**Reading PALs - Skills and Qualities**

**As a Reading PAL you will develop a range of**

**skills and qualities. Here are the top 10 😉**

**1. Patience**

Patience, the ability to remain calm and respectful, is an essential skill for Reading PALs. This is because as a Reading PAL you have advanced knowledge of High Frequency Words and need to help someone with less knowledge. By staying calm, you can not only ensure that the session runs smoothly, but you can also help your buddy practice self-patience to conquer challenging words.

**2. Positivity**

Having a positive attitude can make the difference between a motivated buddy and an unmotivated buddy. As a Reading PAL, you should always give your buddy praise. You should emphasise their strengths, effort and progress. You should also encourage them to challenge themselves. *"You pronounced that tricky word perfectly!" “Awesome Effort!” “Nice use of strategies!”*

**3. Empathy**

Empathy means being able to understand and share the feelings of another person. It's like putting yourself in someone else's shoes. Some people naturally enjoy learning while others could enjoy learning more if they had the right person to help them. That is why it is so crucial for Reading PALs to show compassion towards their buddy who requires support with learning and remembering High Frequency Words. Empathy can motivate Reading PALs to remain dedicated to their buddy while also empowering their buddy themselves to continue learning.

**4. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is another essential Reading PALs skill. Reading PALs are not allowed to share information about their buddy. This means not talking about their buddy with other Reading PALs or anyone else.

**5. Technical knowledge**

Reading PALs should have an appropriate level of High Frequency Word knowledge to help their buddy learn their words. PALs should use a variety of strategies to support their buddy (see Strategy Sheet):

* Modelling how to say the words, get your buddy to repeat
* Sounding the words out together
* Chunking down words – break the words in to syllables “*an/swer” “A/mer/i/ca”*
* Identifying tricky parts of words – draw a heart above the tricky part
* Stretch the word
* Sliding sounds together
* Look for smaller/other words in the word
* Use it in a sentence
* Link to similar words that have been learned – *“go, so, no” “my, by, try”*
* Identify split digraphs / magic ‘e’
* Draw a picture to go with the word

**6. Active listening**

Active listening is the process Reading PALs need to use when with their buddy. It is when you are really listening to what your buddy is saying. You should be maintaining eye contact, nodding and talking things through when appropriate. Reading PALs should display active listening when a buddy voices their concerns or has a question. This not only helps your buddy feel heard and valued, but it also helps Reading PALs determine the best way to help them.

**7. Communication**

Reading PALs should have excellent verbal [communication skills](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/communication-skills?from=careerguide-autohyperlink-en-US) to help their buddy learn their High Frequency Words. Reading PALs should also have neat handwriting so that buddies can read the words that they write on flash cards, dice games, etc. Reading PALs will also need to communicate progress and any issues to the relevant adults in the school.

**8. Leadership**

Leadership is another skill that Reading PALs can use to their advantage. This is because they have a responsibility towards one buddy. Excellent [leadership skills](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/leadership-skills?from=careerguide-autohyperlink-en-US) allows Reading PALs to guide their buddy and keep them on task.

**9. Problem-solving & Initiative**

Problem-solving is the ability to identify a problem and create solutions. This is because Reading PALs will help their buddy problem-solve and learn new words. You will get to know your buddy well and find out what works best for them.

**10. Time management**

Another useful skill for Reading PALs is time management. Being able to manage their time productively means they can make sure Reading PAL sessions don't go overtime. Additionally, staying on task ensures you can cover everything you need to during the session.

**Being a Reading PAL is an extremely rewarding leadership role. You will see the progress your buddy is making and know that you have contributed to improving their reading skills.**