

ACTIVITY

Read Together, Grow Together

Celebrate reading with a family event that includes classroom story time, bookmark making, and a book swap where each student takes home a new-to-them book.

Brought to you by your pals at

alpaca

BUILDING FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH READING

Read Together, Grow Together is designed to help school leaders strengthen partnerships between teachers and families. By bringing everyone together around a shared love of reading, this activity builds relationships, fosters clear communication, and promotes shared responsibility in each student's learning journey. It's a great fit for any time during the school year and helps create a more connected school community.

Try it out at your school!



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- Extra tips to create family engagement



Step 1: Spread the Word

Send a clear, timely message to families so they know what to expect, how to participate, and feel connected to the purpose of the event.

Quick Tips

Communicate Early and Often: Use multiple channels (newsletters, flyers, Class Dojo, etc.) and send your first message at least two weeks in advance. Follow up with a reminder a few days before the event.

Make It Accessible for All Families: Provide translations or bilingual versions as needed to ensure every family feels included and informed.

Set Clear Expectations: Explain the Book Swap process—encourage families to bring 1–3 gently used books—and highlight the event’s goal of building community through reading. Let them know what to expect during the event.



Step 2: Plan & Set Up the Event

Bring families together for a joyful celebration of reading—designed with clear planning so staff understand the goals and flow, ensuring a smooth and meaningful experience for everyone.

Quick Tips

Pick a Convenient Time: Schedule the event at a family-friendly time, like before school pickup or in the morning, to encourage strong turnout.

Create Meaningful Connections: Host families in their child's classroom to build relationships; siblings can choose which room to visit for flexibility and comfort.

Prepare for a Smooth Flow: Print Reading Passports ahead of time and clearly label each station to help families navigate the event with ease.

Suggested Event Stations



Station 1: Sign-In & Book Drop-Off

- Families check in and drop off their gently used books
- Each student receives a Reading Passport

Station 2: Classroom Reading Time

- Families visit their child's classroom (or siblings' rooms) for shared reading
- Suggested time: 10–15 minutes

Station 3: Bookmark Making (Library or Common Space)

- Use pre-made templates or invite families to create their own bookmarks

Station 4: Book Swap (Gym or Multipurpose Area)

- Each student selects a new book to take home from the donated collection

Supplies Needed

Printables:

- Sign-in sheet
- Reading passport

Bookmark Station Supplies:

- Bookmark templates
- Coloring supplies
- Markers
- Crayons
- Scissors

Activity Variations

- Offer a snack during the final rotation
- Purchase new books to ensure every student receives one, even if they don't bring one to swap
- Allow students to choose a reading spot anywhere around the school instead of staying in classrooms



EXAMPLE EMAIL

Send this email to families to explain the event—feel free to adjust the wording to fit your school community and staff!

Dear Families,

We're excited to invite you to our upcoming "Read Together – Grow Together" event—a special opportunity to share the joy of reading with your child!

What's Happening:

Join us to read together, enjoy some tasty snacks, and take part in a fun school-wide book exchange.

What to Bring:


Please bring a gently used book to contribute. Your child will get to choose a "new-to-you" book to take home and keep the reading going.

Passport Fun:

Each student will receive a reading passport to get stamped at each stop along the way—a fun keepsake to remember the day!

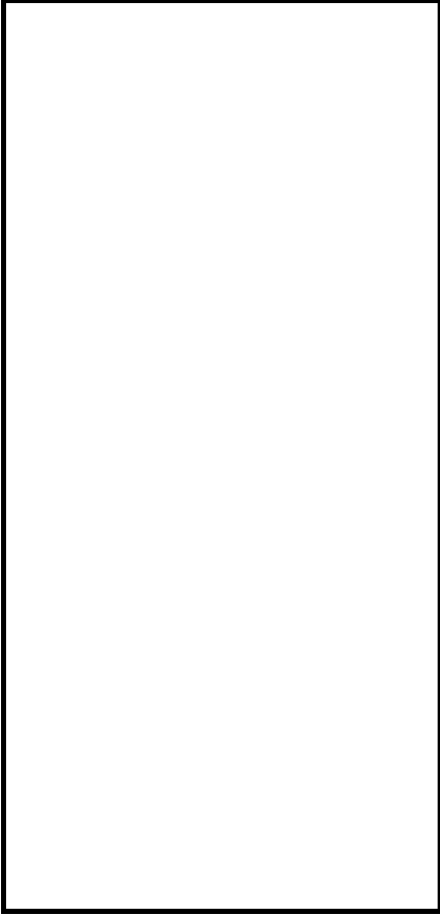
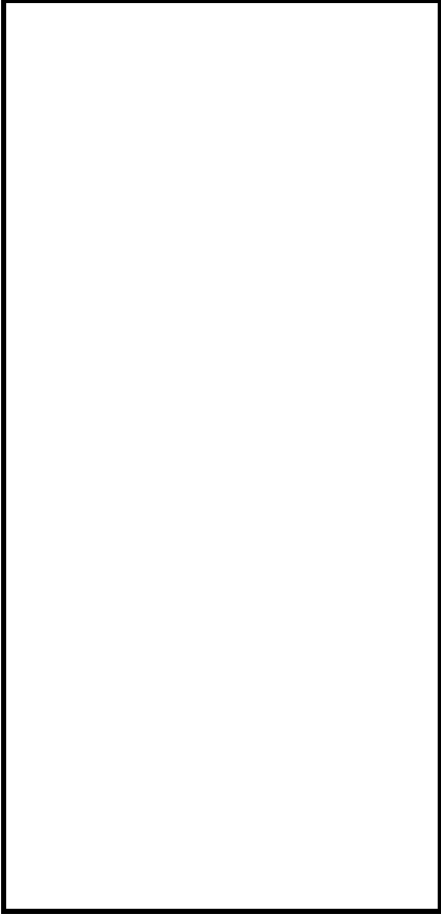
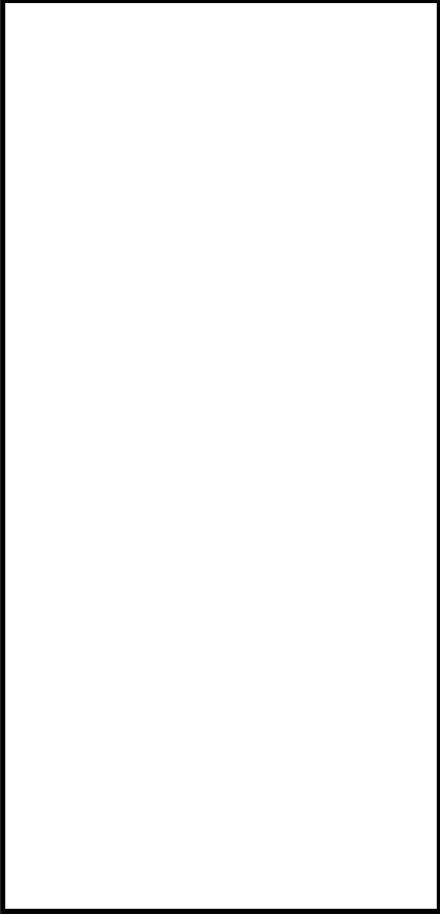
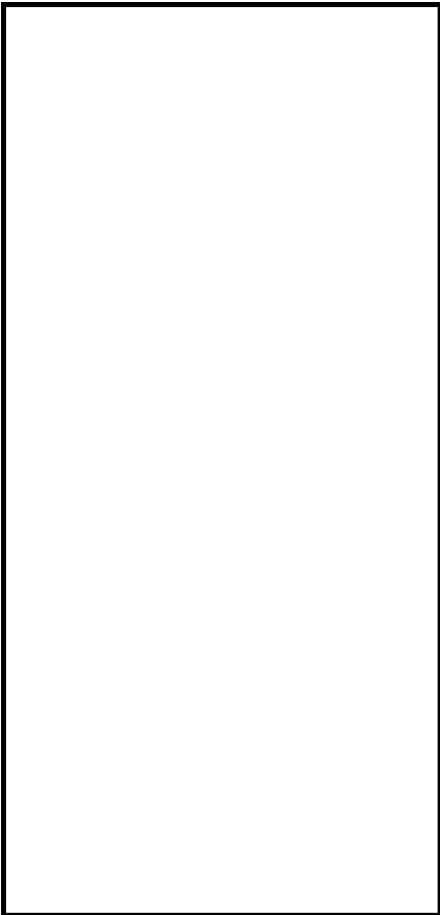
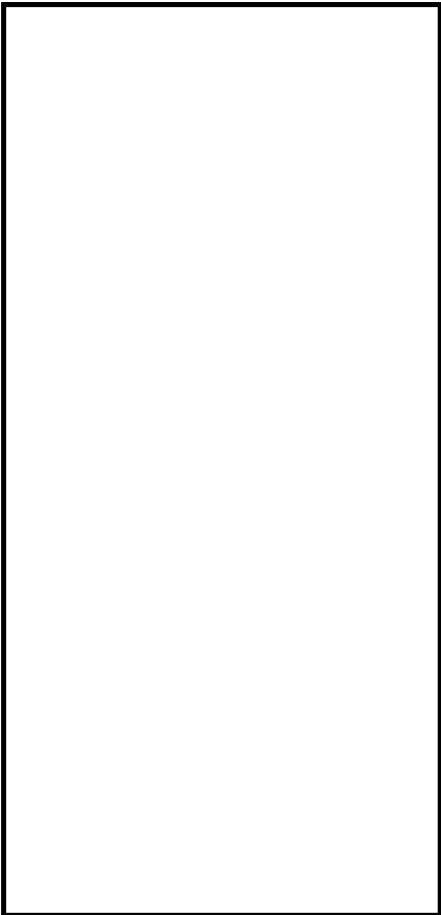
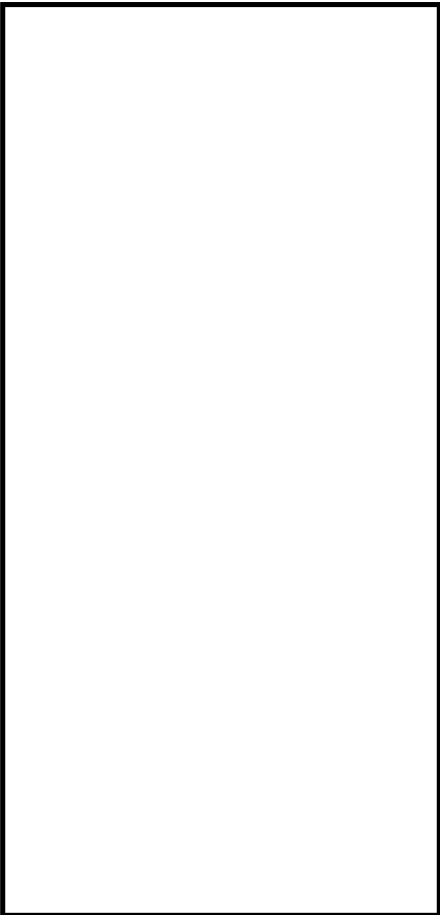
We can't wait to see you there, sharing stories, making memories, and celebrating the adventure of reading together.

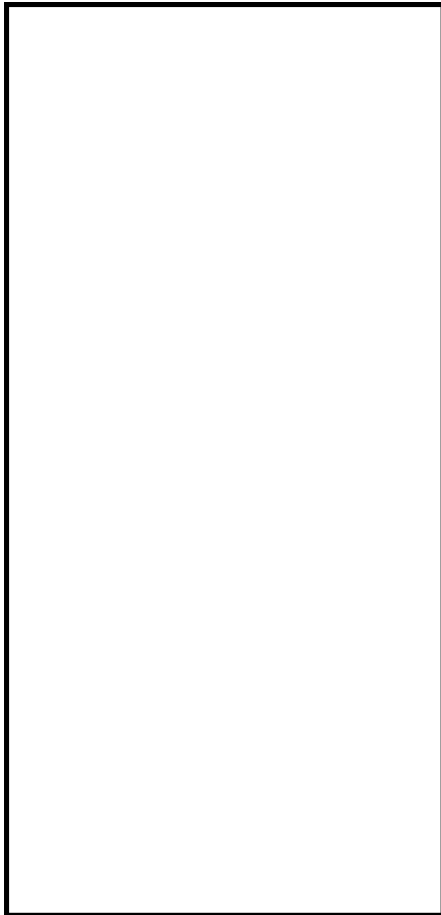
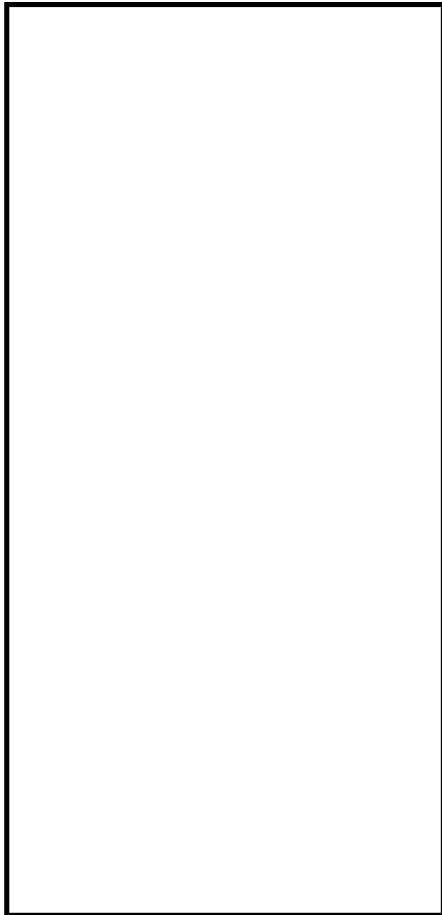
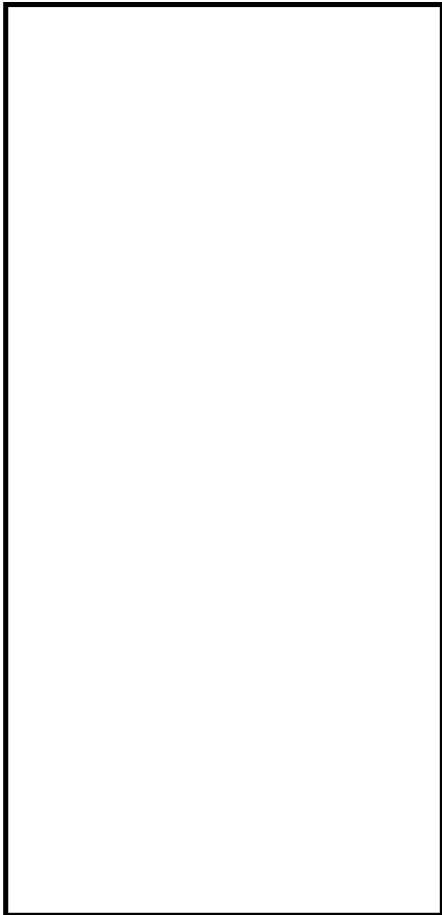
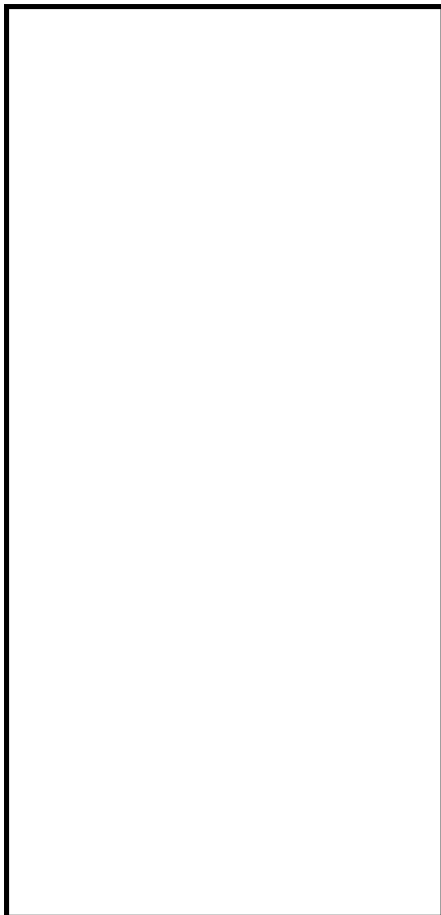
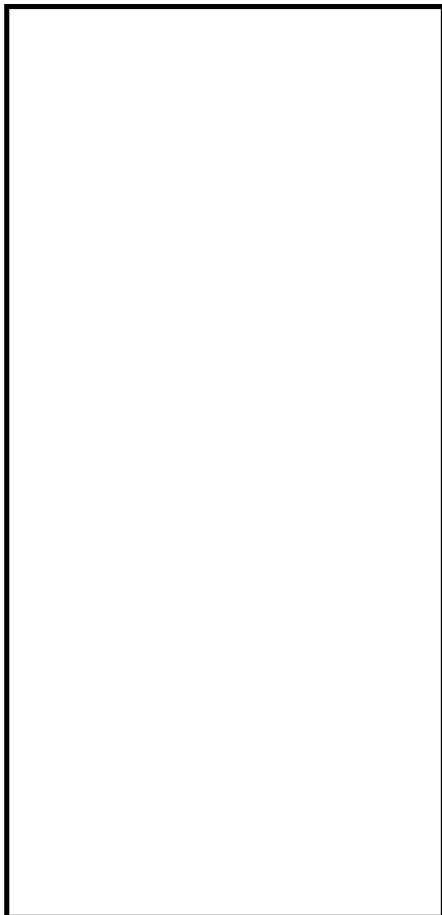
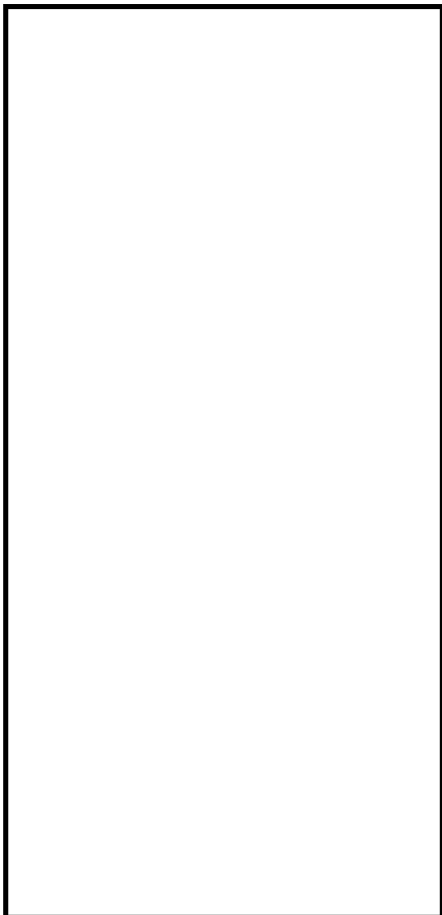
Warmly,
[Your School Name or Principal's Name]



PRINTABLES & RECORDING PAGE







Sign-In Sheet

[illegible]

READ TOGETHER, GROW TOGETHER



Name: _____

1st Station:

2nd Station:

3rd Station:

4th Station:

READ TOGETHER, GROW TOGETHER



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TIPS ON BRINGING FAMILIES INTO THE LEARNING JOURNEY



- **Use technology to communicate:** Share updates with families through videos, voice messages, or texts about what students are learning in class.
- **Create family-friendly assignments:** Design homework that encourages family involvement, such as reading together or interviewing a family member.
- **Invite family input:** Ask families about their literacy routines at home to help connect classroom learning with everyday life.
- **Be mindful of language barriers:** Whenever possible, provide materials and explanations in families' home languages to ensure everyone can participate.

Sample Questions for: "What Can You Tell Me That Will Help Me Be a Good Teacher for Your Child?"

1. What is a typical evening or weekend like in your home?
2. What hobbies and interests do you share with your child?
3. What holidays or traditions are important in your family?
4. Tell me about your child's interests.
5. How does your child feel about reading and writing?
6. What does your child like and dislike about school?
7. What is something I can do to support your child?
8. What concerns do you have about school?
9. Is there anything else you'd like me to know?



COLLABORATION

BUILT BY EDUCATORS, FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

This resource was created in collaboration with dedicated educators and school leaders who brought their experience, ideas, and insight to every step of the process. We're grateful for their partnership in building tools that truly make a difference in schools.



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WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Thanks for downloading this resource—at [Alpaca](#), we're on a mission to **make school the happiest place to work**.



Tried an activity?

Send a photo or a staff testimonial to [our team](#), and we'll send you a coffee on us!



Got an idea brewing?

We love co-creating with school leaders—[drop us a line](#) with any resource ideas you'd love to see next.



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