

## Carry on Reading Book Clubs



### Guidelines for Running a Book Club (Reading Program)

- 1. Select 4 – 6 people** who would be interested in joining a **book club**/reading program. Participants can include anyone who lives in your long-term care home, attends your day program or is in any other environment where people with dementia or other cognitive impairments gather. Consider including anyone who is able to read and anyone who would be interested in joining the group. You may have someone who is unable to read but would like to sit in and listen (such as someone who is blind or likes to be with a their friend or loved one).

**NOTE:** When selecting group members think about “Who” each person is and “Who” they were. Some people love to chat and talk and discuss. Some people are very serious and want to attend to the task at hand. Sometimes if you mix these two types of people the group does not work well. However, there are times this is a perfect mix. Let your “Observations” guide you as you create groups that will become “book clubs” which can generate friendships, reminiscing and joy.
- 2. Use the “Reading Screen”** to determine whether each person is able to read and whether they can see the large sized font used in the readers. Record the outcomes on the form provided with the Reading Screen and ensure that people who need glasses are wearing them and that the glasses are clean.
- 3. Once you know whether each individual can read, and see, the size of the font that is used in the “Carry on Reading” books, ask if him/her if he/she would like to read a book with you.** If you take time to read a book with each person before you invite him or her to participate in the book club (reading program) you are providing an opportunity for him/her to discover that they **can** read these books. Some people may think that they are unable to read. Let the word “familiar” guide you. Some people don’t understand what you mean when you ask them to join a reading program – but when you ask if they would like to join a **“Book Club”** they agree to participate.
- 4. Set a time and quiet location for the book club (reading program).** Consider preparing an invitation, which will serve as a memory prompt to remind each person that he/she will be participating in the reading group at a specific time on a specific day.
- 5. Add predictability to each day by creating a routine.** If possible, in long-term care homes, plan to have the group meet at the same time every day – seven days a week. It is beneficial to create a routine. If daily book clubs are not possible, set the time and day(s)

to be the same each week so the book club members can look forward to their next meeting.

6. **Select the title of the book** for each book club meeting.
7. **Make sure each member of the group has a copy of the book**, making it easy to follow along – and to remain engaged.
8. Make sure every member of the group, including the staff, volunteer or family member, is **wearing a name badge**.
9. For the first few meetings the leader can be the staff, volunteer or family member. **When possible, aim to ask a resident/program participant to take over this role of “Book Club Leader”**.
10. **Welcome each person to the group.**
11. **Ask everyone to turn to the first page and ask one person to begin to read.**
12. **Ask the person seated beside the first reader to read next** and then continue by asking each person to take a turn reading. Stop to discuss the questions that are presented in the books and make sure that conversation is encouraged when memories are triggered.
13. **Thank the group for attending and ask if they would like to join you again – clearly stating when the next group will be held.**
14. **ENJOY!**