

Dear Parents,

Fast start is a fun program designed to build your child's reading skills. You spend no more than 15 minutes reading, rereading and teaching a different poem to your child twice a month. The poem is printed on a sheet of paper with plenty of space for later writing. Here's all you have to do:

1. Sit side by side with your child and read the poem to him/her several times through with good expression. Be sure to point to the words as you read so that your child connects the spoken word with the printed words.
2. Read aloud the poem together and point to the words as in step one. Talk about the poem and what it's about remarking on how well you read it.
3. After reading the poem several times together, invite your child to read the poem several times to you. Listen attentively, offer support and lavish praise on your child for good reading.
4. Engage in Word Study:
 - With your child, choose two to four interesting words from the poem and add them to your child's word bank, word lists, or home word wall. Practice and sort the words in various categories. Use them for word games such as Bingo, Fish, Memory, Concentration, and so forth.
 - Look for rhyming words and key word families (e.g. at, in, op, et, ing) and write them on the poem. Then brainstorm and write down other rhyming words or words from the same family. Read these words several times and add them to the word bank. Look for high frequency words (words that appear frequently in print and should be recognized automatically with no decoding....the, is at, am, look, and).

In school the teacher will put the poem on the chalkboard, an easel or a chart and read it with the students several times. They will talk about what they learned at home from reading it with their families. They will engage in more word study, focusing on word families, sight words, rhyming and word sorting.

Thanks for Participating,
The CGS staff and Reading Room