacy. SMART actively recruits Readers within the local and school community. Please let the Site Coordinator know of any referrals.

All SMART volunteers fill out a SMART application, undergo a criminal background check and are trained prior to coming on site. The basic Reader commitment throughout the school year is the same one-hour block of time every week during school hours. Readers are paired with the same students throughout the school year to build a consistent relationship. The number of Readers in each program is determined by availability. Due to the mobility of both volunteers and students, some students and volunteers are added or dropped from the schedule throughout the year.

If a Reader is absent the volunteer or Site Coordinator will, whenever possible, find a substitute. Upper elementary students can be selected as Junior Readers to serve as substitutes when an adult volunteer is not available. Teachers select a substitute to read with the volunteer if his/her regular student is absent. To honor the volunteers' commitment, K-3 teachers are urged to let the Site Coordinator know as soon as possible about upcoming assemblies, field trips or other events that might disrupt the SMART reading schedule.

Scheduling

Scheduling is crucial to the success of the SMART program. Balancing the needs of the students, teachers and Readers is the highest priority of the Site Coordinator as the scheduling process unfolds. Volunteers' time should be used efficiently and students' days should be disrupted as little as possible.

Each SMART student needs to be available to leave the classroom for 30 minutes, two times per week from mid-October to mid-May when SMART operates. Each SMART Reader is scheduled for a one-hour block of time to read with two children, 30 minutes each. Whenever possible, it is helpful for students to be scheduled during the same 30 minute reading session on both program days (e.g. 10:00-10:30 Monday & Wednesday).

Teachers work with the SMART Site Coordinator to schedule their students to go to SMART. The Site Coordinator distributes reading time selection forms with a list of possible times students could attend SMART. Teachers indicate their first, second, and third preferences as well as any times that do not work from the time slots available. SMART asks that teachers return completed forms to Site Coordinators by the date indicated. Site Coordinators do their best to give each teacher his/her first reading time preference whenever possible.

Students should not be scheduled for SMART during reading blocks, specials, recess, lunch, or core instruction time if possible. Obviously, these restricted times can limit the number of time slots available. Reader availability also influences the schedule. The Site Coordinator works with each teacher until a mutually agreed upon SMART schedule is finalized.

Selecting Students

Teachers are responsible for selecting SMART participants. Children chosen for SMART should be those who can most benefit from the experience. Some children's needs are significant and direct intervention is more appropriate. SMART is an enhancement rather than an intervention.

Criteria for teachers to guide student selection:

- Students served by SMART in prior years who would benefit from continued participation
- Students needing additional reading help with comprehension, fluency, and accuracy
- Limited books in the home
- In need of one-on-one relationship with a caring adult
- Students not being served in other programs

Student selection reminders:

- The number of children SMART can serve is dependent on the number of available Readers
- Selected students who cannot be initially placed with a volunteer should be designated as substitute; substitutes read when a scheduled SMART student is absent

- If Readers become available, substitute students are the first to be added to the schedule

Site Coordinators provide teachers with a student selection form including instructions and guidelines. SMART asks that teachers please complete and return to Site Coordinators by the due date indicated. The Site Coordinator returns a copy of this form indicating which students have been scheduled .

SMART permission slips must be returned and signed before students can participate in SMART. Site Coordinators depend on teachers to assist in distributing and obtaining signed permission slips.

Site Coordinators provide teachers with student information forms to be completed for each selected student. This form provides Readers with helpful information about the student and his/her stage of literacy development. Information on this form may be helpful when pairing Readers with students.