

## Further information

<i>Volunteer activity</i>	<b>Reading partner</b>
<i>What I do</i>	<p>Visit a state school in a deprived area close to my office during my Monday lunch hour, and work with a child who needs extra help with reading and literacy skills. I listen to the child read, help with practising spellings, or play games linked to literacy.</p> <p>I read with the same child every week, so can see his skills improve.</p>
<i>Time commitment</i>	Half an hour weekly in term time. I have been volunteering for five years. In that time I have worked with two children.
<i>Why I do it</i>	<p>My children having attended a state primary school in the same borough, I know how stretched resources are and how precious one to one time is for the pupils, particularly those who are struggling. This is a chance for me to give something back to a system my children have benefitted from.</p> <p>As a parent, I have hopefully developed useful reading support skills that other children can benefit from – and it's much less stressful working with someone else's child than my own (no parental anxiety!).</p> <p>I enjoy getting a break from an office environment and seeing a slice of “real life” during a busy day. I feel energised and refreshed by both the change of scene and knowing that I am contributing to a child's progress in learning.</p>
<i>Downsides</i>	Sometimes I have to miss my slot due to work pressures.
<i>What to do next</i>	<p>Contact a local school and ask if they have a reading partners programme – many schools do. Contact Volunteer Reading Help, a national charity which trains volunteers and matches them with schools – they require a 3 hour per week commitment. London North and East branch can be contacted on 0845 4500 302 or 0207 749 7974.</p> <p>In Camden, call Volunteer Centre Camden on 0207 424 9990 and ask about reading partnership opportunities (e.g. Brookfield School advertise for volunteers through this organisation)</p>