



Fun Reading  Reading for Life

Our mission is to make reading fun for children,
so they become confident, lifelong readers.
No child should be left behind in literacy.

“Education is not the filling of a bucket
but the lighting of a fire”

William Butler Yeats

Teacher Welcome Pack





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Welcome

Dear classroom teacher,

Thank you for becoming involved in the Story Dogs program. We are very excited to have your class participate in the program, and look forward to a long and productive partnership.

From experience, we would like to highlight the following:

- Story Dogs targets students with reading difficulties. These students may also have additional needs. As such, we are not a reading program for all students.
- The **same** four or five target students will read to the Story Dog Team each week.
- A Story Dogs reading session is approx. 20 minutes per target student, and thus in a morning block, the Story Dog team normally sees **four or five targeted students**.
- If a targeted student is away, you may select another student with reading difficulties to fill that slot.
- It may be possible, if time permits, to have one 10 minute reward group session for no more than 2 students.
- Ideally, the same four target students will stay with the Story Dogs program until the end of the year — or until they reach an acceptable reading level of their age and school year.

We cannot stress enough, the benefits to all when the teacher and volunteer can briefly touch base with each other, each week. This communication enables any minor concerns to be addressed promptly, and for the volunteer to give an update on students and receive your input. The volunteer appreciates you are busy and will not seek to interrupt your class. This contact with you makes the volunteer feel welcome and valued, a very important thing!



Please feel free to give your contact details to the Story Dogs volunteer.

Included in this pack are:

- Parent consent form
- Target Student Information sheet – please fill out for each target student
- Story Dogs Day - School fundraiser information

Thank you for participating in the Story Dogs program and we look forward to your students finding a love of books through reading with a four legged “mate”.

 Email: info@storydogs.org.au 

 Address: PO Box 5075, South Murwillumbah NSW 2484 

 www.storydogs.org.au  ABN: 32 603 311 388 



Fun Reading  Reading for Life

School Information

A fun, unique and exciting reading program in your school


Benefits to your school and students:-

- Year 2 students receive one on one time, approx 20 mins, with an accredited Dog Team, the dog handler and the dog.;
- A reading support program that gets results – see web site for more details;
- Minimal class disruption – the dog does not go into the classroom unless invited by the classroom teacher. All reading sessions are outside of the classroom in a quiet space nearby;
- A new and exciting spin on reading for your students and;
- A FREE unique reading support program.

How the Program fits into your school:-

- Reading sessions take place in a quiet area of the school grounds, such as the library or the verandah outside the classroom..
- A reading session is approximately 20 minutes long, where each child is one-on-one with the dog team.
- The Dog Team will visit on the same day at the same time each week, seeing the same 4 – 6 Target Students.
- Books are chosen to suit the child's reading level. Story Dogs does supply books and books can also be from the classroom or library.
- During the session the handler often speaks through the dog, such as; "Lassie doesn't quite understand what is happening on this page could you help him out?" The child becomes the teacher; confidence soars!

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Steps required to start the program in your school:-

1. The Principal must sign the attached Program Agreement to allow the program to begin.
2. Classroom teachers choose a total of 4 – 6 Target Students to be part of the program. These students are usually from Year 2 or higher classes and are the students who will benefit the most from a one-on-one reading program.
3. A school orientation meeting will be organised. This meeting will be between the classroom teacher/s involved, the Story Dogs Coordinator and the Dog Team. This meeting will decide where the reading sessions will take place, what day and time of day suits all parties involved and how many students will be able to participate.
4. Parent consent forms (see attached) must be sent and received for all students involved.
5. The Classroom teacher is to fill out the Target Student Information Form (see attached) for each student chosen for the program. This is given to the volunteer so they have an understanding as to why a particular student was chosen.
6. Mark on the school calendar, **Story Dogs Day – first Friday in May**. This is a day that you can hold a free dress day, or other fundraiser where all the funds are donated to Story Dogs.

If Story Dogs does not have any suitable volunteer Dog Teams for your school the next step is to put an ad in your School Newsletter seeking suitable dogs and their owners. They can contact Story Dogs and we can take over the accreditation and training process. Please see the web site, under the schools tab for a downloadable ad.

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Parent Consent

Dear Parent/Carer,

Story Dogs is a fun and unique reading support program that improves children’s reading and communication skills by children reading to a trained companion dog and its handler.

The Story Dog program is primarily designed for students who have reading challenges, however students may be chosen by the Classroom Teacher to participate in the program as a reward or as an alternative reading activity.

Students will spend approximately 20 minutes with the Story Dog Team once per week reading books which are appropriate to their reading level. During the session, the dog will be on its lead at all times and the handler will be with the dog and student at all times. Although the dog is immaculately groomed, fully wormed with flea protection, children with allergies are recommended not to be involved with the program.

The program is free to all students.

Story Dogs Permission Slip

I (print your name)..... do / do not give permission
for my child (their name).....of class.....
to be part of the Story Dog program.

I give permission for photographs to be taken of my child participating in the program and am aware that these photographs may be used for promotional purposes including appearing on the internet on the Story Dogs web site (www.storydogs.org.au) Yes No

I give permission for my child to participate in any research activities relevant to the Story Dogs program. Yes No

My child **does not** have any known allergies that will be triggered by contact with a dog.

My child **does** have known allergies that that will be triggered by contact with a dog.

Signature of Parent/Carer..... **Date**.....

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Target Student Information

Dear Teacher,

In order for the Story Dogs volunteer to best help each student it greatly assists the volunteer if they know the reason(s) why the student was chosen. We understand that due to confidentiality issues you may not be able to give all reasons.

Please complete both sides of this form and pass it on to your Story Dogs volunteer.

Date:	School:	
Classroom Teacher:		
Story Dogs Team	Person Name:	Dog Name:

Student One

Name (first only) _____ Year Level _____

Reading Level at start of program _____

Reading Level at end of year _____

Reason why student was chosen for Story Dogs program	
Any likes or dislikes the student may have. Any special needs, eg dislikes eye contact	

Student Two


Name (first only) _____ Year Level _____



Reading Level at start of program _____

Reading Level at end of year _____

Reason why student was chosen for Story Dogs program	
Any likes or dislikes the student may have. Any special needs, eg dislikes eye contact	

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Target Student Information

Student Three

Name (first only) _____ Year Level _____

Reading Level at start of program _____

Reading Level at end of year _____

Reason why student was chosen for Story Dogs program	
Any likes or dislikes the student may have. Any special needs, eg dislikes eye contact	

Student Four



Name (first only) _____ Year Level _____

Reading Level at start of program _____

Reading Level at end of year _____

Reason why student was chosen for Story Dogs program	
Any likes or dislikes the student may have. Any special needs, eg dislikes eye contact	

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Fun Reading  Reading for Life

School Fundraiser

Story Dogs Day

first Friday in May

Gold Coin Donation


How to have a successful, fun and hassle free Story Dogs Day

- Mark it on the school calendar EARLY in the year
- Go with something simple – everyone dress in orange
- Ask your Story Dogs team to come along and talk at the assembly
- Other fundraising ideas which are appropriate to the school are most welcome.
- Have FUN

Story Dogs will provide posters to be put up around the school, newsletter reminders and support on the day.

We thank you in advance for your support of this fun event.

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