

Building Readers for Life

Downingtown Area School District K-5 Literacy Newsletter

Hello, Downingtown Families!

We are now in the third trimester of the 2018-2019 school year! We hope you continue to find it useful to receive these assessment updates, reading strategies, and resources to build successful readers and foster positive home and school connections.

April is National Poetry Month

Poetry Pebbles are a fun way to kick off the warmer weather!

You will need pebbles, markers and/or paint. Make sure your pebbles are clean. Paint or write words onto your pebbles. Choose a number of words — people, places, things, action words etc.

Examples: he, she, dog, walk, swim, purple, my, your, happy, red, etc.

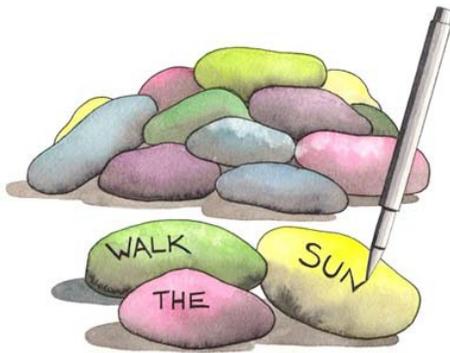
Use your imagination and make sure you draw some punctuation marks on some pebbles as well (comma, exclamation point, period, question mark, etc.)

Once the pebbles are painted, let them dry and seal them with hairspray or spray varnish (optional).

Put all of the pebbles into a shoe box or another container. You can decorate your container with paint or markers as well.

Play a game of poetry pebbles. Each player chooses a number of pebbles from the box and tries to come up with a poem or story.

Makes for a great way to begin a short story for those times when you have writers block! (From kinderart.com)



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UPCOMING ASSESSMENT UPDATES:

AIMS Web
(Grades K-5)

May 20th – May 31st

Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark
Assessment System
(Grades K-5)

May 1st – May 31st

PSSA Testing ELA
(Grades 3-5)

April 23rd – April 25th

PSSA Testing Math
(Grades 3-5)

April 29th – April 30th

PSSA Testing Science
(Grade 4 only)

May 2nd – May 3rd

On Hands Benchmark Assessment
Math Only
(3rd – 5th Grade)

May 13th – May 17th





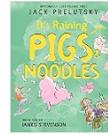
Reading Recommendations

Planting a Rainbow, by Lois Ehlert



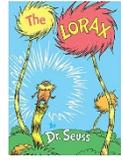
And Then It's Spring, by Julie Fogliano

The Adventures of a Plastic Bottle, Alison Inches



My Mummy Is Magic, By Dawn Richards

It's Raining Pigs and Noodles, By Jack Prelutsky



The Lorax, By Dr. Seuss



You're a Poet and Didn't Even Know It!

Sharing poetry with kids is a great way to highlight language. Poems offer humor, interesting words, tongue twisters, alliteration, and opportunities for choral reading (reading together).

Start with playful, rhyming poetry about topics that are familiar to your child like animals, food, and bedtime. Nursery rhymes and Mother Goose collections are early favorites.

Read the poetry aloud slowly. Emphasize the sound of the words and the rhymes. Read dramatically to emphasize the breaks and phrasing of the poem. Have fun with colorful language and word play.

Reread the poem several times. Many popular poets for kids (for example Shel Silverstein and Jack Prelutsky) have several of their poems online. These can be printed and used for rereading. Favorite ones can be arranged into a family poetry notebook.

Once a poem is familiar to your child, take turns reading! First, you read one line or one stanza, and have your child read the next. See if you can do that while maintaining the rhythm of the poem.

Plan your own family poetry jam! Have a member of the family choose and practice a favorite poem to share with the family. Set aside a special time to celebrate poetry by having each person share the poem.

Ask your Own Questions



Asking and answering their own questions can help boost your child's comprehension as they read or listen to a story.

Suggest these strategies for each stage of the reading process:

BEFORE READING: Encourage your child to think of questions before he/she even opens the book. Looking for the answers to their "questions" will help them pay attention to the details in the story.

DURING READING: Wondering about a book's topic can keep your child focused. Read a page and think of a question. Then ask, "Guess what I wonder?" and give hints. Once your child guesses, it's his/her turn to read while you figure out what he/she wonders.

AFTER READING: Brainstorm questions together to ask after finishing a book. For fiction, your child may list, "What would I do in this setting?" For nonfiction, he/she might suggest, "What did this book make me want to know?" This helps readers better understand and remember the story and information.

Dig Deep

As your child gets older, he/she will be expected to think more deeply about books. Talk together about what your child reads. You can ask questions to encourage and develop higher-level thinking.

1. Pose questions that require more than a one-word answer. Example: "How did the main character change as the story went on?" instead of "who is the main character?"
2. Choose questions that can't be answered by what is in the story alone. Questions that start with "why do you think..." or "what if..." are good alternatives.