



## **“Qualities of an Ideal Mentor” Lesson Plan**

**Objective:** for mentors (and Leadership Team members) to learn more about different qualities of an ideal mentor and how everyone can improve their mentoring skills in one way or anything.

### **Instructions:**

The Leadership member in each group starts by introducing the topic of the day “how to be a better mentor”.

He/She divides her group into pairs, and hands each pair a set of 2 half-sheets of paper (the 2 papers will be labeled role 1 or role 2).

Each set will have a different scenario. Have each pair perform the scenario in front of the rest of the group.

The Leadership member explains that although everyone possesses good qualities already, there is always room for improvement. He/She explains that after the role-play there will be time to debrief about the activity. See papers below:

### **Having a Negative Attitude:**

Role 1: “You woke up late this morning to realize that you missed your doctor’s appointment. You have to volunteer at Reading Buddies today, but what you’re really thinking about is hanging out with your friend right after that. You show up to Reading Buddies just waiting for the time to pass, and just hope that some kid doesn’t get on your nerves again. You get paired up with a person who’s new to Reading Buddies, and is given the task of explaining the program to him/her. You resent this responsibility so you answer their questions haphazardly.”

Role 2: “Today is your first day at Reading Buddies. You are excited about what’s to come, and you’re glad that you got paired up to talk to someone who’s not a newcomer to the program. You ask your partner many questions about their experience and how the program works.”

### **Being Inflexible:**

Role 1: “You have been working with a new buddy for two weeks since the buddy’s usual mentor went on vacation. You love working with this buddy, and you feel like you are really making progress with your buddy’s literacy. Today, the buddy’s previous mentor returned from

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vacation. You are told to keep working with the buddy, instead of the mentor who just returned from vacation. You update the mentor on your buddy's improvement, and tell him/her that you're going to keep working with the buddy."

Role 2: "You have been working with the same buddy for about 3 months, and you loved working with him/her; then you went on a 2 week vacation, so your buddy got a new mentor in your absence. Today you return and expect to get your usual buddy back, but you're told that your replacement is going to work with your buddy. You are full of hesitation about working with a new buddy; you wonder if your buddy will like you or whatever you'll be able to bond with them as well as you had bonded with your usual buddy. You decide to argue about why you can't work with your previous buddy instead."

#### Close-mindedness:

Role 1: "You're pretty new to Reading Buddies, and you've really liked learning about the program so far. It seems to be a pretty structured program but at the same time, there's a lot of room to try different techniques with your reading buddy. You have some ideas about how to change and improve the program, and today decided to talk to another mentor about your ideas so see how he/she felt."

Role 2: "You've been in Reading Buddies for the past year, and you're sure you know what the program is about, top to bottom. You feel like you don't need anyone telling you anything more about Reading Buddies, and acting like they know more than you. You also like Reading Buddies the way it is, so when someone tries to tell you something differ, you are quick to argue."

#### Being Distracted or Disengaged:

Role 1: "You are playing the role of the Leadership Team member, and you are trying to lead your group in a group evaluation of the program so far, so you can see what changes and improvements can be made for the rest of the summer. You notice that one of the mentors in your group doesn't seem to be paying attention; you try different methods to keep him/her engaged in the conversation at hand."

Role 2: "You stayed out late with your friends last night, and woke up this morning with a headache before you came to Reading Buddies. You are so exhausted and tired you can barely keep yourself from falling asleep. Your mind keeps wandering, and you're not really focused on anything the Leadership member is saying."

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Debrief:

After all the scenarios have been played out, the Leadership Team member asks the mentors what bad characteristic each scenario emphasized on.

Then, each mentor will be asked to share which the situations they could most relate to, and how that particular characteristic may affect their teaching ability as mentors and learning ability as mentors.

(ex: a mentor might recount a day when she was really tired when coming to Reading Buddies, and therefore she felt like she couldn't work with her buddy as well that day)

The Leadership Team member finishes by saying that it's important to realize that there are many qualities to being a good mentor, so it's important to look at themselves as mentors from many different angles to see where they can improve more. Also say that becoming a better mentor is a gradual process, so don't be discouraged if the scenarios seem familiar.

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***Skills of an Ideal Mentor***

Ask questions

Creativity

Perceptivity

Phonics

Redirecting

Time management

Flexibility

Positive reinforcement

***Qualities of an Ideal Mentor***

Attitude

Infectious

Flexible

Command respect

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Open-minded

Engaged/focused

***Qualities of an Ideal Leader***

Organizes

Set an example

Shape mentors

Share experience

Take responsibility

Builds relationships

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