

Mission Statement and Summary
Read 4 Me
For Potential Facilitators

Mission:

Able readers and individuals who enjoy reading need opportunities to come together and participate in outlets to explore a variety of reading genres and types of reading options, engage in conversations about ideas, problems, solutions, characters, alternative outcomes, and develop a peer group who enjoy reading. The ***Reading 4 Me*** (working title) program goal is to provide this group of young people, who enjoy reading, a time to come together, engage in discussions, exchange ideas, and build relationships with others like themselves,

Summary of the Project:

One challenge we see in our nations schools is our fourth–sixth grade able readers may just exist in their classroom settings. Often times this group is not having their reading needs met because they are functioning fine with their grades and performance at their assigned grade level. However, able readers are young people who demonstrate characteristics distinguishing them from their age peers in their ability to read and engage with books. They often start to read earlier, have an extensive vocabulary, read a variety of genres, see relationships between characters, and grasp complex ideas within the text. Because these readers often times show a propensity for reading, language understanding and perform more advanced than their same age peers, they need different types of reading options to support their reading needs. These include having access to high interest literature at their reading level not their age level; developing high levels of comprehension skills; use high level questions and interaction with their reading experiences, and have opportunities to discuss ideas with others.

In choosing ways to facilitate for able readers, one must consider providing occasions for these students to interact with advanced content, use different reading materials including trade books/reading on the web/technology, use discussion groups with like ability peers using challenging novels, allow for reading choices, and opportunities to explore interests further such as independent studies. While all able readers may not demonstrate all of the previous characteristics, nurturing students who are able readers and/or like to read with interesting reading materials, opportunities for discussion of ideas, and collaborate with others who enjoy reading creates a supportive environment for these students to grow and develop as readers and thinkers.

Based on the information we know about able readers/those who like to read and survey data gathered from a sample group to learn what able readers like to read and how they like to interact with what they read, the ***Read 4 Me*** program was created. The ***Read 4 Me*** program seeks to offer able readers the opportunity to regularly come together to discuss books of interest and share ideas about

interpretations and implications about what they read. The target group to participate in the initial phase of ***Read 4 Me*** will be able readers in grades 4-6 with 50% of the participants representing students of diversity, poverty and/or from a rural setting. This program is offered as a collaborative effort between the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Center for Gifted Education and UL Reading Institute.

Facilitators for the ***Read 4 Me*** groups will have an educational background for supporting high potential students, gifted masters or gifted certification. While the participants don't have to be identified gifted, the facilitator's background in gifted education will provide the intellectual and affective understanding of able students to support their unique needs. In addition, facilitators will receive professional development in how to conduct inquiry book discussions through Junior Great Books. The background in gifted education and instruction using Junior Great Books inquiry model will bring a rich and challenging opportunity for these able readers.