

#RISECommunities

HELP CREATE A COMMUNITY THAT READS

➔ Increase access to books



Imagination Library is partnering with local businesses to provide one free book a month to children from birth to age five. This program allows children to build a home library of 60 books prior to beginning kindergarten. Currently, Garland County serves around 2,000 children and hopes to reach 5,000 in the next few years. Read more at <https://imaginationlibrary.com>.



Little Free libraries can be found in communities around the state. These mailbox-type libraries simply say "take a book" or "leave a book" allowing people access to books others have read and donated. Read more at <https://littlefreelibrary.org>.

➔ Plan reading events



Real Men Read is a program that brings business and community members into the schools to read to students. It is important that students see adults reading and know that reading will always be a part of their world. Read more <https://www.educationworld.com/admin/admin/admin551.shtml>.



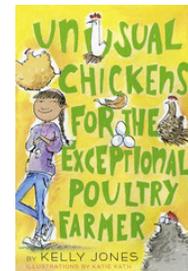
One District, One Book is a program that allows families and communities the opportunity to read and discuss a book together, alongside the students in the school. Read more about this program at <https://readtothem.org/programs/one-district-one-book/about/>.



Read Across America Day will take place on March 2, 2019. Start now and plan an event to promote reading across the community. Read more at <http://www.nea.org/grants/plan-a-reading-event.htm>.

GARLAND COUNTY READS

#RISEArkansas



One county in the state has put district rivalry aside and joined together to promote a culture of reading. #GarlandCountyReads was started three years ago as part of Hot Springs School District's strategic plan for improving reading. After the six district superintendents committed to providing one book for every student and a district liaison, over 1,500 community members now participate in the annual kickoff event and students are experiencing a book alongside their families and the community.

During the Garland County Reads Event, downtown Hot Springs is filled with music, laughter, books, and this year...chickens. Community partners cook hot dogs, hand out resources, and provide an evening of fun at no cost to the families or districts. Students dance the Chicken Dance, but more importantly, students sit down with students from other schools and people from the local community to hear a volunteer read the first chapter of the book *Unusual Chickens for the Exceptional Poultry Farmer*. Together, Garland County experiences the transformational magic of reading.

Event coordinator Melissa Edwards encourages other counties to follow their lead. "Start with buy-in from the superintendents. Next, form a committee and begin finding your community partners. Then, pick out a book and let the fun begin." Edwards' personal experience with reading as a child has influenced her dedication to this project. "Reading is essential in today's society because it broadens the mind and encourages imagination, opening doors and windows to unlimited possibilities," she said.

Learn more about the RISE Arkansas Initiative.	Encourage reading at home with these resources for families.	Utilize Arkansas Ideas for professional development on the science of reading.
		