

# FEBRUARY 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3 Plan a Valentine's Day project	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18
19	20 President's Day	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

## NOTES:

- Junior Optimist Reading month!
- Continue collecting for Souper Bowl of Caring project.
- Contact the Junior Optimist Department for Junior Optimist Reading bookmarks.

## Junior Optimist Reading Program

Kids who love to read know how much fun it can be to open up a book and discover the story that waits on the pages inside.

Aside from the fun a good book can bring, it gives young readers a brighter future. Children who read are more likely to do well in school and be more successful in all areas of their lives.

Reading also gives kids hope. Reading helps children develop their imaginations so they can dream bigger dreams for the future.

But while children in well-developed countries like the United States and Canada have many advantages in life, the rate of illiteracy and the poor reading levels can be alarming. By getting children excited about reading early in life, they can take this excitement with them as they grow up. And in a few years, they will be passing their love of reading along to other kids!

There are outlined Junior Optimist Reading projects that Clubs can choose to do, or Clubs can develop their own ways to promote reading to other students.

### **Possible projects include:**

Kids Mentoring Kids – Members mentor younger students in their schools or communities to introduce them to the fun of reading at an early age. While the younger students are having fun, they are also sharpening their reading skills!

Junior Optimist Reading Month – Members initiate a fun competition in their schools to get students reading outside of class.

### **Kids Mentoring Kids**

Readers know how fun it is to open up a book and be taken into a story far away – you never know where you will end up when you open up a book and start turning the pages.

Sometimes it takes a special person in a child's life to get them excited about reading. And who better to show them this whole new world in books than other kids!

Children look up to older students and trust them to know what is fun, interesting and cool! If Members show how fun reading can be, they will pass the Junior Optimist Reading Program along to other kids.

If you need some facts to convince you that Kids Mentoring Kids is important, consider this:

According to studies by the U.S. Department of Education and national literacy agencies, the single most important activity for building a foundation for reading skills is reading aloud to children. It's time for Kids Mentoring Kids!

### **What Kids Mentoring Kids Should Accomplish**

Here are some other areas where mentors should see improvement when they start mentoring younger kids:

- Recognizing and naming the letters of the alphabet
- Connecting sounds to letters to establish basic reading skills
- Recognizing words more easily
- Learning and using new words
- Understanding what is read
- Listening and responding to stories read aloud

### Junior Optimist Reading Month

Reading should be fun! Many students get so wrapped up in reading for school that they forget to take time to read just because they enjoy it. Junior Optimist has selected February, but Clubs can designate any month to promote reading for fun to the students in their schools.

### Junior Optimist of Reading Contest

During February, organize a Junior Optimist Reading Project and your Club could win cash prizes: \$100 for first place, \$50 for second place and \$25 for third place. Just submit your project to the Junior Optimist Department by April 1.

### Reading Rates are Dropping

Literacy is on the decline and the number of readers is also declining. It's time for us to turn this trend around!

### Objectives and Goals

To increase literacy rates in every classroom and to get every student in school to read a certain number of books in one month

### Goals for Junior Optimist Reading Month

- Students choose to read for fun in their free time
- Readers put school and public libraries to good use
- Members gain high visibility in schools
- Program success can lead to sponsorship opportunities to fund the program in the future
- Establish partnerships with organizations/libraries

### Suggested Supplies

Bookmarks, promotional posters, goal sheets, T-shirts (for Members), banner to present to school library for participation in the program

### Supplemental Materials

The materials in this guide and more are available on the website at [junioroptimist.org](http://junioroptimist.org).

### Get the Word Out!

Clubs can promote reading activities and events with press releases that are available on the website and can be modified to fit a Club's promotional needs.

