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Reading Successes Delivered

## **Planning a Successful Family Reading Event**

**Tips, Tricks, and How-To's**

# Planning a Successful Family Reading Event

## Tips, Tricks, and How-Tos

A fun and successful Family Reading Event (FRE) is one of the best ways to increase participation in the Kids Read Now summer reading program! Your school's FRE should be designed to create excitement for the students and disseminate vital information to guardians. There are several variables that determine how to plan your school's FRE such as number of students participating, location of the event, and resources needed. We know you are busy, so we have created this easy-to-follow FRE planning guide with exciting FRE ideas!

### STUDENT POPULATION SIZE AND LOCATION

You will need to consider how many of your school's students are participating in the KRN summer reading program. Smaller events could be held in a classroom or a section of the auditorium while larger events require more space. It is safe to assume that students who attend will be accompanied by at least one family member. Try to pick a location in your school that is easily recognizable (the auditorium, gym, or cafeteria), doesn't require the movement of heavy furniture, and is close to entrances/exits and bathrooms.

### DATE AND TIME

Choose a date for your FRE within the last two weeks of school and that does not overlap other school/district events such as sporting events or award ceremonies. Avoid dates that are directly next to a previously planned day off, such as Memorial Day, to help accommodate the families who may be traveling. Pick a broad enough time range to allow families with different work schedules to attend.

### EDUCATORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Encourage educators of participating classes to attend the FRE and interact with students and their families. Teachers can help explain the students' reading levels and their Wish List choices to guardians. Depending on the size and nature of your FRE, you may wish to enlist the help of volunteers to set up the room, serve refreshments, and complete other important tasks throughout the event.

### SUPPLIES AND RESOURCES

Supplies and resources will vary dependent on the theme of your FRE. Light refreshments are recommended, especially if your FRE is around mealtime. Consider playing the KRN FRE video several times throughout your event. An internet connection, large screen/projector, and speakers may be needed! KRN will send the FRE student materials directly to your school. These materials include each student's first 3 books and a Parent Guide separated in individual packages and organized by teacher and student last name. You will need to have a plan to distribute these packets to students who do not attend the FRE! Please see the KRN Community Engagement Kit for quick and easy community fundraising tips.

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Attendance is one of the most important aspects of your FRE! Once you have set the date, time, and location details, make a plan to distribute this information to students and their families. Your FRE information should be distributed multiple times and in multiple ways. You can post flyers in the schools, send home flyers with students, utilize a mass messaging system with an automated phone call or email, post on social media or the school webpage, or reach out to families directly. Advertise your FRE multiple times and far enough in advance so families can plan to attend.

# STORYTIME

## Summary

Who doesn't love listening to a story? Inviting a dynamic storyteller to your Family Reading Event can entice students into a fun world where characters come to life and imaginations run wild. A storyteller is an excellent way to create excitement for the summer reading program! Consider inviting a storyteller who changes his/her voice for each character, brings puppets to act out the story, or engages the audience through questions. The storyteller can also repeat the story several times throughout the duration of your Family Reading Event for families who arrive late. After each story, invite students and families to enjoy refreshments and pick up their Family Reading Event materials bag with the first 1-3 books and the Parent Guide. *Encourage students to read a book with their family and report it before they leave!*

## To-Do

- Determine approximate number of potential attendees
- Set date and time
- Determine and reserve location
- Ask teachers and volunteers to attend
- Reserve/hire storyteller
- Advertise FRE to students and families (multiple times, multiple ways)

## Resources

- Family Reading Event student materials (mailed to you from KRN)
- Refreshments
- Internet connection and large screen/projector to play KRN Family Reading Event video

## Ideas

- Instead of hiring a storyteller, think about recruiting older students who are involved in a drama program or AP English class.
- See the KRN Community Engagement Kit for easy and quick community fundraising ideas.

# BOOK WALK

## Summary

Similar to a “cake walk”, this fun carnival-esque game is sure to excite students! Print (or write on colored paper) the titles of popular children’s books and put them on the floor in a circular pattern. Also write these titles on small pieces of paper, fold them, and put them to the side in a hat or a bowl. Play fun music and have students walk or dance around on the titles. When the music stops, all students must find a title! Then draw a piece of folded paper out of the bowl or hat and the student on the matching title wins a prize! You can repeat the book walk several times throughout the duration of your Family Reading Event for families who arrive late. After each book walk, invite students and families to enjoy refreshments and pick up their Family Reading Event materials bag with the first 3 books and the Parent Guide. *Encourage students to read a book with their family and report it before they leave!*

## To-Do

- Determine approximate number of potential attendees
- Set date and time
- Determine and reserve location
- Ask teachers and volunteers to attend
- Advertise FRE to students and families (multiple times, multiple ways)

## Resources

- Family Reading Event student materials (mailed to you from KRN)
- Refreshments
- Internet connection and large screen/projector to play KRN Family Reading Event video
- Radio or portable speakers and a fun, kid-friendly music playlist
- Colored paper, markers, a bowl/hat
- Prizes for students who win the book walk

## Ideas

- Offer carnival-type foods such as popcorn and snow cones!
- Ask local businesses for donations for the prizes. Bookmarks from your local library or bookstore would be great!
- See the KRN Community Engagement Kit for easy and quick community fundraising ideas.

# IMAGINATION STATIONS

## Summary

Imagination stations are a great way to encourage students' creativity and spark excitement for summer reading! You can include several stations for students and their families to visit such as a bookmark making station, a station to watch the Family Reading Event video provided by KRN, a reading station where the student can read a poem or short story to family members, a story writing station for students to brainstorm new story ideas, and a library card station for students to sign up for a local library card! Keep the stations stocked with supplies throughout the event to accommodate students and families who arrive late. When students have finished the stations, invite them and their families to enjoy refreshments and pick up their Family Reading Event materials bag with the first 3 books and the Parent Guide. Encourage students to read a book with their family and report it before they leave!

## To-Do

- Determine approximate number of potential attendees
- Set date and time
- Determine and reserve location
- Ask teachers and volunteers to attend
- Advertise FRE to students and families (multiple times, multiple ways)
- Invite the local library to participate and help sign up students for library cards

## Resources

- Family Reading Event student materials (mailed to you from KRN)
- Refreshments
- Internet connection and large screen/projector to play KRN Family Reading Event video
- Paper, pencils, and markers to create bookmarks and stories

## Ideas

- See the KRN Community Engagement Kit for easy and quick community fundraising ideas.