

America Reads!

Bowman Foster Ashe Elementary
Barbara Hawkins Elementary
Colonial Drive Elementary
Naranja Elementary
NFL YET Center

Challenge



Tutor Handbook

Kinloch Park Elementary Shenandoah Elementary Phillis Wheatley Elementary Pine Villa Elementary Kensington Park Elementary
Sylvania Heights Elementary Tropical Elementary North Hialeah Elementary North Twin Lakes Elementary South Miami Heights Elementary
Amelia Earhart Elementary Redondo Elementary James H. Bright Elementary Miami Heights Elementary Hialeah Elementary Silver Bluff Elementary
Flamingo Elementary M.A. Milam Elementary Norwood Elementary W.J. Bryan Elementary Douglass Elementary Barnyard Community Center
Charles R. Drew Elementary Miami Park Elementary North Miami Elementary Carol City Elementary Peskoe Elementary Palm Lakes Elementary
Palm Springs Elementary Fulford Elementary Gragny Elementary Hibiscus Elementary Carlos Finlay Elementary Bel Aire Elementary
Linda Lentin Elementary Easter Seals Marjory Stoneman Douglas Elementary The After-School House
Town Park North Mattie Koonce ChildHope Inc. JFK Library

“My reading is getting better because
my tutor helps me.”

- Claude Daniel, Age 7

AmeriCorps ★ VI STA

Barry 📍 University

✍️ Miami-Dade Community College

Miami-Dade County Public ❤️ Schools

📖 Florida International University

University of Miami ✓

Miami Ad School

National School of Technology

Technical Career Institute

Florida Computer and Business School

America Reads! **CHALLENGE** **Tutor Handbook**

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Barry University

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Miami-Dade Community College

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Prepared by

AmeriCorps*VISTA Members

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FOREWORD



The Butterfly Effect: “A butterfly stirring the air today in Peking can transform storm systems next month in New York.”

– J. Gleik

Congratulations and welcome to America Reads!. As proposed by President Bill Clinton in 1996 and led by the U.S. Department of Education, this nationwide initiative helps American children become better readers. Studies show that students who cannot read well by the end of the third grade have a higher dropout rate and a decreased chance for success in life. Frighteningly, 40% of America’s fourth graders failed to attain a basic reading level in 1994.

America Reads! Tutors play an important role in counteracting this serious problem by devoting time and energy to the intellectual development of America’s youth. The America Reads! program intervenes in the early stages of childhood development – during grades K through third, with a special emphasis on first grade.

The work is challenging, but it is also rewarding. America Reads! Tutors serve as role models to the children whom they mentor and must understand their responsibilities accordingly.

- ✓ America Reads! Tutors should arrive for work displaying a positive attitude about school and about life in general.
- ✓ Tutors must show sensitivity to children’s feelings – celebrating successes while gently guiding them past mistakes – and having patience for success that sometimes comes in small steps.
- ✓ Tutors are expected to carefully read the contents of this handbook.
- ✓ Finally, America Reads! Tutors are expected to conduct themselves professionally and to adhere to the policies stated herein.

We are excited to have you as a member of our family. Good luck stirring the air as an America Reads! Tutor.

MISSION STATEMENT



The goal of America Reads! is to ensure that every child can read well and independently by the end of the third grade. Your mission as an America Reads! Tutor is to provide children with one-on-one instruction in reading, phonics, and comprehension.

AMERICA READS! TUTOR POLICIES

Standards

America Reads! Tutors are expected to:

- ✓ Present themselves in a manner that reflects positively on them and on the America Reads! Challenge. Be courteous and dress appropriately.
- ✓ Treat all persons, including Site Coordinators and America Reads! staff members, with respect and courtesy. Resolve disputes in a constructive manner.
- ✓ Commit for at least one academic year.
- ✓ Show up for work everyday they are scheduled, keep their commitments, and be punctual for all scheduled assignments.
- ✓ Respect the confidential nature of anything that they see or hear. Share concerns and information only with school staff and America Reads! staff.
- ✓ Be tutors -- **NOT** educators, parents, or employees of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). Tutors **CANNOT** be left unsupervised with children, deviate from the tutoring curriculum, evaluate children on a formal basis, discipline children, preach their religion to children or school personnel, contact parents, or give students gifts or rewards exceeding \$1 in value, or give students anything edible.

Expectations

Eligibility

To be eligible for the America Reads! Federal Work-Study Program, students must meet the following criteria:

- Students must qualify for financial aid
- Students must have at least a 2.0 GPA
- Students must be registered for and maintain at least 6 credit hours
- Students must not be in the lowest level of College Prep classes

30-Day Probationary Period

Tutors are hired as candidates by colleges and universities to be placed at school sites. **Employment, however, is dependent upon a successful interview with the school's Site Coordinator.** Although you are employed as a Federal Work Study student, the Site Coordinator makes the final determination as to whether you will be hired at their specific site. In order to maintain employment as an America Reads! Tutor you must demonstrate acceptable performance at your college/university and the America Reads! site.

Upon employment, all new tutors will undergo a mandatory 30-day probationary period. During this period, Site Coordinators will assess the tutor's performance to determine continued employment in the America Reads! program. Assessment will be based upon the policies outlined in this tutor manual, including (but not limited to) proper implementation of the tutorial model, dress code, job performance, attitude, attendance, and punctuality.

Paid vs. Unpaid Activities

Tutors are paid strictly for work related to America Reads!.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- i. tutoring
- ii. organizing America Reads! materials/preparing for tutoring sessions
- iii. attending tutor team meetings
- iv. assisting AmeriCorps*VISTA members in the implementation of parental involvement activities
- v. participating in Miami Book Fair International and Miami Volunteer Fair
- vi. attending training sessions and in-service workshops

Tutors will not be paid for:

- i. travel time
- ii. lunch (unless your shift is 5 or more hours – see the section on page 9 concerning breaks)

Tutor should not be:

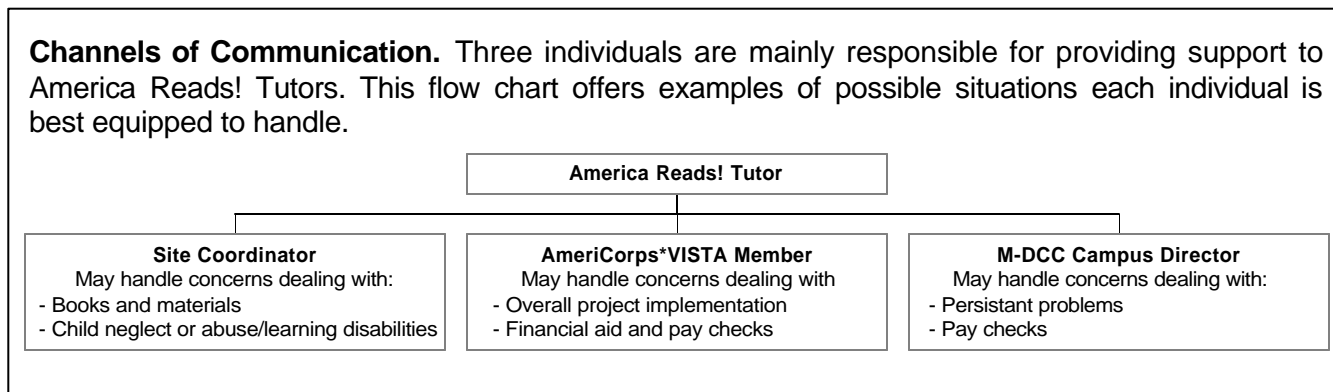
- i. chaperoning field trips unrelated to America Reads!
- ii. supervising classrooms
- iii. administering student assessment tests
- iv. handling other teacher duties

Channels of Communication

Contacting your designated America Reads! site:

- Make sure that you have the correct contact information for your designated site.
- Make sure to call your designated site the next business day after attending the 4-hour new tutor training.
- Make sure to leave your name, phone number, and the time you can be reached, when leaving a message at the site for the Site Coordinator.

America Reads! Tutors are strongly encouraged to share their thoughts on a regular basis with their Site Coordinators, their AmeriCorps*VISTA member, and their campus directors. Keeping the lines of communication open helps to diffuse tensions before those tensions become problems!



Site Coordinator

Site Coordinators are best equipped to handle problems that are specific to their sites and to the children served by those sites. Examples of such concerns may include:

- ✓ Needing a new set of books or additional materials,
- ✓ Suspecting that a child may have a learning disability, or
- ✓ Suspecting that a child is not being cared for properly at home.

Site Coordinators are also responsible for scheduling work times for America Reads! Tutors*. In turn, tutors are expected to inform the Site Coordinator in advance of the following:

- Changes in class schedule, including at the beginning of a new semester
- Missing work at any time
- Arriving late or leaving early
- Expected dates of return following winter, spring, and summer breaks
- Departure from the America Reads! program

*(*Note: All tutors must complete a “Confirmation Agreement” that sets their work schedule for the semester. The form is in triplicate with the original being turned into the office, one copy for the tutor, and one for the Site Coordinator—tutors are expected to work the agreed upon hours!)*

AmeriCorps*VISTA member

Please communicate regularly with your AmeriCorps*VISTA member. America Reads! Tutors are encouraged to speak with their AmeriCorps*VISTA member about ANY problem that concerns them! Relevant concerns may include:

- ✓ Challenges faced
- ✓ Successes achieved
- ✓ Suggestions for improvement
- ✓ Overall project implementation
- ✓ Tutor recruitment and support



AmeriCorps*VISTA members are also responsible for tutor training and support. In turn, tutors should inform the AmeriCorps*VISTA member in advance of the following:

- Departure from the America Reads! program
- Conflicts with scheduled in-service training sessions
- Expected dates of return following winter, spring, and summer breaks

M-DCC Campus Director

Campus Directors for the M-DCC Center for Community Involvement will be contacted to resolve problems that are persistent and seemingly irreconcilable. However, if a problem arises tutors should first contact their Site Coordinator as most issues can be resolved here. If you are unable to resolve the problem at this level, go to your Campus Director (do not contact the principal or Site Coordinator—rather, the Campus Director will make this contact to resolve serious problems).

Attendance



Absences

America Reads! Tutors who will miss a day of work must inform their assigned Site Coordinator at least 24 hours in advance of an expected absence. If the Site Coordinator is not available, tutors should inform the alternate contact person at the site giving the reason for the absence as well as their expected date of return.

Even in the event of an emergency, tutors are still expected to call in BEFORE their shifts are scheduled to begin. Please note that tests, exams, and term papers do NOT constitute emergencies.

MISSING 3 OR MORE DAYS WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION WILL RESULT IN TERMINATION.

Consistency

Consistency is an important aspect of the job for America Reads! Tutors. Tutors are expected to be at work and be on time. A tutor's repeated failure to report to work, results in:

- Six to ten children being deprived of the opportunity to receive the one-on-one attention that makes such a crucial difference in their education and their lives.
- Children feeling disappointed on a personal level since they look forward to time spent with their tutor each week.
- Site Coordinators, first grade teachers, and other tutors, being responsible for filling the gap left by an absent tutor.
- A negative reflection of the America Reads! Program and the associated college/university.

In-Service Training

America Reads! Tutors must maintain high standards of excellence. Therefore, it is essential that every tutor attend two In-Service Trainings per semester. These workshops are MANDATORY and typically last for two hours. Tutors will be paid for their participation in the In-Service Trainings. Dates, times, and locations for each session will be published well in advance. The purpose of In-Service Training is to promote:

1. Information dissemination
2. Reflection on progress & challenges
3. Skill enhancement

Missing In-Service Training Sessions

Excusable absences require advance, written notice with an acceptable excuse. Failure to attend In-Service Trainings without prior notification will result in a written warning. A second occurrence will result in termination.

Dress Code

America Reads Tutors are held to a higher standard due to the nature of the job. They serve as role models to the children they tutor and are therefore expected to present themselves professionally. Tutors are expected to dress appropriately and appear well groomed. “Business-casual” (comfortable yet professional) is considered suitable. **Dress conservatively** and ask for feedback from other school/site employees.

America Reads! Tutors are asked **NOT** to wear the following types of attire:



- × All types of workout gear
- × See-through garments
- × Revealing garments
- × Tank and halter-tops
- × “Cut-offs”
- × Shorts
- × Short skirts or short dresses

Jewelry and accessories (including piercing) should be professional.

Site Coordinators are permitted to use discretion when establishing a dress code.

PAY SCHEDULES AND TIMESHEETS

M-DCC America Reads! tutors work 10-20 hours per week, earn \$6.50 per hour and are paid every other Friday. Pay periods cover two weeks at a time. **In order to receive paychecks on time, tutors must turn in timesheets on time!**

Pay Schedule

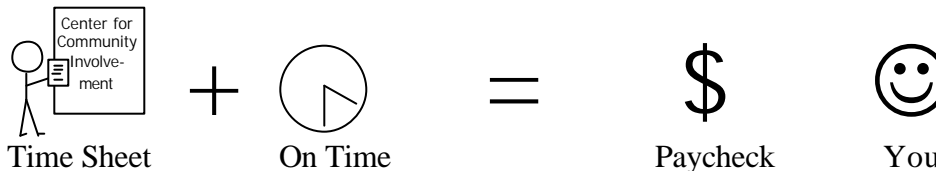
America Reads! Tutors attending M-DCC should turn-in timesheets and bi-weekly logs, and pick-up pay checks according to the following pay schedule. Paychecks correspond NOT to the pay period just ending but to the prior pay period. Checks are available after 11:00 AM in the Center for Community Involvement office. Timesheets are due by 4:30 PM every other Friday in the Center for Community Involvement office (see pay schedule on page 7).



PAY PERIOD	TIMESHEETS DUE AT M-DCC	PAY DATE
Aug 27 – Sept 09, 2001	Friday, Sept 10 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Sept 21
Sept 10 – Sept 23	Friday, Sept 24 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Oct 5
Sept 24 – Oct 7	Friday, Oct 8 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Oct 19
Oct 8 – Oct 21	Friday, Oct 22 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Nov 2
Oct 22 – Nov 4	Friday, Nov 5 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Nov 16
Nov 5 – Nov 18	Friday, Nov 19 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Nov 30
Nov 19 – Dec 2	Friday, Dec 3 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Dec 14
Dec 3 – Dec 16	Thursday, Dec 14 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Dec 21
Dec 17 – Dec 30	Friday, Dec 21 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Jan 11
Dec 31 – Jan 13, 2002	Friday, Jan 14 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Jan 25
Jan 14 – Jan 27	Friday, Jan 28 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Feb 8
Jan 28 – Feb 10	Friday, Feb 11 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Feb 22
Feb 11 – Feb 24	Friday, Feb 25 by 4:30 PM	Friday, March 8
Feb 25 – March 10	Friday, March 11 by 4:30 PM	Friday, March 22
March 11 – March 24	Friday, March 25 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Apr 5
March 25 – Apr 7	Friday, Apr 8 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Apr 19
Apr 8 – Apr 21	Friday, Apr 22 by 4:30 PM	Friday, May 3
Apr 22 – May 5	Friday, May 6 by 4:30 PM	Friday, May 17
May 6 – May 19	Friday, May 20 by 4:30 PM	Friday, May 31
May 20 – June 2	Friday, June 3 by 4:30 PM	Friday, June 14
June 3 – June 16	Friday, June 17 by 4:30 PM	Friday, June 28
June 17 – June 30	Friday, July 1 by 4:30 PM	Friday, July 12
July 1 – July 14	Friday, July 15 by 4:30 PM	Friday, July 26
July 15 – July 28	Friday, July 29 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Aug 9
July 29 – Aug 11	Friday, Aug 12 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Aug 23
Aug 12 – Aug 25	Friday, Aug 26 by 4:30 PM	Friday, Sept 6

* Early due date

And remember...



Timesheets and Biweekly Progress Reports

America Reads! Tutors are required to:

1. Maintain tutor timesheets in a safe place at the school or agency, where the timesheets will not be lost.
2. Sign-in upon arriving and sign-out when leaving (a sign-in book is located in the school site main office). The personnel in the front office must verify each sign-in and sign-out time with their initials or a signature.
3. Write in hours worked after every shift.
4. Obtain the signature of the Site Coordinator or alternate contact person at the site **after every shift.**

Filling Out Timesheets

Timesheets should be filled out as follows:

Date			Time In	Time Out	Hours	Supervisor's Signature
Day of Week	Month	Day				
Monday:	5	/ 10	8:30 a.m.	12:45 p.m.	4.25	Site Coordinator or
Tuesday:	5	/ 11	1:10 p.m.	3:45 p.m.	2.50	Alternate Contact
Total Pay Period Hours						6.75

Adding Hours on Timesheets

Hours worked per day should be rounded to the nearest quarter-hour (15, 30, or 45 minutes) and added as follows.

Total hours worked = number of complete hours worked + fraction of minutes worked

Where the fraction of minutes worked can be calculated using the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{Number of minutes worked}}{60 \text{ minutes in one hour}} = \text{the fraction of minutes worked}$$



Example: Tuesday in the timesheet above was totaled as follows:

- (a) This tutor worked 2 full hours + 35 minutes.
- (b) 35 minutes should then be rounded to 30 minutes.

(c) $\frac{30 \text{ minutes worked}}{60 \text{ minutes in one hour}} = \frac{30}{60} = 0.5 \text{ hours worked}$

- (d) Hence, 2 hours + 0.5 hours = 2.50 hours worked

(15 minutes = .25 hour; 30 minutes = .5 hour; 45 minutes = .75 hour)

Breaks

Tutors working between four and five hours in one day are entitled to a paid 15-minute break. Tutors working five or more hours in one day are entitled to a paid 30-minute break. Tutors will not be paid for all other breaks. Unless a tutor is entitled to a 30-minute break, tutors will not be paid for lunch

Total Hours Worked for One Day	Length of Paid Break
Less than 4 hours	No paid break
4 hours or more but less than 5 hours	15-minute paid break
5 hours or more	30-minute paid break

Prior to Submitting Timesheets and Biweekly Progress Reports

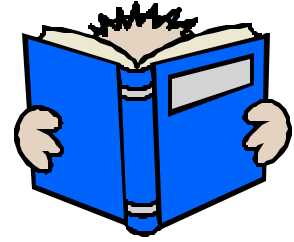
1. Complete the biweekly progress report (there are three versions of the biweekly report– use any of them, changing as often as possible).
2. Complete the timesheet by adding pay period hours and writing in the total.
3. Obtain the Site Coordinator’s signature on both the timesheet and biweekly progress report.
4. Turn in completed timesheet and biweekly progress report by 4:30 p.m. on the due day.
 - (a) Faxes are acceptable if you absolutely cannot get the timesheet to the office on time.
 - (b) Call the Center for Community Involvement main office number to make sure the fax was received.
 - (c) You must turn in the original as soon as you can.
5. Leave the pink copies with your supervisor, keep the yellow copies for your records, and turn in the white originals to the Center for Community Involvement.

Warnings

1. Falsification of hours and/or signatures will result in termination of employment, as well as suspension and/or expulsion from school.
2. **LATE TIMESHEETS WILL RESULT IN PAY DELAYS.**
3. Chronically late timesheets will result in verbal and/or written warnings and finally termination.

TUTORING TIPS

- ✓ Be kind and friendly to the child. Learn the proper pronunciation of his/her name. Show interest in what the child says and does.
- ✓ The tutoring curriculum must be followed in proper order.
- ✓ The written plan must be filled out for every child, every time.
- ✓ Write clearly in print, not cursive.
- ✓ Empower the child as the reader. Let him/her hold the book.
- ✓ Give the child time to think about words. Do not jump in too quickly to help.
- ✓ Always look for the positive in what the child says or does.
- ✓ Do not make promises you cannot keep.
- ✓ Communicate regularly with classroom teacher regarding the student's progress.



Remember that being a tutor is more than just a job!

You are a role model and someone who can impact a child's life forever.

2001/2002 CONTACT SHEET

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