

# *The Reading Promise*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, promise to read.

I promise to read on my own, in print or on a screen, wherever books appear. I promise to visit fictional worlds and gain new perspectives---to keep an open mind about books, even when the cover is unappealing and the author is unfamiliar. I promise to laugh out loud (especially in public) when the chapter amuses me, and to sob uncontrollably on my bed for hours at a time when my favorite character dies. I promise to look up words when I don't know them, and cities when I can't locate them, and people when I can't remember them. I promise to lose track of time.

I promise to read with \_\_\_\_\_, if not every night, then whenever I can. I promise to remember that this person is more than my son, daughter, mother, father, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, cousin, spouse, friend, landlord, or dog walker; he or she has a mind that, like mine, loves to be used and challenged. I promise to share books however it suits us best, whether we choose to read to each other or simply get together for discussions and homemade baked goods. I promise to appreciate the time we spend together and the literature we meet, even when I am stressed or tired or sunburned (or an awful combination of the three), because books are better when they're shared. I promise to do my best to meet our goal, whether that goal is to read for ten thousand nights or simply to get to know each other better. I promise to never give up on reading, nor let us give up on each other, whether we meet our goal or not.

I promise to support reading in my community of \_\_\_\_\_ however I can, and everywhere else for that matter. I promise to spread the word about words, whether it's volunteering at my local library or just recommending good books to friends. I promise to speak out if reading is cut from the school curriculum, and to fight for books whenever their value is challenged. I promise to tell everyone I know how reading calms me down, riles me up, makes me think, or helps me get to sleep at night. I promise to read, and read to someone, as long as human thought is still valued and there are still words to be shared.

I promise to be there for books, because I know they will always be there for me.