

Introduction

What Is Reading Rockets? A Brief Overview

Reading Rockets is a literacy initiative that looks at how young children learn to read, why so many struggle, and how librarians, parents, and educators can help them.

Elements of Reading Rockets include videos to use in workshops, parent discussion groups, and in-service training for childcare staff, library staff, and others; print guides for teachers and parents; and Web sites that offer an ongoing source of downloadable materials for workshops, a children's literature database, and much more.

Because Reading Rockets is fueled by the latest research and advice from today's top reading experts and children's literature specialists, you can use these resources confidently with your staff, partners, and the general public.

Reading Rockets and Libraries

What do Reading Rockets and libraries have in common? In addition to sharing an interest in getting and keeping children reading, they have lots of resources to share.

Reading Rockets can be used in school and public libraries in many ways. These include but are certainly not limited to:

- » Circulating Reading Rockets videos from the library's audiovisual department. Some libraries have special program collections. These are usually educational videos that have public performance rights.
- » Using Reading Rockets videos in children's areas to introduce parents to ideas and information that they can then follow up on by using other library resources.
- » Using Reading Rockets as in-service training for library staff, possibly in collaboration with school library media specialists and reading specialists.
- » Hosting community forums with local experts, using Reading Rockets videos to launch discussions.
- » Encouraging parents, teachers, and other adults to visit the Reading Rockets Web sites for current information about reading research, parent forums, book clubs, and lists of children's books on various subjects and by featured authors and illustrators:

- www.ReadingRockets.org
- www.ColorinColorado.org
- www.pbs.org/launchingreaders

See Section 2: Reading Rockets in Action, beginning on page 10, to find out how libraries are putting Reading Rockets to use in their communities.

Reading Rockets Resources

There is a wealth of materials available for your library:

» **Reading Rockets: Launching Young Readers** is a five-part television series that covers the foundations of literacy from preschool through third grade. It includes:

1. The Roots of Reading: Pre-Reading Skills
2. Sounds and Symbols: Phonemic Awareness and Phonics
3. Fluent Reading: The Ability to Decode Quickly
4. Writing and Spelling: Motivation and Vocabulary Building
5. Reading for Meaning: Comprehension

The videos and DVDs are available for purchase. Please see page 9 for more information. You may want these for your library's circulating collection of videos or for use in library-initiated programs.

A **companion Web site** for the video series, www.pbs.org/launchingreaders, has been developed especially for parents. There are downloadable one-page tip sheets for parents, which can be reproduced by the library or printed by parents or organizations. It also includes an overview of the five stages of reading and corresponds with each of the five television programs in the Launching Young Readers series.

A **viewers' guide and a teachers' guide** for the video series are available.

» The bilingual **Reading Rockets Family Guide** in Spanish and English provides tips for parents and other adult caregivers on helping children get the most out of reading, pointers on working with schools and

teachers, and great ideas for use in libraries. It includes computer tips, valuable Web site addresses, and more.

- »» The **comprehensive Reading Rockets Web site** at www.ReadingRockets.org provides articles, research reports, a daily news service, and other resources. It helps library users and staff learn more about basics of literacy, helps librarians answer questions, and provides up-to-the-minute information about literacy work that is being done in communities across the country. Also, there are monthly interviews with children's book authors and illustrators, thematic book lists, and the ability to search for titles by age or subject.
- »» The **bilingual Web site in Spanish and English** at www.ColorinColorado.org is geared to Spanish-speaking parents and professionals who work with families whose children are English language learners. Caldecott Medal-winning artist David Diaz contributed the artwork for the site.

New Reading Rockets Initiatives

- »» ***A Tale of Two Schools*** is a one-hour television documentary that looks at how two schools — and two dedicated teachers — take on the challenge of teaching young kids to read. Narrated by Morgan Freeman, the program premiered on PBS stations in September 2003. Local dates and times of upcoming broadcasts

are posted on www.ReadingRockets.org/twoschools/broadcast.php. A companion Web site can be found at www.pbs.org/twoschools.

- »» **Teleconferences** for educators and librarians. Topics include effective reading programs, parents as partners, and teaching English language learners to read. Participation information is available at www.ReadingRockets.org/teleconferences.php.
- »» ***Reading Rocks!*** is a fun, 30-minute television program that motivates kids who struggle with reading. It includes interviews with children who have overcome reading difficulties.

A **parent special** is in the works for broadcast on PBS in Spring 2005. Of special interest to parents of struggling readers, this new television program will focus on school programs that have succeeded with research-based reading programs that rely on parental involvement.

Ordering Additional Reading Rockets Materials

To order online, go to

www.ReadingRockets.org/store

Reading Rockets @ your library

A Toolkit for Librarians

Complete Toolkit \$89.95

Includes:

- » a VHS copy of the five modules for use in workshops, as outlined in Section 3 of the toolkit
- » a DVD copy of the five-part series, *Reading Rockets: Launching Young Readers*
- » copies of the bilingual family guide, teachers' guide, and viewers' guide

Additional Videos

Reading Rockets: Launching Young Readers, a five-part television series, is available for purchase on VHS videotapes or on DVD. A full set of the series has been sent to your state library agency. Additional copies may be purchased:

Videotape Set \$89.95

Includes a complete set of five VHS videotapes, the viewers' guide, and your choice of either the family guide or the teachers' guide.

DVD \$39.95

Discounted Price for Libraries

With the purchase of a Toolkit, libraries may purchase additional copies of the DVD for the discounted price of \$39.95 (a substantial savings from the regular retail price of \$89.95).

The DVD contains all five episodes plus bonus segments featuring additional interviews with reading experts, teachers, and others; the viewers' guide; and your choice of either the family guide or the teachers' guide.

Individual Videotapes \$19.95

Includes one 30-minute episode (see titles below) and a viewers' guide.

- » The Roots of Reading
- » Sounds and Symbols
- » Fluent Reading
- » Writing and Spelling
- » Reading for Meaning