



**The Kids on the Block Program on  
Literacy – An Adult  
Who Is Learning to Read**

**Featuring: Teresa James, Dale Appleton, Melody James, and Caroline Appleton**

**The Kids on the Block Program on Literacy** was developed in conjunction with the State of Tennessee and the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Adult and Community Education and is designed to introduce children and adults to the issues surrounding the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy and to show how an adult who cannot read can get help. In addition, the program shows how an adult learns to read, and how his family feels about his courageous new beginning and new found skills.

Script material focuses on the cover-ups that a non-reading person uses to pretend he can read, how the nonreader was motivated to seek help, the relationship between an adult student and his literacy teacher, the sensitive relationship between a parent and child (both of whom are learning to read), and how the child of a non reading parent feels about the parent's efforts at mastering reading skills.

The complete curriculum consists of large hand-crafted puppets, follow-up activities, resources, and four scripts designed for a variety of audiences including literacy providers, literacy clients, family members and school-aged children.



**CALL OR WRITE TODAY  
THE KIDS ON THE BLOCK, INC.**

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# Script Summaries

## Jumping In -- Dale Decides to Learn to Read

A Public Service Announcement on Dale Appleton's radio comes at just the right time. Thirty-year-old Dale, who can barely read, has just come to work on his day off and has had to make excuses as to why he can't help his daughter, Caroline with her homework. Dale finds help from a literacy volunteer, Teresa James, who shows Dale that reading is a skill he can learn. *This script focuses on an adult who has marginal reading skills and is designed to show **adult audiences** how life can take a positive turn when one decides to take the steps to learn to read. (Dale, Caroline, Teresa, and Delores who is played by a puppeteer as an actor)*

## Doll-Pins!

This script demonstrates the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy and how that cycle is broken when a parent learns to read. Caroline Appleton, Dale's nine-year-old daughter, is stuck on an unfamiliar word. Dale comes to the rescue by calling his literacy teacher, Teresa, and asking for help. Dale, who needs help with the new words he's learning, is then assisted by Caroline, who finds a unique and humorous way to help her father do his homework. *This script has been used successfully with audiences of children and adults and it is especially effective in situations where adult literacy students and their own children view it together. (Dale and Caroline)*

## Pizza Pie

As Dale learns to read, he is guided by the gentle motivation of his literacy teacher, Teresa James. She uses a language experience approach to introduce Dale to new words--words he will need on his job and shows him that learning to read is a stimulating, self esteem producing experience. This script is a "slice of life" in that it shows what an actual tutoring session can be like. *This script shows adult audiences what can happen when they receive literacy services. It can also motivate community members to become literacy volunteers. (Dale and Teresa)*

## Forgive Me!

When Caroline returns her Dad's books to the library, she meets Melody James, the daughter of her Daddy's literacy teacher. When the girls realize their connection ("My Dad works with your Mom! And your Mom teaches my Dad!"), Melody asks Caroline how it feels to have a parent who is just learning to read. Caroline explains how proud she is of her father and how pleased she is that he's not playing "let's pretend" anymore. *This script has been used effectively for classroom students as well as adult literacy students. (Caroline and Melody)*

**NOTE: After each script, the children in the audience are given the opportunity to ask their own questions directly to the puppet characters.**

**The Kids on the Block**, created in 1977, features life-sized puppets who, through the magic of live puppet theatre, teach children and adults about disabilities, medical and educational differences, and social concerns. Through the hard work and dedication of many community-based groups, **The Kids on the Block** puppets are able to touch the lives of people all over the world.