

Notes from Patches and Friends



My Dear Friends,

I would like you to take the time and reflect on your childhood; **when did you learn to read, and did you enjoy it?**

When I reflect on my childhood, I remember my mother reading to me before I could talk or walk. As I got older, she would take me to the public library every week to check out books. My mother would allow me to browse through and take books off the shelves, and I would look at them for hours as I selected each special one. I was so disappointed when it was time to leave, and I could only check out ten; I wanted more and counted the days until my mother would take me to the library to get my next ten! To this day, I remember that library, the *Glendale Public Library*.

Are you a lifelong reader? What creates a lifelong reader?

I believe a lifelong reader isn't created overnight. We grow slowly, through small, meaningful moments shared over stories, laughter, and imagination. Below are a few simple, powerful ways you can help nurture that love with your children at home.

1. Make Reading a Daily Ritual

Children thrive on routine. Whether it's a bedtime story, a morning poem at breakfast, or a quiet afternoon reading break, consistency helps books become a natural and comforting part of their day.

2. Let Them Choose

Even if it is the same book for the tenth time or a topic you wouldn't have picked, choice builds ownership. When children feel in control of what they read, their enthusiasm grows!

3. Read Aloud – Even After They Can Read Themselves

Reading aloud isn't just for toddlers. It strengthens vocabulary, comprehension, sparks imagination, and emotional connection. Additionally, it evokes associations with warmth and togetherness.

4. Create a Reading – Friendly Environment

A small basket of books in the living room, a cozy corner with pillows, or a weekly library visit can make reading feel special and inviting.

5. Be a Reading Role Model

Children notice everything. When they see you reading -- books, magazines, even recipes -- they understand that reading is valuable and enjoyable for all ages.

6. Connect Stories to Real Life

Ask open-ended questions like, "What would you do if you were the main character?" or "How do you think she felt?" "What setting would you select for this story?" These conversations deepen understanding and bring stories to life.

7. Celebrate Progress, Not Perfection

Every child develops at their own pace. Celebrate effort, curiosity, and improvement rather than focusing only on skill level.

Most importantly, keep reading **fun**. When books are associated with **comfort**, **curiosity**, and **connection**, children don't just learn to read—they **learn to love** reading. When children **love** reading, they open doors to **empathy**, **creativity**, **confidence**, **imagination**, and **lifelong learning**.

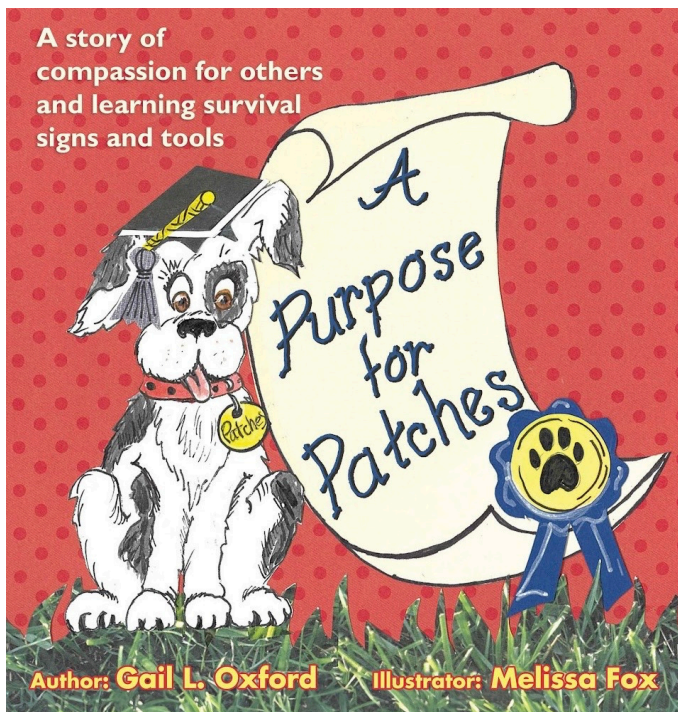
Here's to many **magical** story times ahead!

Please visit <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0G81316VN> to check out my new coloring book, created to accompany A Purpose for Patches---now available for purchase!

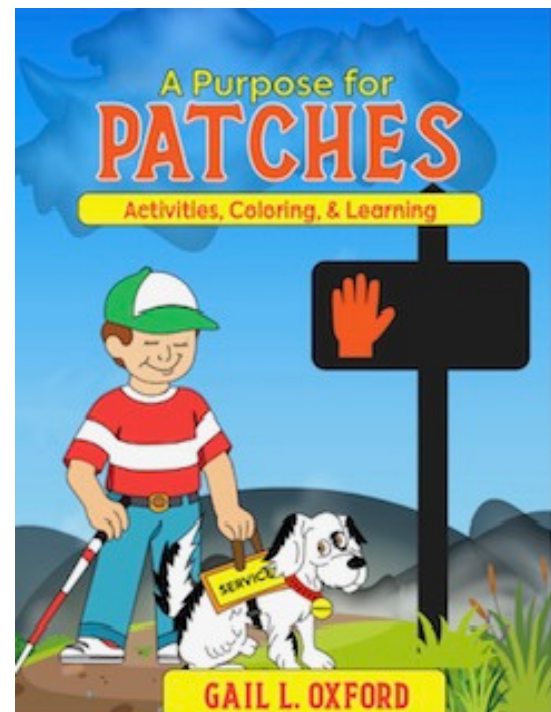
I am also excited to share that my newest Travel Adventure Series, Patches Explores Pagosa Springs: A Guide Dog's Mountain Adventure, will be available for purchase soon!

P. S. ~ Please write to me at gail@purposefulpals.com to ask me questions or suggest topics you would like me to write about.

Warmly,
Gail Oxford



Click [HERE](#) to order *A Purpose for Patches*



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