

The **MARTHA SPEAKS** Read-Aloud Book Club includes:

Welcome

- Introduction
- How Martha Became a Talking Dog
- Meet Martha, Her Family, and Friends

Sessions

- Session 1: *Once I Ate a Pie*
- Session 2: *A Kid's Best Friend*
- Session 3: *Not Afraid of Dogs*
- Session 4: *Now Hiring: White House Dog*
- Session 5: *Martha and Skits*
- Session 6: *Hanni and Beth: Safe & Sound*
- Session 7: *Say Hello!*
- Session 8: *Katie Loves the Kittens*
- Session 9: *I Got Two Dogs*
- Session 10: *The Dog Who Belonged to No One*

Community Events

- Host a **MARTHA SPEAKS** Viewing Party
- Invite a Special Guest

Supporting Materials

- Character cards
- Sticker template
- Doggy Book List (for families)
- Books About Dogs (for librarians)
- *M-A-R-T-H-A* Song Lyrics

Promotional Materials

- Printable poster
- Customizable flyer
- Participant sign-up sheet
- Stationery

Welcome to the MARTHA SPEAKS Read-Aloud Book Club

Bring **MARTHA SPEAKS** to your library! Drawing on the appeal of the popular PBS animated television program and children's book series by Susan Meddaugh, the **MARTHA SPEAKS** Read-Aloud Book Club creates a fun environment for young kids to read and talk about books. Over the course of 12 meetings (ten read-aloud sessions and two community events), children will see the many positive roles dogs play in our lives.

How It Works

The **ten read-aloud sessions** are similar in format to a library story hour. During each one-hour session, children watch a **MARTHA SPEAKS** episode, listen to a book read aloud, engage in conversation, and participate in a creative activity. Then children are encouraged to take library books home to continue reading and learning about dogs. For more information, see *Read-Aloud Sessions* on page 3.

Two community events will enable you to share the excitement and fun of the **MARTHA SPEAKS** Read-Aloud Book Club with a larger group. You can host these events in conjunction with the Book Club (for example, as a celebration at its completion), or as stand-alone events. We suggest screening an episode of **MARTHA SPEAKS** and inviting a special guest to each. You may want to partner with your local PBS station. For more information, see the community event PDFs: *Host a MARTHA SPEAKS Viewing Party* and *Invite a Special Guest*.



Materials

At the core of the MARTHA SPEAKS Read-Aloud Book Club are ten culturally diverse children's books representing a range of genres and styles:

Once I Ate a Pie (Poetry)

By Patricia MacLachlan and
Emily MacLachlan Charest
HarperCollins, 2006

A Kid's Best Friend (Nonfiction)

By Maya Ajmera and Alex Fisher
Charlesbridge, 2002

Not Afraid of Dogs (Picture book)

By Susanna Pitzer
Walker & Company, 2006

Now Hiring: White House Dog (Picture book)

By Gina Bazer and Renanah Lehner
Walker & Company, 2009

Martha and Skits (Picture book)

By Susan Meddaugh
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2000

Hanni and Beth: Safe & Sound (Picture book)

By Beth Finke
Blue Marlin Publications, Ltd., 2007

Say Hello (Picture book)

By Rachel Isadora
Putnam, 2010

Katie Loves the Kittens (Picture book)

By John Himmelman
Holt, 2008

I Got Two Dogs (Song book)

By John Lithgow
Simon & Schuster, 2008

The Dog Who Belonged to No One (Picture book)

By Amy Hest
Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2008

The books are supported by the resources listed below, which are available as PDFs for download at pbskids.org/martha/parentsteachers/bookclub/index.html:

- **Ten read-aloud session guides** (one for each title, with discussion questions and activity options)
- **Two community event guides** (*Host a MARTHA SPEAKS Viewing Party and Invite a Special Guest*)
- **Supporting materials** (character cards, sticker template, book list for families, librarian book list, and M-A-R-T-H-A song lyrics)
- **Promotional materials** (poster, flyer, participant sign-up sheet, and customizable stationery)

Read through all the materials before you begin your MARTHA SPEAKS Read-Aloud Book Club. Choose how many sessions you will conduct. You may want to adapt the sessions to suit the needs of your group.



Read-Aloud Sessions

Getting Started

The Book Club experience can be as rewarding and fun for you as it is for the kids who participate. With a little preparation, you can ensure that things run smoothly.

- **Promote and recruit.** Use the promotional materials to advertise and recruit members. Display the poster, flyer, and sign-up sheet in prominent areas around the library, or create your own using the customizable stationery. (Note: If you are partnering with a veterinarian, pet hospital, and/or humane society, ask them to display the poster in their offices.) Announce the upcoming Book Club on your library's Web site or in its newsletter. Send an announcement (e-mail or html postcard) to local educational and children's organizations (e.g., schools and afterschool programs) to forward on to their mailing lists.
- **Decide on meeting logistics.** Where will the Book Club meet and how often? (We recommend once per week, in the morning for younger children and after school for older children.) How many children can participate? (We recommend eight to ten per session.) Will parents and caregivers sign up their children for all sessions at once or will sign-up be session-by-session? Will parents and caregivers participate with their children or be provided with drop-off and pick-up times?

Before Each Session

- **Review the book and session guide.** Read the book (you may want to practice reading it aloud) and session guide to become familiar with the story and activities. Decide which activities you will do and customize them as needed.
- **Gather and prepare materials.** The activities require minimal preparation and use inexpensive and easy-to-find materials. Check the session guides for a list of what you will need. Before you begin the Book Club, you may want to purchase a MARTHA SPEAKS plush toy or other related products to decorate your room or use with the activities (pbskids.org/martha/parentsteachers/products/index.html). You can also create your own MARTHA SPEAKS puppet (see Session 7).
- **Download, print, and make copies.** Photocopy and cut out the session host's character card (one per child), activity handouts, and templates as needed. For the first Book Club session, you may want to photocopy the "Doggy Book List" (see Supporting Materials) to send home. You may also want print MARTHA SPEAKS stickers (see Supporting Materials) to send home after each session.
- **Find related books.** Use the "Books About Dogs" Book List (see Supporting Materials) or conduct your own search to find additional books related to or expanding on the session topic. Set up a book display and encourage children to borrow the books after the session. If a child doesn't have a library card, explain how to sign up.
- **Get the MARTHA SPEAKS episode.** Watch the episodes on the Read-Aloud Book Club section of the MARTHA SPEAKS Web site at pbskids.org/martha/parentsteachers/bookclub/episodes.html. You can also stream episodes for free on the PBS KIDS GO! video player at pbskids.org/go/video (type the episode title into the "search" box), or purchase and download episodes from the iTunes® store. Some episodes may be available on DVD (available for purchase at ShopPBS and other online and retail stores), but for those that aren't, you will need a projector or other setup for group viewing.

During Each Session

- **Welcome.** Begin by gathering kids together and singing the song *M-A-R-T-H-A* (see Supporting Materials) or use another welcome activity of your choice. This will help set the tone and make kids feel welcome and excited for what's to come. You may also want to stamp the back of each child's hand with a rubber paw print stamp to indicate "official" entry into the session (search online for "dog paw print rubber stamp" for a list of retailers). If you have purchased a Martha plush toy or made a Martha puppet, you might want to have her welcome the kids as well.
 - If you have new children at a session, you may want to remind kids about Martha and her ability to speak (see *About the Series* on page 5). Share with kids the cartoon, *How Martha Became a Talking Dog*, and read it aloud. You may also want to photocopy the cartoon and send it home or display a copy in the library.
 - Distribute the host character card at the beginning or end of each session. (To encourage regular attendance, you can use the character cards as an incentive by letting kids know they can collect all ten.) If parents and caregivers participate with their children, invite them to join in with the songs and other activities.
- **Watch the episode.**
 - *Before watching* questions help set the context of the episode and help you to introduce the host character.
 - *After watching* questions can help you start a conversation about the episode and invite kids to discuss what they thought and felt.
- **Read the book.** The session guide offers three "steps" to the process:
 - *Before you read* offers helpful language to introduce the book, topic, and questions to get children involved.
 - *As you read* suggests themes to focus on. Use a lively and dramatic voice as you read to engage kids in the characters, images, and words. If words seem difficult to understand, pause to define them in simple terms.
 - *After you read* provides questions and discussion points to help children make personal connections to the story and lead into the activity.
- **Do a related activity** to give children a chance to be creative and help make the story more personal and meaningful. Use one or both of the options (adapt as needed), or substitute an activity of your own.
- **Wrap up** in order to end the session. Take a few moments to gather children back together, talk or sing together, and then say goodbye.

After Each Session

- **Distribute goodies.** If you haven't already done so, or for new participants, give each child the host's character card (in color or black-and-white for kids to color), a copy of the "Doggy Book List," and, if you choose, MARTHA SPEAKS stickers.
- **Send children home with books.** Encourage children to check out library books related to the session topic they've just learned about or any other book they choose.
- **Remind parents and caregivers** when the next session will be.

About the Series

From the producers of the ARTHUR and CURIOUS GEORGE children's television series, MARTHA SPEAKS is an animated series on PBS KIDS. Aimed at viewers ages 4 to 7, MARTHA SPEAKS is a fun show with a serious educational goal: to teach kids new words.

Based on the popular children's book series by Susan Meddaugh, the series stars Martha, a beloved family dog. When Martha accidentally eats a bowl of alphabet soup, the letters travel to her brain (instead of her stomach) and give her the ability to talk. Now she speaks her mind to just about anyone who will listen!

Check your local PBS listings to find out when the show airs in your area, and look for the books that started it all. Martha's adventures in print are published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and include: *Martha Speaks*, *Martha Calling*, *Martha Blah Blah*, *Martha Walks the Dog*, *Perfectly Martha*, and *Martha and Skits*. A new series of TV tie-in books is also available. Check the "Books About Dogs" Book List (see Supporting Materials) or visit www.marthathetalkingdog.com.

Martha, Family, and Friends

Martha is an outspoken, honest, smart, confident dog who loves to eat (and talk!). She has a great family and good friends on whom she can depend (see *Meet Martha, Her Family, and Friends* and the character cards). Along with Martha, they help host the Read-Aloud Book Club sessions:

Helen: Martha's best friend and caretaker

Skits: The newest doggy member of Martha's family

T.D.: Helen's loyal friend

Truman: Helen's very smart (and slightly anxious) neighbor

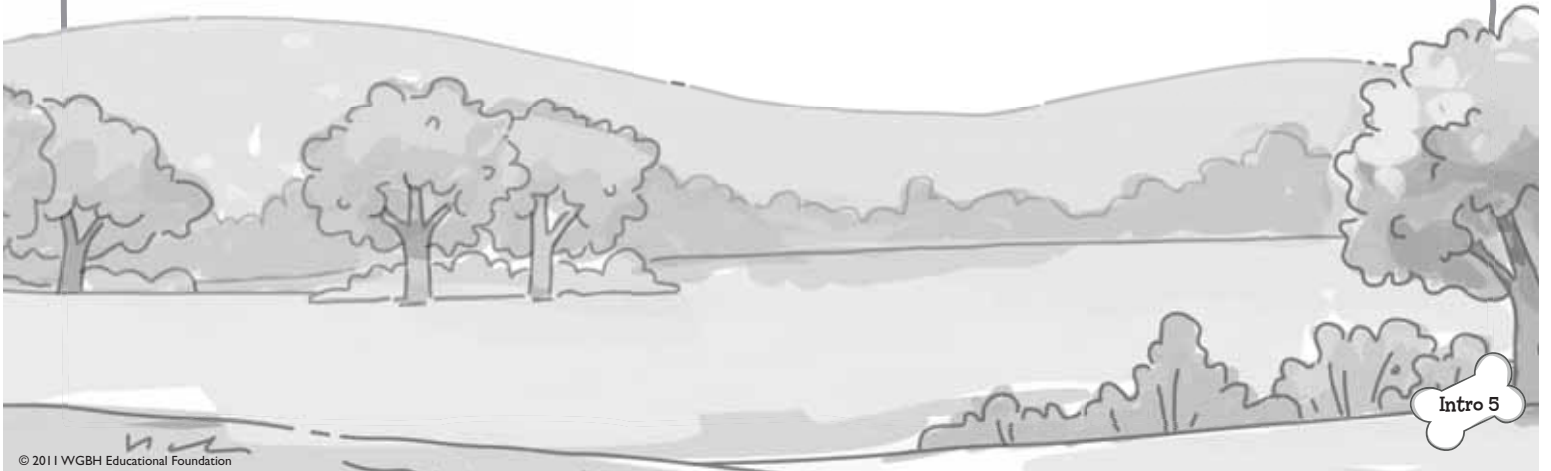
Carolina: Helen's older, more sophisticated cousin

Mariela: Helen and Jake's mom

Alice: Helen's clumsy but energetic friend

Jake: Helen's baby brother

Daniel: Helen and Jake's dad



Learning Goals

The MARTHA SPEAKS Read-Aloud Book Club can be used in a school or public library. In a library setting, the focus of the Club is to help children enjoy and appreciate books and reading. Since the goal of the MARTHA SPEAKS television series is to increase children's oral vocabulary—the words we use when we talk—watching and discussing the episode, reading and talking about the related book, and doing the activity all help children to achieve that goal.

Reading Buddies Program

The MARTHA SPEAKS television series is supported by an educational outreach campaign that includes a cross-age Reading Buddies program, successfully launched in schools around the country. For more information about the MARTHA SPEAKS Reading Buddies program, visit pbskids.org/martha/parentsteachers/readingbuddies.

Web Site

pbskids.org/martha

Chock full of fun, interactive, and educational games that promote vocabulary learning, the MARTHA SPEAKS Web site also has character and episode descriptions, program information, and engaging activities to share with families.

Credits

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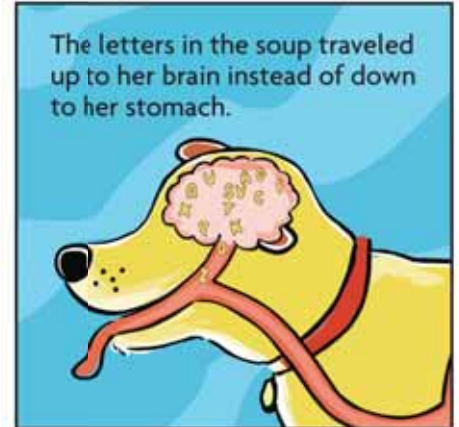
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How Martha Became a Talking Dog

In the beginning . . .



Is the world ready for Martha?

Meet Martha, Her Family, and Friends

