



MARTHA SPEAKS™



HOW-TO

How Does It Work?

This overview of the Reading Buddies Program will provide both Little Buddy and Big Buddy teachers with the basics you will need to know. For more specific and detailed information, see the Instructions for Little Buddy Teachers and Instructions for Big Buddy Teachers.

The ten Reading Buddies sessions always follow the same steps. Each step offers kids opportunities to hear and use the key vocabulary from the MARTHA SPEAKS show in a meaningful and personalized context. You may adapt the sessions according to the needs of your students and schedule by varying the order of the steps or the time allotted for each.

★ Step 1: Watch Together (15 minutes)

Big Buddies and Little Buddies sit together as the whole group watches the MARTHA SPEAKS episode. Each episode introduces that session's four "special words," weaving clear explanations and examples of word meaning into the story. (Before the buddies meet up, you will need to preview the vocabulary words in each classroom.)

★ Step 2: Talk and Play (10 minutes)

The Big Buddy Guide provides Big Buddies with a step-by-step plan for each session. Working in pairs, the buddies use discussion questions to talk about their favorite parts of the show and then play the provided game or activity. Each game or activity is specifically designed to prompt students to use the four special words in meaningful, conversational ways.

★ Step 3: Read Together (10 minutes)

Big Buddies read a picture book to their Little Buddies. The four special words are embedded in the story and/or highlighted in the discussion questions. (Note: You will need to select a book for each session. See pages 6–8 for recommended books.)

★ Step 4: Write Together (5–10 minutes)

A different writing prompt is provided for each entry of the Reading Buddies Journal. Key vocabulary is used in the writing prompt and children are encouraged to use some of the special words in their response.

★ Step 5: Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

Review the special words through a group song or chant, or by inviting volunteers to share their journal responses. See "Wrap-Up Chart" in the Instructions for Little Buddy Teachers for suggestions.

Components

The components of the MARTHA SPEAKS Reading Buddies Program are:

- Teacher Checklist
- Instructions for Little Buddy Teachers
- Instructions for Big Buddy Teachers
- Ten MARTHA SPEAKS Episodes
- Big Buddy Guide
- Reading Buddies Games & Activities
- Reading Buddies Journal
- Little Buddy Certificate of Achievement
- Big Buddy Certificate of Achievement
- Reading Buddies Classroom Poster
- Letter to Little Buddy Families (English and Spanish)
- Letter to Big Buddy Families (English and Spanish)
- Family Activity Booklet (English and Spanish)

You will need to download these materials, print them out, and make enough copies for each pair.

Logistics

Here are some tips, suggestions, and logistics to consider as you prepare for your MARTHA SPEAKS Reading Buddies Program.

Planning

Use the Teacher Checklist as you prepare. Meet with your teacher partner well in advance of beginning the program. Go through the materials together and read the Instructions for Little Buddy Teachers and Instructions for Big Buddy Teachers. (You may want to read each other's instructions to make sure you are fully prepared).

You will want to:

- print out and copy all materials, as needed
- watch the episodes
- choose, obtain, and preview the read-aloud books
- read and review the Big Buddy Guide

You may also want to make curriculum connections to what you are studying and reading in your class.

Scheduling

There are ten sessions in the Reading Buddies Program. You can choose to meet once a week for ten weeks, or once every other week, spreading it out over a twenty week period. Some teachers find it useful to schedule Reading Buddies right before a kindergarten transition time. For example, Big Buddies can escort the Little Buddies to lunch or help them get ready to go home.

Matching Up Buddies

Consider personalities, prior relationships, and ability levels as you create Reading Buddy pairs. If you have a very shy or high-energy kindergartner, you might want to pair two Little Buddies with one Big Buddy. You might also want to match a shy child with a particularly nurturing Big Buddy. If there are older and young siblings, consider whether or not you want them to be together as Big Buddies and Little Buddies. With English language learners, you may want to put together a Big Buddy and Little Buddy who share the same home language.

Overseeing Each Session

The sessions are designed to fill a 45- to 60-minute block. During each session, keep the Reading Buddy pairs in sync by letting the kids know when it is time to go on to the next step. For example, you could say, "You should be finishing up your game in a minute or two so you can start reading your book together." You may want to make a handy reminder for yourself on an index card as to what the Reading Buddy steps are, so you can refer to it during the session.

Adapting the Plan

If the five-step plan for the Reading Buddies session seems too ambitious for your students or your schedule, you can easily adapt the plan. For instance, if the Little Buddies are too restless to listen to the read-aloud book after watching the show, have them do the game or activity first. If the sessions are too long, you may want to consider deleting the Reading Buddies Journal activity. (Teachers of the Big Buddies will need to instruct the Big Buddies to cross out the Write Together section in their Big Buddies Guide.) As the program continues and students grow more familiar and adept with the steps, you may choose to add the journal activity back in.

Note that Session 5 features a vocabulary game, "Skit's Tricks," which is on the [MARTHA SPEAKS Web site](#). If possible, arrange to have the Reading Buddies meet where they have access to the Internet. If computer availability is limited, you could also rotate computer time with small groups and spread the activity over several days. (If computers are not available, students can just complete the Reading Buddies Journal activity.)

Providing Materials

The MARTHA SPEAKS Reading Buddies Program requires a variety of materials. Obtaining them will involve downloading, printing, and copying equipment and supplies. As you plan, be sure to consider various strategies to handle this aspect of the program. You may want to enlist the help of your principal, school or public librarian, superintendent, school committee, PTO/PTA, local businesses, community groups, or parents to find additional funding for printing and/or for volunteers to help you download, print, and copy materials.

You will need multiple copies of many of the materials, including the Big Buddy Guide, Games & Activities, and the Reading Buddies Journal. If your school equipment cannot accommodate copying class sets, you may want to make arrangements with a local print shop or other group to help you.

Read-Aloud Books

The read-aloud books are an important part of the Reading Buddies experience. Not only do they give the buddies another opportunity to use the vocabulary words as they discuss the story, they also help both Big Buddies and Little Buddies appreciate and enjoy books and reading.

Selecting the Books

The titles for the suggested read-aloud books (see pages 6–8) have been selected because they:

- a) use the four special words in that session OR are theme-related and lend themselves to the use of the vocabulary words in the discussion afterwards.
- b) can be easily read by the Big Buddies and understood by the Little Buddies.
- c) feature quality illustrations and text.
- d) are in print and widely available.

Several titles for each session have been recommended. In adapting the program, you may decide to use different books, due to availability or the reading level of the Big Buddies. Be sure to keep the above criteria in mind as you make your final selection of books.

Obtaining the Books

You will need to obtain enough copies of the book for each pair and each session. (For example, if you have 25 buddy pairs who meet for ten sessions, you will need to supply 25 each of ten titles, which is 250 books.) Since your school library will probably not have enough copies of any one title, you will need to purchase them. You may be able to share the cost with the school librarian or the school district. (Once you purchase the books, they can be used by other classes for their Reading Buddies sessions later on.) You may also be able to partner with the local public library, the PTA/PTO, community groups, your local public television station, or businesses that can underwrite the cost. Some business or charitable foundations offer small grants that you can apply for. Publishers often offer books at a substantial educational discount, or a local bookstore may be willing to work out an arrangement. You may also want to check the First Book Program.

Games & Activities/Journal

Each of the Reading Buddies sessions contains a game or activity that uses simple, everyday materials (such as pencils, markers, paper lunch bags). With your teacher partner, decide how best to gather and store these materials so that they will be ready before each session. You may also want to make extra copies of the Games & Activities, so that you can send a blank one home for Little Buddies to do with their families.

Writing in the Journal is also featured in each session. After you print it out and make copies for each student, ask students to staple the pages together. You can also make folders to contain each Journal.

Episodes to Watch

The ten episodes of the MARTHA SPEAKS Reading Buddies Program are available online and on DVD. You will need a Flash Player and a good Internet connection to stream episodes for free from www.pbskids.org/go/video. You can also purchase MARTHA SPEAKS episodes from iTunes. See pages 6–9 for the episodes that match each session.



Celebrating Success

You may want to plan a special whole-group celebration for Little Buddies and Big Buddies together after they have completed the entire program. (See also Instructions for Little Buddy Teachers and Instructions for Big Buddy Teachers.) For example, consider contacting your local veterinarian, Humane Society, or the Intermountain Therapy Animals organization, a nonprofit group providing animal-assisted therapy (including a special READ program, where dogs help struggling readers) at www.therapyanimals.org. Invite representatives from these groups to speak to students about dogs, dog care, and service dogs.

You may also want to do one or more of the following:

- 🐾 Plan a party featuring dog-themed snacks (such as “animal crackers” or homemade cookies shaped as dog bones) or other snacks.
- 🐾 Hold an award ceremony where Big Buddies present their Little Buddies with Certificates of Achievement, and Big Buddies receive their Certificates of Achievement from their teacher.
- 🐾 Invite the principal, school librarian, or other school staff, as well as parents and caregivers, to join the party.
- 🐾 Decorate the room with dog-related books, student drawings and writing, and photos or pictures of dogs from around the world.
- 🐾 Take a class survey or poll about the most interesting or favorite word learned so far, or ask for student volunteers to tell you what word they liked best. Create a class chart or display.



MARTHA SPEAKS READING BUDDIES SUMMARY CHART

Session 1



Episode: Martha and Skits

A new puppy joins Martha's household, bursting with energy and the desire to chew everything.

Special words: *extraordinary, stupendous, talent, unique*

Recommended books:

Banjo Granny by Jacqueline Briggs Martin and Sarah Martin Busse
Jamaica Louise James by Amy Hest
Martha and Skits by Susan Meddaugh
Star of the Week by Barney Saltzberg

Session 2



Episode: Martha to the Rescue

Martha is inspired by her favorite show, "Courageous Collie Carlo."

Special words: *brave, courageous, hero, rescue*

Recommended books:

Abiyoyo by Pete Seeger
Dex: The Heart of a Hero by Caralyn Buehner
Sheila Rae, the Brave by Kevin Henkes

Session 3



Episode: Firedog Martha

Martha wants to be a firehouse dog, just like in her favorite book, *Firehouse Freddie*.

Special words: *actually, fantasy, pretend, real*

Recommended books:

Abuela by Arthur Dorros
Bippity Bop Barbershop by Natasha Tarpley
Fire Truck by Peter Sis

Session 4



Episode: Martha in Charge

Mom is out and Helen is sick in bed. Martha thinks maybe candy and pizza would help.

Special words: *cure, healthy, recuperate, remedy*

Recommended books:

Bear Feels Sick by Karma Wilson
Don't You Feel Well, Sam? by Amy Hest
I Hate to Be Sick by Aamir Lee Bermis



Session 5**Episode: Perfectly Martha**

Martha thinks there is something fishy about the Perfect Pup dog-training school.

Special words: *disobedient, disobey, obedient, obey*

Recommended books:

Arthur's New Puppy by Marc Brown
Baby Rattlesnake by Te Ata
The Great Gracie Chase by Cynthia Rylant
Perfectly Martha by Susan Meddaugh

Session 6**Episode: Martha Walks the Dog**

There's a new dog in town and, boy, is he a bad dog!

Special words: *bully, compliment, pleasant, unpleasant*

Recommended books:

Franklin's Bad Day by Paulette Bourgeois
Jamaica's Blue Marker by Juanita Havill
Stanza by Jill Esbaum

Session 7**Episode: Martha Calling**

When Martha wins a trip to the Come-On-Inn, there's only one problem: No dogs allowed.

Special words: *allowed, forbidden, rule, permitted*

Recommended books:

Little Hoot by Amy Krouse Rosenthal
Mama Don't Allow by Thacher Hurd
Officer Buckle and Gloria by Peggy Rathmann

Session 8**Episode: There Goes the Neighborhood**

Can Martha tolerate a new kitten and actually become his buddy?

Special words: *buddy, ignore, prejudice, tolerate*

Recommended books:

Angus and the Cat by Marjorie Flack
Katie Loves the Kittens by John Himmelman
No Dogs Allowed! by Anne Davis

Session 9

Episode: Dog Fight

Can Martha and Skits stop bickering and call a truce?



Special words: *bicker, quarrel, negotiate, truce*

Recommended books:

I Won't Share! by Hans Wilehm

It's Mine! by Leo Lionni

Should I Share my Ice Cream? by Mo Willems

Session 10

Episode: Martha Says It with Flowers

Martha decides to do something really special for Grandma's birthday.



Special words: *considerate, inconsiderate, sincere, thoughtful*

Recommended books:

A Birthday Basket for Tia by Pat Mora

Flower Garden by Eve Bunting

Martha Says It with Flowers by Susan Meddaugh