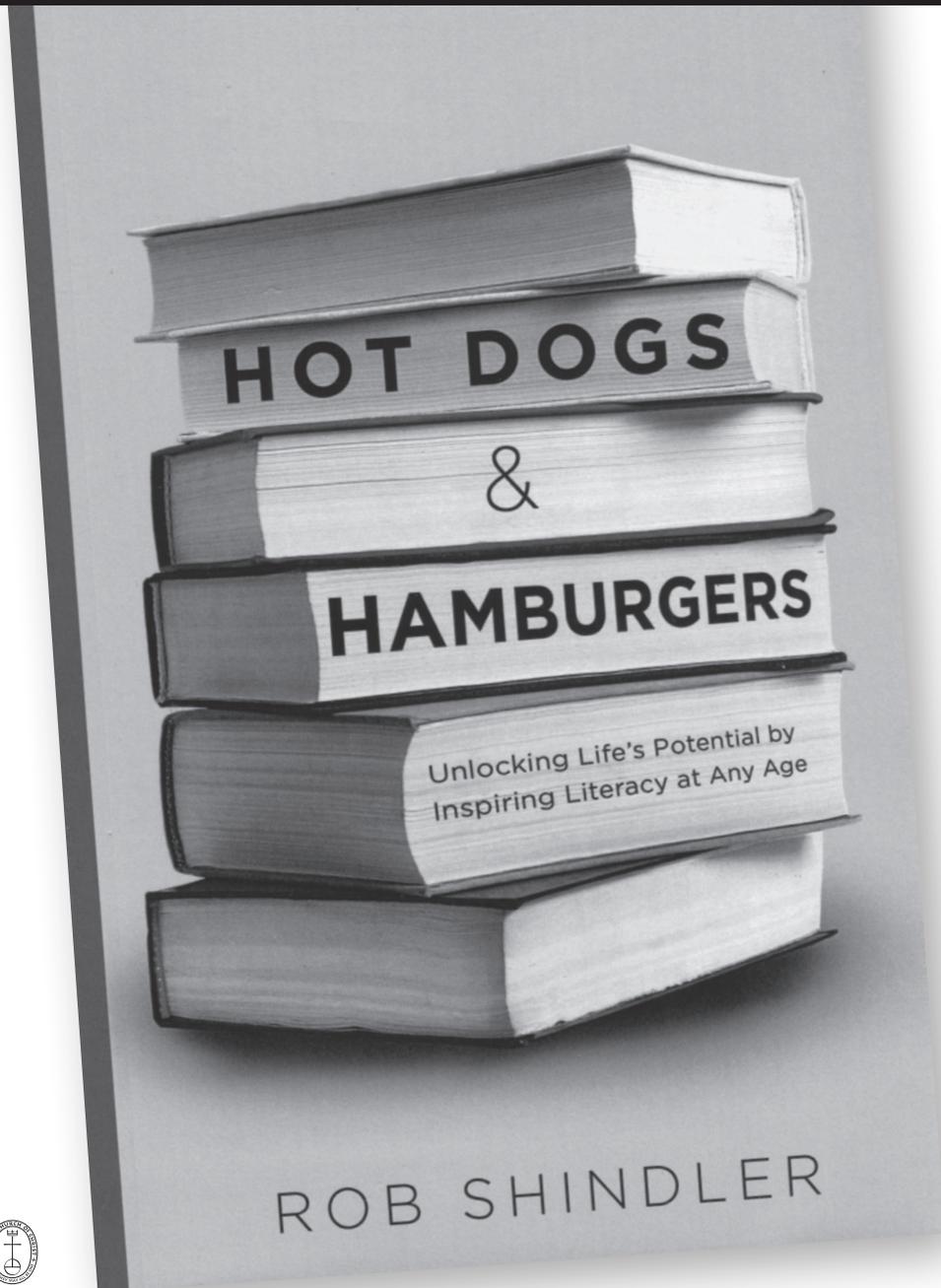




ONE READ

DISCUSSION GUIDE



READING SCHEDULE

This suggested timeline for reading *Hot Dogs and Hamburgers* allows for all participants to read, learn and engage together.

WEEK	DATES	CHAPTERS	PAGES
Week 1	Sept. 8–12, 2014	cc. 1–5	pp. 1–32
Week 2	Sept. 15–19, 2014	cc. 6–11	pp. 33–63
Week 3	Sept. 22–26, 2104	Inside of O’s Mind–ch. 17	pp. 64–97
Week 4	Sept. 29–Oct. 2, 2014	cc. 18–23	pp. 98–130
Week 5	Oct. 6–10, 2014	cc. 24–33	pp. 131–165
Week 6	Oct. 20–24, 2014	cc. 34–Epilogue	pp. 166–193

Hot Dogs and Hamburgers: Unlocking Life's Potential by Inspiring Literacy at Any Age was chosen for its heartwarming and honest look at the complicated and broad social justice issue of adult illiteracy. Those participating in One Read are invited to use this book to foster conversation and dispel the myths and stigma surrounding those who silently live out their daily lives not knowing how to read.

As a faith community, One Read allows us to:

UNITE IN A COMMON EXPERIENCE – Reading the book as a community allows for the opportunity to explore the topic of illiteracy together. One book, one church!

CREATE AWARENESS – By reading real stories of those uniquely touched by illiteracy, we become intentionally informed about this difficult issue.

ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE – Readers can share, reflectively and honestly, their reactions through discussion, listening and sharing.

INSPIRE CHANGE – Inspire and challenge each other to find creative ways to become actively involved. Stand up and take action!

Use this discussion guide for personal and group exploration. As part of the journey, use the included scripture verses for meditation and reflection.

We have different gifts that are consistent with God's grace that has been given to us. If your gift is prophecy, you should prophesy in proportion to your faith. If your gift is service, devote yourself to serving. If your gift is teaching, devote yourself to teaching. If your gift is encouragement, devote yourself to encouraging. The one giving should do it with no strings attached. The leader should lead with passion. The one showing mercy should be cheerful.

Romans 12: 6–8
Common English Bible

Welcome,

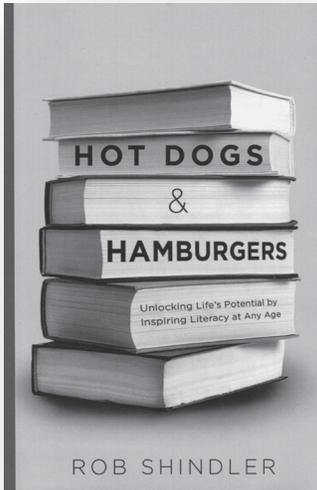
Hot Dogs & Hamburgers is a heartwarming book about my struggles with our son's learning disability, about volunteering and bringing to the forefront the real faces of adult illiteracy. Please know that I am not your traditional author. I'm just a dad who wrote a story about my little boy and the adult learners we fell in love with along the way.

I am honored to partner with the United Church of Christ in *our* campaign to bring a voice to this hidden injustice and show that *Reading Changes Lives*. Together we can give these adults the second chance they deserve.

Excited and humbled,
Rob Shindler

**I have only just a minute,
Only sixty seconds in it
Forced upon me, can't refuse it,
Didn't seek it,
Didn't choose it
But it's up to me to use it
I must suffer if I lose it
Give account if I abuse it
Just a tiny little minute
But an eternity is in it!**

—Dr. Benjamin Mays



ABOUT THE BOOK

Learning to read builds confidence and hope In this heartwarming story, author Rob Shindler tells how he offered his time, unflagging energy, and unconventional teaching techniques to help a boy with serious learning differences and adults suffering from low literacy levels. A father who wanted to help his son with his reading deficiencies, Rob discovered the way to that goal was through volunteering at the Literacy Center of Chicago. There, he learned firsthand how ridiculous the common misconceptions are about learning disabilities and adult illiteracy. The assortment of students he taught were ambitious people who were eloquent, driven, clever, and so funny they made him laugh out loud. Here, Rob shares his students' pain and humiliations, frustrations and hopes. *Hot Dogs & Hamburgers* demonstrates that literacy issues reside in all neighborhoods and that its victims are committed to finding dignity and life's possibilities through learning to read. Rob's teaching experiences are so motivating and rewarding that once you've read his story, you're likely to begin your own journey as a literacy tutor.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rob and his wife, Andi, have twins, Isabella and Oliver, and their younger brother, future NFL star Sage. Rob is the founder of Abogados America, a small law firm in Chicago that specializes in representing the Hispanic community, which faces an array of legal injustices. "My Spanish-speaking clients are a lot like adults fighting illiteracy. Society tends to judge both before all the evidence is in." Rob's hope is that *Hot Dogs & Hamburgers* will bring an awareness of adult low literacy and slow that judging process down.

WEEK 1

Chapters 1-5

Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.

—John 7:24

“I had judged a book by its cover”—Why do we take one look at someone and sum up their worth or character in one glance? Was your judgment based on negative stereotypes, preconceived notions, or simply not taking a closer look?

“What kind of father turns his back on his own son? That’s not a question; it’s a confession.” — The author confesses that he tried to keep his son’s learning disability a secret. Was it to guard his son from harm or to guard himself from negative perceptions? Have you ever struggled with acceptance for being different? Have you ever been challenged to accept another because of their difference? How did you overcome these struggles?

**Let each of you look not to your own interests,
but to the interests of others.**

—Philippians 2:4

“In the end, individual motivations are irrelevant because hope loves company.”—Everyone has their own journey or story, but there are needs that connect us all. Do you think that the author’s motivations are selfish? What motivates you to help another?

WEEK 2

Chapters 6–11

Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another.

—Romans 14:13

“Instead, they simply want to be able to enjoy the sports section in their daily newspaper. Read a menu. Fill out a job application. Understand the instructions on medicine bottles. Help their sons and daughters with their homework. Read the Bible in church. Achieve the self-respect we all take for granted.”—Read the above passage and replay in your mind the things you did today. What required you to read? Do you sometimes take for granted basic rights and privileges such as the ability to read? Do you often think of those who are living without basic rights and resources?

“If you weren’t able to keep up, you became lost. And soon forgotten.”—No single injustice can be overlooked. How does our culture allow the gap to widen between those who can and those who cannot? Do we have an obligation to help those who lag behind?

Describe what is occurring in Rob’s classroom? What have both the students and the teacher learned from each other?

WEEK 3

Chapters Inside O's Mind-17

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

—1 Thessalonians 5:11

Oliver had an adventure choosing his first book. Do you remember your first 'big' kid book or your favorite book as a child? Was reading a joy or a chore? How did reading as a child influence your reading habits today?

“If you learn a word—I mean, really, really, really learn it—then (pointing to his head) it goes inside your bank. And no matter how hard you shake it, the word will stay inside. It will be yours. Forever.”—What lesson is the author trying to teach both Oliver and his literacy students? How have you felt after having learned something new? What have you banked away that is yours forever? Do you feel a sense of pride?

“Society spends so much time telling people—especially adults who can't read and learning-challenged youths—what they don't know that those who are trying to improve their reading skills forget to celebrate what they do.”—Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

WEEK 4

Chapters 18–23

...with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope
to which (God) has called you,
—Ephesians 1:18

“At first glance...the students at the center may not exactly entice someone’s desire to believe they have value...But when you take your time, look closer, and investigate, you see that there is worth. Something that is beautiful. Something that is real. A diamond in the rough...”—Think back to the elevator ride on the author’s first visit to Literacy Chicago. How has volunteering transformed him, his perceptions, his spirit?

Ann Marie finds comfort in her Bible. She has memorized almost all of the scriptures. Imagine that the person next to you in the pew may not be able to *read* Bible scripture. How do you think that this may impact their worship experience?

“I suddenly realize Michael probably sees me as the guy on the other side of the fence... The one who couldn’t possibly understand him and, therefore, couldn’t help him.”—Does silent judgment and our differences impact the desire to extend help to others? How might our differences dampen or enhance the mentor/mentee relationship?

“...how she effortlessly extended herself to a perfect stranger.”—

Just as literacy is passed from parent to child through example, the gift of service and a spirit of helping others can also be passed down. Do we find it difficult to help those we do not know? Do we get personally involved or keep our distance?

WEEK 5

Chapters 24–33

For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

—John 13:15

“I’ll help you help Oliver. And then you’ll make sure that someday Oliver helps someone else’s son, deal?” (ch. 1)

Oliver and Isabella pitch in and take over the class in their father’s absence. How has their father’s journey influenced their own journey of discovery? How does their desire to help extend to their father, his students and to Oliver? What are your ideas on volunteering and sacrificing your time for others compare to the Shindler family?

Isabella creatively used her love of music to help the class. What unique gifts could you bring to help someone, young or old, learn to read?

Think of your favorite song. Does it stay with you because of the melody, the words, what emotions come forth? Print out the words of one of your favorites and read the words. Does it have the same meaning?

WEEK 6

Chapters 24–Epilogue

Some give freely, yet grow all the richer;...A generous person will be enriched, and one who gives water will get water.

—Proverbs 11:24–25

“It must have been hard wearing that mask all these years, alone”—Adults who can’t read suffer in silence. They adapt and create ways to navigate their world while feeling trapped. In what ways as a community are we able to remove the masks and create opportunities for those who can’t read?

What is the significance of the class waiting to read the last page of *Black Beauty* aloud for the author?

“It was kind of like I was sharing something I got they never did” (Oliver Shindler)

“...we’re all here to teach each other something.”—Compare the journeys that Oliver and his father completed? How were they similar? Different?

GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God,
serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.**

—1 Peter 4:10

What did you know about the literacy divide in America prior to reading this book? Do you know anyone who struggles with reading? How so?

What preconceived opinions, if any, did you have of those who struggle with low literacy? How has reading this book changed your opinion?

What did you find to be the most interesting events in the book? What specific passage, quote, or character left a lasting impression? How did it affect you?

Has reading the book inspired you to look deeper into the literacy dilemma or take action?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Find local literacy and education programs and where to volunteer in your area:

<http://www.nationalliteracydirectory.org>

Learn more about adult literacy in America:

www.proliteracy.org

www.national-coalition-literacy.org

Read more stories of second chances:

Last Reader Standing: The Story of a Man Who Learned to Read at 54 by Archie Willard

The Teacher Who Couldn't Read by John Corcoran.

The Promise of a Pencil: How an Ordinary Person Can Create Extraordinary Change by Adam Braun

From Illiteracy to the White House by Rod Williams

Join the United Church Christ in our fight against illiteracy.

September 7, 2014

Day of Prayer for Literacy in celebration of Christian Education Sunday

September 8, 2014,through October 24, 2014

ONE READ – Church-wide read of *Hot Dogs and Hamburgers* by Rob Shindler

October 26, 2014

Celebrate Higher Education Sunday

March 4, 2015

MARCH FORTH FOR LITERACY

Individuals and congregations will have an opportunity to join one of four teams throughout March, competing with each other to collect the most books, solicit the most pledges to become literacy tutors, sponsor the most schools, or raise the most money for local and national literary programs.

June 26-30, 2015

GENERAL SYNOD 30

You'll want to attend General Synod in Cleveland as the UCC reaches out to the local community. There will be opportunities to learn, help and support those who struggle with reading find resources.



NOTES:



For additional info visit
www.readingchangeslives.org

Contact

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