Celebration and Engagement Ideas

Make it a Classroom Event!

In-Person Read-Aloud Tips

1. **Get comfy**
   Get students into a comfortable listening position. Carpet squares or a similar setting can be a fun way to do this.

2. **Help students see**
   Hold the book wide open and facing students. If students aren’t all directly in front of you, rotate the book periodically so all students can see the pictures. Project a digital version of the book if possible.

3. **Read slowly**
   Take your time!

4. **Get animated!**
   Use voices for characters, hand motions, facial expressions, and volume changes to help kids get engaged.

5. **Involve students in the story**
   Are there things students can act out or contribute to the story? Are there pictures you can refer to? Quick “yes or no” questions can also help students connect to the story and stay engaged.

6. **Prepare for questions**
   Young students can get sidetracked easily. Be ready to redirect students who have stories or lots of questions.

7. **End with discussion**
   Help your students fully grasp the story by talking about it afterward! Ask questions like: What is the big idea of the story? What is something new you learned? What surprised you?

8. **Follow up with an activity**
   Solidify the students’ learning with an educational activity.

9. **Challenge students to select a book and read independently**
   Students may be motivated to find a book that is of interest to them and continue reading.
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Extend the Reading Experience
Use these activities to connect the books to science, social

- **My Family’s Dairy Farm**
  - **Dairy Sustainability and Science** (3): in this lesson students identify aspects of raising dairy cattle and producing milk products that are done in an economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable way.
  - **Dairy Careers from Farm to Fridge** (3): in this lesson students identify the human resources needed to produce, process, transport and market dairy products and realize there are many different types of jobs in agriculture.
  - **It’s a Moo-stery** (3-5), **It’s a Moo-stery** (K-2): students make observations about historic tools used on a dairy farm to store and process milk into cheese and butter.
  - **Sun, to Moo, to You** (3-5): Students investigate the transfer of energy in the process of making milk, discover that there are different forms of energy, determine that living things need energy to survive, and identify the sun as the primary source of energy.

- **Meg and the Eggstraordinary Egg**
  - **Eggs From Hen to Home** (K-2): students trace the production path of eggs, beginning on the farm and ending in their home and identify the culinary uses and nutritional benefits of eggs.
  - **FoodMASTER Eggs** (3-5): students examine the process of egg production from the hen to our homes, explore the parts of an egg, perform measurements of circumference and height, compare raw egg whites to egg white foams, and prepare meringue cookies.
  - **Virtual Egg Farm field trips**
  - **The Incredible Egg** resources

- **From Grape to Jelly**
  - **Grapes Here and There** (K-2 & 3-5): Students compare Iowa to California and investigate viticulture (growing of grapes) by finding patterns as they compare grapes and make connections to climate, harvest, and taste.
  - **History of Iowa’s Grape Industry** (3-5): Students will learn about the grape industry in Iowa and factors that impacted the industry, including government policies, cultural shifts, and environmental factors.
  - **From Grape to Jelly** (5): Students work together to solve a problem by engineering a fridge/freezer grape jelly recipe. Through this lesson students learn about the physical properties of grapes and how to write a recipe using fractions. Using the engineering process, students gather data and refine their grape jelly.
  - Explore careers with specialty crops like grapes using the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundations Career Posters
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• Bread Lab
  o **Seed Germination Necklace** (K-2): students will plant a wheat kernel and soybean seed in a small clear bag and watch them grow to learn about germination. (connect with the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation if you need seeds)
  o **Kids Connect Wonderful Wheat** (3-5): in this resource students engage in activity sheets that help them gather a deeper understanding of wheat.
  o **FoodMASTERS Grains** (3-5): Students describe the steps of making flour, compare the nutritional value of different cereals, compare cooked and uncooked rice, and identify the parts of a whole grain.
  o **Enjoying the Harvest** (3-5): students identify the parts of a wheat plant and wheat kernel and investigate the process of milling wheat kernels into flour.

• Ice Cream in a Bag
  o **FoodMASTER Fats and Oils** (3-5): students identify the farm source of common dietary fats, compare Nutrition Facts labels, perform a taste test of various salad dressings, learn the chemistry of emulsification, and compare regular ice cream, reduced-fat ice cream and fat-free ice cream.
  o **Milk, Sugar, Science Engineering Ice Cream** (K-2): Students explore the journey of milk from cow to ice cream, make ice cream in a bag, and discover how food engineers have developed many different processes for making ice cream.
  o **A Day Without Dairy** (3-5): Students create, read, and interpret graphs relating to the economic importance of the dairy industry and are challenged to understand the economic consequences of a day without dairy.
  o **Milk Making Math** (3-5): Students explore the numerous career opportunities involved in the dairy industry and solve real world math problems related to specific careers within the industry.

Digital versions of the *My Family’s Farm* book series and additional lesson plans to go with each are available at: [https://www.iowaagliteracy.org/Tools-Resources/Publications/My-Familys-Farm](https://www.iowaagliteracy.org/Tools-Resources/Publications/My-Familys-Farm).

Digital versions of the Bushel of Stories books (books written for student by students) and additional lesson plans to go with each are available at: [https://www.iowaagliteracy.org/Tools-Resources/Publications/Bushel-of-Stories](https://www.iowaagliteracy.org/Tools-Resources/Publications/Bushel-of-Stories). Encourage your students to be writers using the *Bushel of Stories* student program resources.
Celebration and Engagement Ideas

Make it a Virtual Event!

Virtual Tips and Ideas

1. Organize a Facebook Live event with your local library
   Broadcast directly from Facebook. Viewers can interact and ask questions live or view the recording later at their convenience. Be sure to practice and set up a good camera angle. Ensure that the internet connection is strong. Make sure the audio on the video is clear. Be sure to get the author’s and/or publisher’s permission to do a read-aloud.

2. Host a meeting of a book club
   Challenge students to read the same book independently, and then come together virtually to discuss it. Challenge students to each read different books independently and then come together virtually to give a book talk about what they read.

3. Invite the author to do a reading.
   New faces and guest readers are always great.

4. Offer a supplemental virtual guest speaker or activity
   After students read a book, a guest speaker could provide an activity. Supplies could be sent to the classroom to be distributed or you can work with the school to create kits to send home for each student. Request a guest speaker here: https://app.etaperestry.com/onlineforms/IowaAgricultureLiteracyFounda/guestspeaker.html

5. Slide Party
   Ask students to prepare a slide presentation (Google Slides; PowerPoint) on a topic of their choice related to a book and share it with others on a videochat platform. Slides can be about a lot of things—students can create slides to introduce themselves, share interests, make a comic, teach others about something they are passionate about, or talk about a favorite book, series, or character in detail.

6. Grab and Go Kits
   Create packets of books and activities (see suggested activities) and let families pick them up. Invite families to share pictures or stories about reading together on your county or city’s social media page.

7. Mystery Readers
   Traditionally, Mystery Readers are special guests who come—after a mysterious build up—to read aloud to youth. Mystery Readers can be parents, grandparents, older siblings, or other members of the community (someone associated with agriculture?). Schedule virtual Mystery Readers! Build up suspense by asking Mystery Readers for clues about themselves and share these with youth throughout the week so they can unravel who will be reading with them next. Try using polling or forms to share clues and get children engaged in the guesswork.
8. FarmChat® Scavenger Hunt
Read an agriculture book with students. Together make a list of items to look for on a farm. Then request or show a FarmChat®. During the chat, can children find something at the farm that is pictured in the book?

9. Breakout EDU or Virtual Escape Room
A Breakout Edu (edu stands for education) and virtual escape rooms are puzzle games where youth answer questions about the book and figure out clues to unlock something. When they have the right answer, they get a code that “unlocks” a door or lock. To do a digital breakout, make clues based on a book and create your locks through Google form questions with data validation. You can also create the room using Google Slides. Get more information:

- Digital escape room ideas
- Video on how to create with Google forms
- Video on how to create with Google Slides
- Digital book on the Life Cycle of Soybeans
Celebration and Engagement Ideas

Make it a Community Event!

Ideas

1. **Reading Drive In**
   Invite families to an evening out of reading fun! As members of your community read aloud a variety of agricultural books, live stream their read alouds on a large screen set up in the school or community center parking lot for families to enjoy from their vehicles. Have readers use props, costumes, music, or interesting virtual backdrops to make the stories come alive for your audience.

2. **StoryWalk**
   StoryWalk is a fun, physically-distanced activity that places a children’s story—a deconstructed book, page by page—along a walking route in your community. Developed by Anne Ferguson in Montpelier, Vermont, a StoryWalk combines reading a children’s book aloud while taking a walk. To make a StoryWalk, you’ll need two copies of a book. Mount each page spread on cardstock and laminate with a heavy weight lamination. You should also create a “Welcome” page that explains how the StoryWalk works and includes the front cover of the book. Depending on where you set up your Read Across Iowa StoryWalk (library or school grounds, park, trails, or storefront windows along main street), you’ll also need wooden stakes for each laminated page spread and heavy-duty adhesive-backed Velcro to attach them. Window installations can be secured using suction cups, clips, or removable tape. Your StoryWalk could also feature student writing, photography, and artwork rather than published works.

3. **Reading Obstacle Course**
   Book fun, physical activity, and physical distancing all in one! Take advantage of empty parking lots or sidewalks and chalk up (or paint, duct tape) a path that gets kids hopping, jumping, spinning, balancing, marching, dancing, and zigzagging. Your chalk walk could include a variety of steps and directions based on literary references from the agricultural books. Focus around books that really move, such as *Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table* and mimic shoveling to plant potatoes and dribbling a basketball. Or act out Sylvia’s emotions in *Sylvia’s Spinach*. Encourage an inspired interpretation of a title like *The Kid Who Changed the World* and have students imagine an invention they could create. New faces and guest readers are always great.

4. **Little Free Library**
   Work with youth, parents, and community groups to create a free community book sharing box. Develop an action plan to open or revitalize a Little Free Library in your community. This book exchange, where neighbors, friends, and students can share their favorite books and stories, is a great way to learn through and with others. Celebrate with story time at the opening of your own Little Free Library! See the Little Free Library website for information, [https://littlefreelibrary.org/](https://littlefreelibrary.org/).