Really Good Stuff® Activity Guide
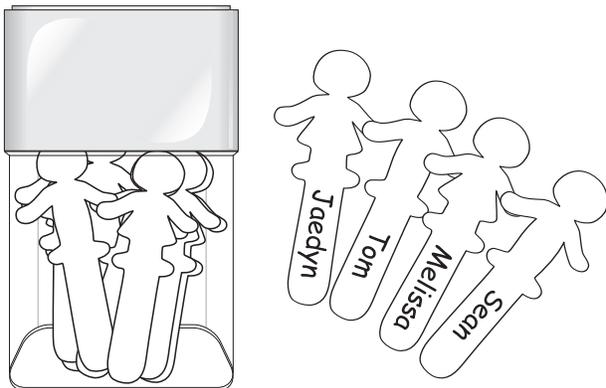
Pick-A-Student Sticks Set

Congratulations on your purchase of the Really Good Stuff® Pick-A-Student Sticks—a convenient way to group students or randomly select students for teams, small group work, or errands.

Inside this Really Good Stuff® set you'll find:
- 16 Student Sticks shaped like girls (wearing dresses)
- 16 Student Sticks shaped like boys (wearing pants)
- 8" Plastic Storage Container with Lid
- This Really Good Stuff® Activity Guide

Preparing the Pick-A-Student Sticks Set
Using a permanent marker, write each student's first name on both sides of a **Pick-A-Student Stick**, below the "feet" on the stick's outline. Writing girls' names on the sticks with dresses and boys' names on the sticks with pants will aid you later if you would like to pair/group students according to gender.

Color Coding the Pick-A-Student Sticks
Pick-A-Student Sticks can be color coded for a variety of purposes. However you choose to code your **Sticks**, be sure to make yourself a key using the *Color Coding Key*, so that you can easily remember what each color means. It is important that you use different color schemes on each side of your **Sticks**, so that systems are not confused with each other. For instance, if you are coding Oral Reading on one side, you might use red, yellow, and blue. If you are coding Math on the other side, you might use purple, orange, and green. To further distinguish sides, you can label the oral reading side "OR" and the math side "M." Also, it is important that you do not tell students if your **Sticks** are color coded according to ability, as that may affect students' self-esteem.

Color Coding According to Oral Reading Ability
Before color coding your **Sticks**, assess each student's oral reading ability. Then divide students' **Sticks** into three groups: students who can read long passages without difficulty, students who can read passages with some difficulty, and students who struggle reading orally. Using a magic marker, color the head on one side of each **Stick** to indicate oral reading ability (ex. red for the first group, yellow for the second group, and blue for the third group).

When the class reads orally, tell students that you will select students to read by picking **Sticks**. Because you can see the colored heads, you will easily be able to choose a **Stick** according to the length and difficulty of the passage. When the class comes upon a short/easy passage, choose a student with a blue **Stick**. For difficult passages, choose a red **Stick**, etc. This system prevents students from being embarrassed when they are asked to read a passage that is far beyond their level. It also prevents more advanced readers from being bored with passages that are much too easy. You may choose to replace **Sticks** in the container after they've been selected so that students may have another turn, or place **Sticks** in a pile beside you so that each student gets only one turn.

Color Coding According to Reading Comprehension Ability
Assess each student's reading comprehension ability. Divide students' **Sticks** into three or four groups, depending on how many small reading groups you may already have. Color the heads of each group's **Sticks** to indicate comprehension ability. Use these **Sticks** to pair or group students for paired reading, literature circles, or other reading activities. At times, you may choose to pair students of the same reading level by choosing **Sticks** of the same color. At other times, you may prefer to match students of multiple levels by choosing **Sticks** of different colors.

Color Coding According to Math Ability, Writing Ability, etc.
Pick-A-Student Sticks can be color coded for math ability, writing ability, and for many other content area skills.

As above, divide the **Sticks** into ability groups and color code them. During work time or activity time, you may choose to group students of like ability or of differing ability.

Creating groups with your **Sticks** is often easier than using a grid or list, as you can easily move the students from group to group without the worry of missing a name on a list. When you have grouped all of your **Sticks**, you have grouped all of your students!

Changing Stick Colors

Color code the **Sticks** for your purposes; make a key using the *Color Coding Key* to remind yourself. If a student's level changes during the year, or if you would like to change a student's group for any reason, place a sticker over the "head" of the **Stick** and color the sticker as desired.

Random Selection of Students

At times, you may want to select students randomly for a variety of reasons (running errands, passing out papers, taking the class pet home for the weekend, taking turns during a game, etc.). If you would like to select a student at random, simply reach into the container and pull out a **Stick** without looking. To be sure to choose a student who has not yet had a turn, only include those **Sticks** in the container. If you would like for every student to have a chance each time, include all of the **Sticks** in the container and replace the **Stick** each time you have pulled one out.

Choosing helpers randomly assures students that you are not playing favorites by allowing the same child to perform each task. It also may help to alleviate parent concerns about how children are selected for activities and privileges.

Color Coding Key

Identify each subject for which you have color coded your **Sticks**. Label each color used on your key. Then list students' names under the correct color.

SUBJECT:			
COLOR:	COLOR:	COLOR:	COLOR:
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.	6.
SUBJECT:			
COLOR:	COLOR:	COLOR:	COLOR:
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.	6.