

Mentor Tips: MENTOR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



Burson-Marsteller's Jessica Smith with
Thomson Elementary's Ashaunda Ingraham.

In challenged home environments where there are few books in the home, little time to read them, and too many other distractions, students are at a great disadvantage. Reading Mentors in the Power Lunch program are charged with *reading for fun*. We do not train mentors to teach students how to read. But in some ways, Reading Mentors can be great agents of change. To help you in that endeavor, here are answers to a few of the most frequent questions we hear from our Reading Mentors.

Is my mentee reading at grade level? Maybe, maybe not. There are gifted readers in the Power Lunch program, and there are students who struggle with all but the simplest words. There are even students who are close to non-readers. All of these students can benefit from sharing reading time with a caring adult. By association, exposure to the written word strengthens all kinds of skills: decoding, comprehension, vocabulary, and many more. Enjoying the reading process is more important than knowing what level book your mentee “should” be reading during the program.

S

What should we be reading? Read what appeals to your mentee! Or read what appeals to you – if it also appeals to your mentee! By reading books of high interest, the reader is automatically engaged, and skills will be strengthened. That said, feel free to challenge your student to “step it up,” and take on a more demanding book.

Is it ok if I read to my mentee, or do I always have to insist that my mentee read to me? Either is fine! Reading to your mentee strengthens comprehension, problem-solving, appreciation of plot and story line, and countless other skills. But challenge your mentee to read some of the book – a sentence, a line of dialogue, or every other page. Some mentees love to do all the reading, and some are reluctant. You can find a rhythm, while keeping the dialogue positive and reading-focused.

For mentors who would like a frame of reference, to the left is a basic list of what a strong reader will be able to do by the end of third grade. Feel free to work toward these goals with your student!