

Dear Parents:

The Reading (Reading Readiness) Program your child is experiencing at school employs a uniquely child-centered approach to the teaching of beginning reading. The program allows each child to learn in a relaxed, comfortable and positive atmosphere and creates a real excitement within the child for both reading and writing.

The program, which was developed for the Center for Innovation in Education by Mary and Bob Baratta-Lorton, is based on sound educational research, and has been used successfully in classrooms since 1972. The Baratta-Lortons have authored the following educational publications: **Workjobs, Workjobs for Parents, Mathematics Their Way and Mathematics a Way of Thinking.**

When you read the poem which I have included at the end of this letter, you will notice the confusing and inconsistent spellings which occur in the English language and which are the cause of many of the difficulties children have in learning to read. It was to overcome these difficulties that this program was created.

The reading program your child is learning provides a consistent sound-symbol base by using "pictures" to represent each of the 44 different sounds which make up all of the words in the English language. Each time a sound occurs in a word, regardless of how it is spelled, a picture representing that sound appears in the word. For example the "k" sound occurs in each of the following words:

kiss cat sick school

In each word the sound is spelled differently but the sound "k" is the same. This can be very confusing to a young child. In the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program a picture of a stick being broken represents the "k" sound, regardless of the spelling of the word.

The Baratta-Lorton program enables children to read long before they are able to make sense out of the complexities of individual letters and letter combinations. This frees the child to concentrate on understanding what he or she is reading. This particular approach has proved to be an excellent method of developing language and thinking skills, as well.

In the very near future I will be inviting you to come to school for an evening open house, so that I may demonstrate for you how the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program makes learning to read and write so easy for your child. You will then be able to see for yourself why this reading program makes learning a joy rather than a struggle.

During the next few weeks, your child may occasionally come home with a "picture" stamped on his or her hand. Don't worry! The picture isn't permanent! It will wash off or wear off soon. If you wish to become familiar with some of the sound pictures used in the program before our open house, please ask your child to tell you which new sound each picture stamped on his or her hand represents. Your child would very much enjoy sharing the sounds with you.

I will send you the date and time of the open house in my next note home. I am looking forward to sharing the reading program with you. I know you will be as excited as I am about the learning it makes possible for your child.

Sincerely,

Our Queer Language

When the English tongue we speak
Why is "break" not rhymed with "freak"?

Will you tell me why it's true
We say "sew", but likewise "few"?

And the maker of a verse
Cannot rhyme his "horse" with "worse"?

"Beard" sounds not the same as "heard"
"Cord" is different from "word".

Cow is "cow", but low is "low"
"Shoe" is never rhymed with "foe".

Think of "rose" and "close" and "lose"
And think of "goose" and yet of "choose".

Think of "comb" and "tomb" and "bomb"
"Doll" and "roll" and "home" and "some".

And since "pay" is rhymed with "say"
Why not "paid" with "said" I pray?

We have "blood" and "food" and "good"
"Cough" is not pronounced like "could".

Wherefore "done" but "gone" and "lone"?
Is there any reason known?

And in short it seems to me
Sounds and letters disagree!

(Author Unknown)

Dear Parents:

On (day) , the (date) of (Month) at
 (time) in the evening, I would like to meet with the parents of all
the children in my class.

At this meeting I will explain to you the program I am using this year to
make learning to read an easy and enjoyable process for your child.

I would appreciate it very much if you could come to room number
 that evening to allow me to meet you and show you our different
way of teaching reading, writing, and spelling.

Please come and learn the meaning of all those stamps you've seen on your
child's hand.

Sincerely,

Dear Name of individual:

I am sorry you were unable to join us at our open house last (day) evening.

At the meeting, I explained our reading program and gave each parent who was there some materials so they could help their children with the program at home. I would like to arrange to give you those same materials.

Please indicate below if you would prefer to meet with me after school one afternoon or if it would be more convenient if I came to your home.

I am most anxious to meet you and to share with you our special way of teaching reading, writing and spelling.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Please indicate your choice by checking one of the boxes below, and return the bottom portion of this form to me as soon as possible.

.....

I would prefer to meet with you after school.
(Teacher: list choices of dates and times to group the parents together and ask parents to circle choice.)

I would prefer you to come to my home.
(Teacher: list available visiting dates and ask parents to circle choice.)

Please call me to set up a time.

Phone Number to call _____

Best time(s) to call _____

Name of parent: _____

Child's Name: _____