"Sometimes I wish that there was no such thing as reading."
Madeleine, age 8

For a lot of us it can be hard to imagine having such a feeling: But Madeleine! you want to say. What about Harry Potter? What about Little House on the Prairie? Beverly Cleary and Judy Blume? Right now, Madeleine couldn't care less – because reading represents pain and failure. And the struggling readers in your life may know just how she feels.

Reading Rocks! gives you the chance to talk with them about those feelings. And it lets them know that they're not alone. We hope children who feel like giving up will be motivated by the stories of kids like them – Ben, Maricely, A.J., and Madeleine – kids who found a way to give reading another chance.

Here are some ideas to get the discussion going:

"I decided that I would actually try to read [Harry Potter] myself, 'cause it sounded so interesting."  Ben, age 12

Kids: Ben has dyslexia, which makes it very difficult to learn to read. But he began working hard on his reading because he fell in love with the Harry Potter books. What kinds of things would you like to read about? Soccer? Music?

Teacher/Parent: Children with dyslexia or other reading difficulties should have an understanding of what that means. You can find resources to help you explain it – along with the names of some very successful people who have dyslexia – at www.pbskids.org/readingrocks. Also, plan a trip to the library to pick out books in your child or student's area of interest. Ask a librarian for help choosing books at the appropriate level for your child.

"I just need to try harder and harder."  A.J., age 8

Kids: A.J.'s teacher teamed him up with a buddy. What do you think it might feel like to work with a buddy on reading?

Teacher/Parent: Teaming a child up with a peer who is a stronger reader can help improve a child's reading. He may be less intimidated by another kid and more willing to receive gentle correction. Be open to ideas your child may have about improving the reading experience.