

Mission: READ! Booster Packs

A Response to Michigan's Read Before Grade Three

Booster packs are ready-to-go kits created for students in grades K - 3. Designed with struggling students in mind, booster packs include games, books, and activities that make reading even more fun.

Each pack has a central theme that corresponds to a core component of reading: comprehension, fluency, phonics, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary are each available as options.

Things to Keep in Mind

Our reading booster packs included lots of pieces. To keep track of these pieces, each one was labeled - not to charge patrons for lost pieces, but to determine when to replace materials and to know which components were missing. DIY materials would be a less expensive, yet potentially more time consuming option. Many ideas can be found on Pinterest and many more still from websites and blogs about school-hosted literacy nights. Teachers are experts at well-crafted inexpensive activities!

Our booster packs were set to circulate for three weeks. They were created to be express items initially (meaning holds cannot be placed). However, during the pilot test, we discovered that patrons really do want and need specific levels and areas of practice in order to meet the needs for the child's reading improvement plan, or IRP.

While the cost of each kit can average \$100 (average taken throughout 20 kits), many options are available to create kits from what you may have on hand.



Because we wanted all children to be able to practice reading skills, even if packs were unavailable, we also created a "Reading Tub of Goodness". This tub contains ten reading games which we categorized by reading area and grade level. These can be played by patrons at the branch or used for outreach.

Having additional resources has allowed us to try new games alongside patrons, while giving them something fun to look forward to even if they need to wait for the next available pack.



Created by Jackie Boss & Ashley Smolinski at KDL

"I checked out a pack for my classroom literacy stations and my kids can't wait for the next one!"

-GRPS 2nd grade



"It was fun trying new books that we wouldn't normally pick for ourselves.

My kids really enjoyed the variety."

-Tammy, homeschooling mom of two



Booster Pack displaying games from Lakeshore, phonics readers, and ready-to-go activities at a table at Comstock Park. Displaying 20 bags can be a challenge. While 75 - 100% have been checked out on any given day in the last month, laminated display cards are being created to offer another option for displaying kits when storage space is available.

At our branch in Comstock Park, we might have to put them on top of shelves if they stay too long!

Selecting Materials

Books were chosen using several websites and tools including arbookfind.com, reading level conversion charts, Kent District Library's website and Scholastic.com. An effort was made to include lower leveled books within a grade level (2.2 as opposed to 2.7) in order to meet the needs of struggling readers, especially at the beginning of the year.

For younger grades, K and 1st, phonics readers in both non-fiction and fiction were selected, while 2nd and 3rd grades received a wider variety. This variety included a graphic novel, non-fiction picture book, picture books, shorter chapter books, and easy reader texts. First in series and books that seemed engaging, fun, and popular were chosen intentionally.

Purchased games were chosen using Amazon and Lakeshore websites. While reviewing these materials took time and effort to select for each category, comments by other users were helpful! We selected one or two games per pack and games have sparked the most initial interest from kids!

DIY games were found using Pinterest and many are available on Teachers Pay Teachers. Jackie also created several games when free options were not available. Both purchased and created games were a huge hit!



Next Steps

Testing out these booster packs has provided us with opportunities to offer support to our local schools, teachers, and families. While our primary audience was initially struggling readers, our kits have been enjoyed by teachers, tutors, families with preschoolers and homeschooling families.

This testing process has also allowed to create, investigate, and support current reading initiatives offered at KDL including Mission:Read! (missionread.org), family reading game nights, literacy outreach events, and storytimes aimed at elementary children during the summer.

If you'd like to see more of our inspiration, visit: <https://www.pinterest.com/comstockparklibrary/>

For additional information about Mission:Read! Including handouts for families and book suggestions, visit <http://missionread.org/>.

If you'd like to see what we're up to at KDL, visit: www.kdl.org.



Kids we know and love, our third graders from Comstock Park!