





Brand Guidelines

**Like people,
brands have personalities.**

At Reading Is Fundamental, four important personality traits form the core of the brand personality we want to share with the world. The RIF brand is:

- Authentic
- Passionate
- Empowering
- Agent for Change

One of the primary ways we will express our personality is through the look and tone of voice of our communications.

It's important that we establish guidelines for how we design and write our communications materials. The guidelines on the following pages will help ensure that our materials effectively present our brand personality consistently across all of our communications.

Reading
Is Fundamental

Brand Story

Reading is Everything



The first and perhaps most important thing you need to know about our organization is that our name captures a profound truth about life.

We call ourselves Reading Is Fundamental. Because reading is the skill that is absolutely fundamental to every person's journey through life.

This fact (not opinion) is why we exist. It inspires our calling. It describes our higher purpose. It guides everything we do.

It's undeniable that reading is essential for pretty much everything.

Beyond just enabling us to make our way through the world day to day, reading is the cost of entry for knowledge, for discovery, for education, for careers of any kind, and for a significant degree of personal growth, self-esteem and happiness.

For children, reading is especially vital. It opens doors to a whole world of possibilities. Reading prepares kids to take advantage of opportunities. It helps them realize their full potential. It gives them the confidence to strive. It frees them to live a life without limits.

Our mission is to create a literate America by inspiring a passion for reading among all children by providing quality content and by engaging communities in the solution to give every child the fundamentals for success.

Because reading proficiency is the key building block required for their life's journey, it allows them to grab the future with both hands and live fully.

By any measure, reading is fundamental, which is why we're Reading Is Fundamental.

Creating readers, inspiring futures.

Since our founding in 1966, Reading Is Fundamental has been America's leading champion of children's literacy. We believe every child deserves the opportunity to own books, and to learn how to read them. And we've acted on our belief. RIF has distributed more than 415 million books and literacy resources to more than 40 million children across all 50 states.

Needless to say, it's been as wonderful a journey for us as for the children we serve. Nothing gives us more joy than watching kids dive into books and digital literacy content with excitement and expectation. It's great to see how the stories they read transport them to other worlds and fire their imaginations. It's rewarding to witness their confidence grow with every page they turn.

And it's really cool to meet adults who even today refer to themselves as "RIF kids." Like the 33-year-old woman who became an archaeologist because she was inspired by the books about dinosaurs she read in fourth grade. Or the commercial pilot who caught the flying bug at age ten when he read the story of Charles Lindbergh.

Of course, at the time, kids don't realize that reading is so much more than just fun. They don't know that reading is what's going to unleash life's possibilities for them.

But we know. And it's why we're so passionate about turning kids into strong readers from a very early age.

But there's something else we know; something troubling and tragic. In the United States today, 25 million children cannot read proficiently.

This is an alarming crisis. It has significant consequences for the country, because a productive, thriving nation requires literate citizens. And it's especially tragic for millions of children who are prevented from being equipped to take advantage of all the opportunities reading provides.

Today, RIF is at the forefront of combatting the literacy crisis, attacking it from multiple angles and with great urgency. We're applying all the knowledge and expertise we've gained in our more than 50 years of literacy leadership. We're making quality content readily available to the children who need it. In partnership with other literacy leaders, we're developing innovative solutions. We're building highly engaged local networks of literacy support across the country and activating them to deliver actionable programs and measureable results.

Using our legacy of leadership to change lives.

RIF has always been and continues to be a tireless, highly recognized advocate for childhood literacy and its most respected thought leader.

We have an unmatched depth of knowledge about the issue – the problems, the challenges, the opportunities, the advancements, and the solutions that work best.

We raise public awareness and understanding of childhood literacy and all its effects; how it impacts individual children, the workforce, and society as a whole.

And most importantly, we design and implement effective reading programs to address specific literacy issues. Here are just two examples of RIF programs that are making a life-changing difference for children:

- **Books For Ownership**

Focusing on access, choice and engagement, our flagship program gives children all over the country the opportunity to participate in RIF book distributions and select new age-appropriate books to take home and own. When kids are allowed to select their book it increases the likelihood they'll actually read the book. And who knows, it could be the book that sparks an

interest or ignites a passion that shapes the child's future path. And, because they are learning to read, that passion can turn into reality. Such as the boy who became an architect after devouring a book about skyscrapers that he chose at a RIF event years before. The books we distribute will always be free, but the effect they can have on a child is priceless.

- **Read For Success**

Summer learning loss is a big problem that causes many kids to suffer a literacy backslide during the few short months they're off from school. We partnered with the U.S. Department of Education to develop Read for Success, an innovative reading intervention program to prevent this summer slippage and tested it over two years with 33,000 students from 16 states. Our program helped prevent summer learning loss for more than half of participating students. And 57% of the students actually improved their reading skills over the summer.

As with most RIF programs, Read for Success is itself a great success. It's just another example of how our literacy leadership continues to help more kids become better readers and live fuller lives.

Great content sparks kids' passion, and proficiency.

It's much easier to instill a love of reading in kids when you give them reading materials that are fresh, interesting, and fun. That's why providing dynamic, high-quality content is at the very heart of our literacy efforts. These are the materials educators, parents and volunteers use to connect with kids and keep them engaged, so they become confident, enthusiastic readers.

Having strong reading skills is vitally important for children to be able to excel in the STEM subjects that offer so much opportunity for further study and for careers that will continue to be in high demand. For example, the tech industry continues to offer abundant opportunities for coders. **But if kids can't read, they can't code.** So RIF provides a wide range of age-appropriate resources in both book and digital form to capture many kids' imaginations and to set them on exciting STEM paths for their future.

RIF's efforts to prepare children for success in STEM is a prime example of our commitment to developing innovative content and making it easily accessible so kids develop the literacy skills they need to thrive in school and in life.

As we move further into the 21st century, RIF is committed to meeting children – today's digital natives – where they are, with tools and resources that make reading fun while delivering measurable outcomes.

- **Literacy Central**

Our award-winning free digital portal gives educators, parents and literacy volunteers access to thousands of age-appropriate, supplemental resources including activities, games, videos, calendars, reading passages and lesson plans paired with classic and popular kids' books. Literacy Central is a robust, content-rich resource for anyone who wants to go "beyond the book" to help children build strong reading skills. It's a remarkable combination of nontraditional, new media resources that will help kids experience new levels of literacy success.

- **Literacy App**

This new app is a powerful companion to Literacy Central that makes it quick and easy for teachers and parents to go beyond the book with kids. Users simply scan the ISBN bar code of a specific book to launch the Literacy Central web page filled with activities, games and instructional tips dedicated to that particular title.

We know it takes a village to raise a reader.

RIF is an organization with a national scope. But our success happens at the local level. We know that deep community involvement is absolutely vital to achieving the literacy gains we seek. So, we support a vast number of community partners, organizations, and groups throughout the country who engage directly with students, teachers, and parents.

Book Fund

The RIF Book Fund allows schools, districts, community groups and other youth-serving entities to purchase high-quality, affordable books for kids. Whether they are looking for books for giveaway prizes, lending libraries or to build home libraries, RIF's Book Fund can provide the requested titles for just \$3 per book.

Local RIF organizations are making a huge difference working with more than 2,000 program sites in 500 American communities, and that number is growing every day.

We work with and empower a vast network of volunteers that at any given time numbers in the thousands nationwide.

We maintain critical corporate partnerships and have worked with more than 450 companies, such as McDonald's, Amazon, Macy's, Dollar General, Pitney Bowes, State Farm and more, and their contributions are invaluable. Our partners step up because they know that when more kids learn to read, we all benefit from a more skilled workforce and a more literate culture.

Literacy Network

To make our widespread community engagements even more effective, we've just launched our RIF Literacy Network. This online resource provides powerful tools to help our local partners be as successful as possible:

- Detailed RIF program information, resources, and implementation support for program schools and other sites
- Volunteer toolkits with proven ideas, tips and techniques for making a difference at the local level
- Grant information and application for access to funding to support RIF programs
- National and state-specific literacy facts to support childhood literacy advocacy
- Coming in 2018, comprehensive online community support center to assist with local fundraising, marketing, and events

Join us. We're all in this together.

When kids develop strong reading skills, they aren't the only ones who benefit. We all do. Readers are better prepared and far more likely to thrive, and to contribute positively to their families, the economy and society at large.





Body Copy

Since we are a literacy organization, our writing style is an especially important and meaningful reflection of our brand. So, of course, our copy must follow all the rules of proper grammar, organization, usage and punctuation.

However, we also want our copy to be as clear, engaging, relatable and interesting to read as possible. Here are some things to keep in mind as you write:

- Use simple sentence constructions. Avoid overly complex compositions and run-on sentences. Ideally, our writing should be crisp and easy to read.
- Adopt a friendly, warm, conversational tone of voice. Copy should not feel stuffy, academic or scholarly. Rather, it should come across as if you're speaking one-on-one with the reader.
- Although much conversational writing uses sentence fragments, at RIF we try to avoid using fragments if at all possible. A complete sentence can still communicate crisply and conversationally.

- Active voice is much preferred to passive. Compose copy so it uses active voice whenever possible.
- Respect that today many people are time-pressed. So keep copy as brief as is practical to still be able to communicate completely.

Headlines

Sometimes a communication (such as a print or digital ad, a poster, or other promotional piece) will require a headline.

A headline's job is to grab readers' attention and to pique their curiosity and interest so they read further.

Here are some considerations that will help you write headlines that have the best chance to engage readers:

- Keep headlines short and sweet. The fewer words you use, the larger the headline's type size can be in the layout, which helps it stand out and get noticed.

- Be conversational. As with all copy we write for RIF, the most effective headlines will speak to the reader as if in a one-to-one conversation.
- Be interesting. More than any other kind of writing we do, headlines benefit greatly when they're interesting. Use the headline to present a fresh insight or a surprising fact or a challenging proposition or anything you think will most engage the reader most quickly.
- Don't shy away from being clever. A headline that uses a clever turn of phrase or some wit stands a better chance of being noticed. However, don't use cleverness gratuitously; use it strategically so it reinforces the message.

Examples

Please see the ads in the Typography section for examples of headlines.

Testimonials

In some communications, a testimonial will add invaluable real-world context and meaning to copy. If appropriate and space allows, look to incorporate stories about how reading is helping a particular child thrive, in school or in life. Presenting such real examples further demonstrates the value of reading, and by extension, Reading Is Fundamental.

“Reading Is Fundamental” and “RIF”

As you will see in a few pages, we are changing our brand logo from the acronym “RIF” to the full spelling our name: “Reading Is Fundamental.”

We think this is important, especially for external audiences who may not be familiar with our acronym. (Also, we've taken into account another important consideration about the RIF acronym. Within the past decade, “RIF” has come to mean “reduction in force” as it pertains to layoffs and unemployment. Obviously, we do not want to associate our organization with such a negative connotation.)

We also believe it's strategically beneficial to use our full Reading Is Fundamental name. It is such a powerful statement about the value of reading; we will now keep it front and center in our logo.

Now in copy, you don't always need to write our full name every single time you mention the organization. In any piece of copy, the first reference to the organization should always be “Reading Is Fundamental.” In subsequent references you can then use “RIF.”

Internally, of course, we will still refer to ourselves as RIF, and in internal communications it's certainly fine to continue using the RIF acronym. But please remember to spell out the complete name in the first reference of any copy that will be read by outside audiences.

Logo Anatomy

Reading

The word “Reading” is the largest element of the logo because reading is the focus and essence of our organization. To reinforce its importance, it is underscored by the bookwing.

Bookwing

The bookwing is the focal point of the logo and is our new brand mark. Seen as an open book, it reinforces our mission: helping children develop a passion for reading. Seen as bird wings, it also symbolizes that reading can enable a child’s life journey to take flight.



Is Fundamental

By any measure, reading is fundamental to life’s journey – it is the foundation to a life of possibilities. It also provides the foundation to our logo, upon which the bookwing and all-important word Reading are stacked as one clear, compact typographic unit.

Please contact us at Literacynetwork.org to request logos and usage requirements.

Logo versions

As described on the previous page, we’ve aligned the three components of our logo to function as a single unit, not only to identify who we are, but to reinforce the essential importance of reading. The logo can only be reproduced in this one format. We do not recommend adapting it to a one line horizontal format for any reason. The component parts should not be disassembled or rearranged in any way. It can, however, be reproduced in any of the three color options shown on this page. The blue logo is the preferred version. The other two color options may be used if: 1) the environment in which the logo will be placed better matches one of the optional color versions, or 2) variety is desired (for example, as shown in this guide).

If color is not an option, use the appropriate B&W logo version.

NavyCyan

This is the primary logo and the preferred color version. This version should always be used unless one of the two reasons to the left apply.

GreenLime

This is a secondary color option. This version should only be used if one of the two reasons to the left apply.

UmberGold

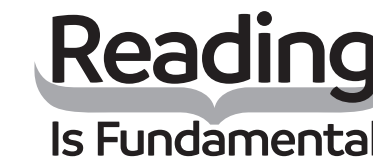
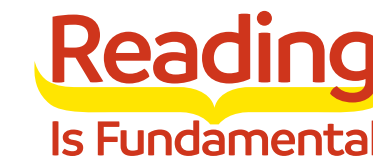
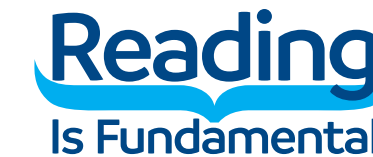
This is a secondary color option. This version should only be used if one of the two reasons to the left apply.

BlackGray

This is the positive B&W logo version to be used on white or light backgrounds.

WhiteGray

This is the negative B&W logo version to be used on 70%-100% black backgrounds.



Logo Rules

There are only three hard and fast rules pertaining to the logo:

1) Size

The logo can be reproduced in any size that is clearly legible.

2) Logo Safe Area

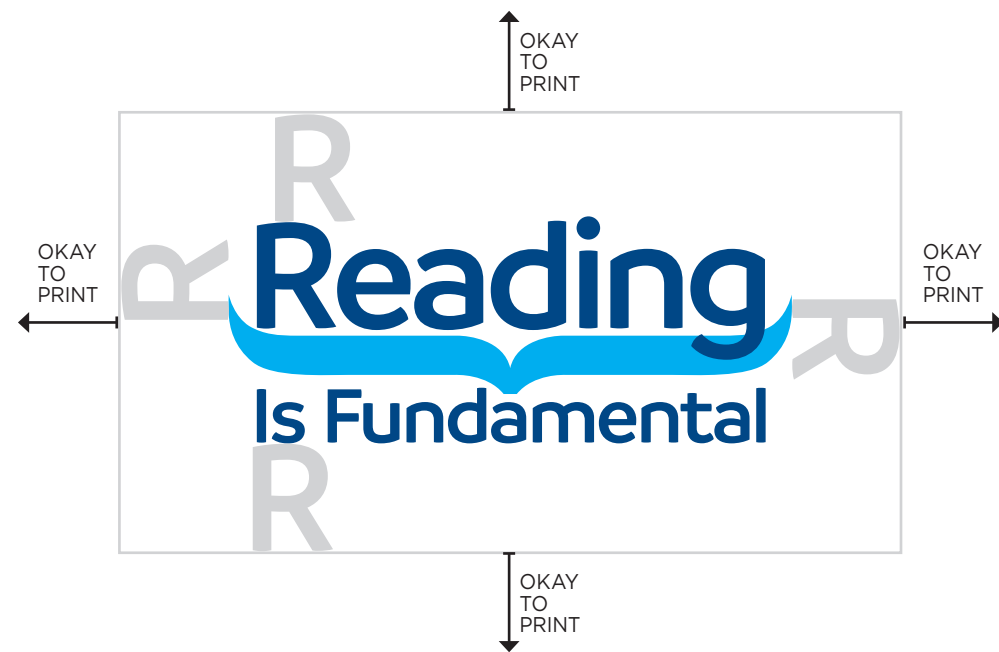
A safe area equivalent to the height of the cap “R” of “Reading” is required at all times. Nothing is allowed in this area.

3) Background

The logo can only be reproduced on a white background. When used as B&W, however, it can be reversed if on a black background.

4) Common Sense

Okay, there are four rules. Always use good discretion to maintain the integrity of the logo and the communications.



Logo Bookwing Graphics

The bookwing, both in its standard “open book” state or its “taking flight” state, are additional elements that can be used in designs. They should be used sparingly and with a purpose.

The standard “open book” bookwing can be used in its entirety in various sizes as a header underscore (as it’s been used throughout this guide), or large as a graphic bleeding off the page (as on the cover). It should not be noticeably stretched or condensed.

The flying bookwing is an additional graphic element to be used in communications to indicate a transitional moment. It is used sparingly (no more than once on a page) when you want to call attention to how reading made a difference or is making a difference in someone’s life - whether specifically (with a caption) or implied (alone). It can be used in one of two ways:

- 1) as a marker for a caption that explains a positive change (see examples to right) or
- 2) alone on the upper portion of a page when the open book bookwing is used (either alone or in the logo).

Bookwing - Open Book



Bookwing - Flying



 *Olivia will travel the world as an archaeologist.*

1  *Matt will study horticulture and run a landscaping firm.*

 *Ryan will be a sportswriter or a web developer. He's not sure yet.*



Imagery

Photography is a vitally important part of our brand and how we communicate the value of reading for children as well as the passion kids develop for reading.

In all likelihood, we will need to use stock photography for nearly all of our materials, whether online or printed. Today's stock photography services are very robust. However, we must take the time to thoroughly search for stock photos that don't look and feel like stock photos!

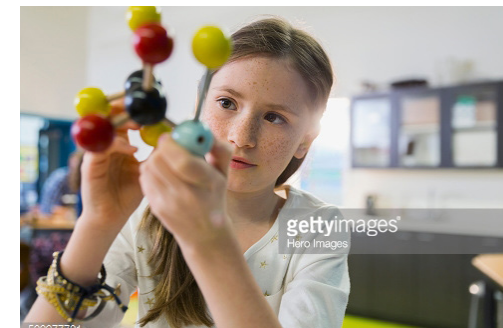
Many stock photos, especially of children, feel generic and expected. Too often they're obviously posed and feel staged and artificial. It's important to find shots of kids in which their expressions are real and genuine. Select photos that look and feel natural, spontaneous and candid, preferably where the child is not looking at the camera and does not seem to be aware of its presence.

If a child is reading – whether a book or a digital device – he or she should be engaged with the reading material, not smiling artificially. (Like adults, kids don't read with big cheesy smiles on their faces!) It's more valuable to communicate that a child is immersed in his or her reading.

When you find a photograph that uses an interesting angle or composition that gives the shot a more dynamic feel, by all means use it! Like our copy, we want our photography to be as interesting and engaging as possible.

Example Imagery

These images are for example only.



Typography

Headline font

Headlines should always be in Branding Semibold, and follow the following guidelines:

- 1) Letterspacing - optical at minus 30
- 2) Horizontal scaling - 100% preferred
- 95% min
- 105% max
- 3) Color - Deep color (see Color Palette)
- 4) Justification - flush left or right (based on placement)
- 5) Case - Sentence case only.

Body font

Body copy and subheads should always be set in Gotham Book and Bold respectively, and follow the following guidelines:

- 1) Letterspacing - optical at minus 20
- 2) Horizontal scaling - 100% preferred
- 90% min
- 100% max
- 3) Color - Black
- 4) Justification - flush left or right (based on headline and placement)

Branding Semibold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890!@#\$%^&*()

Gotham Book

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890!@#\$%^&*()

Gotham Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890!@#\$%^&*()

Examples

Reading is
grabbing the future
with both hands.

Reading is essential for everything.

It enables children to dream big, seize opportunity, and live fully.

Reading Is Fundamental helps kids develop a passion for reading.

As America's childhood literacy champion, RIF distributes millions of free books. We support teachers with literacy programs, resources and digital content.

And we partner with community groups and volunteers nationwide. Join us, by donating, volunteering or advocating. When we all help kids develop strong reading skills, they also develop the confidence to live a life without limits.

Reading
Is Fundamental

Reading is
seeing no limits.

Reading is essential for everything.

It enables children to dream big, seize opportunity, and live fully.

Reading Is Fundamental helps kids develop a passion for reading.

As America's childhood literacy champion, RIF distributes millions of free books. We support teachers with literacy programs, resources and digital content.

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Reading
Is Fundamental

Color Palette

Primary Color Family

Colors come in color families. Color families consist of a strong/deep color and a lighter/bright color and are always to be used together. Color families cannot be broken up. NavyCyan should always be used unless one of two reasons apply:

- 1) the environment (photography) better matches one of the secondary color versions,
or
- 2) variety is desired
(for example, as shown in this guide).

The color family colors are to be used on headlines (Deep), subheads (Deep or Bright), or graphic accents (Bright preferred).

Body copy should always be in black.

NavyCyan

Deep



PMS 288

CMYK C 100
M 69
Y 7
K 30

RGB R 0
G 44
B 118

Bright



Cyan

CMYK C 100
M 0
Y 0
K 0

RGB R 0
G 162
B 227

Secondary Color Families

These are secondary color options. These versions should only be used if one of the two reasons on the opposite page apply.

GreenLime

Deep



PMS 2259

CMYK C 84
M 0
Y 100
K 39

RGB R 0
G 114
B 51

Bright



PMS 2293

CMYK C 40
M 0
Y 100
K 0

RGB R 163
G 197
B 52

UmberGold

Deep



PMS 7626

CMYK C 0
M 90
Y 100
K 15

RGB R 193
G 56
B 20

Bright



PMS 102

CMYK C 0
M 06
Y 100
K 0

RGB R 255
G 222
B 0



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RIF.org

