

9/9/09

Dear parents,

We will be implementing a reading homework program in our classroom that works very well with the Montessori philosophy. This letter serves to explain the reading homework your child will receive each day. The WORKSHOP WAY system uses words or phrases for the homework lessons. The lessons contain words that are used in readers and other books. In WORKSHOP WAY, no judgment is made as to which students can read or will read. It is believed that all students will read, learn well, and learn how to think!

Although the lessons have words, phrases, and word meaning exercises, the purpose of the homework is NOT reading! The purpose is building self-esteem for every child. FAST READING is the process which can get the students to feel important, intelligent, and the power to manage how they study. The feelings are positive impressions of their worth that are rich nourishment for self-esteem.

The homework assignment is the same for all students: "Choose how much of the lesson you wish to learn to read fast each morning." Homework lessons are heard after cursive practice each morning.

It is important for students to be willing to choose how much to study. Therefore, I am asking that you NOT tell your child to study the homework, and above all, NOT to make your child do the homework! If you do, you will have to tell or make your child do his/her work all through his/her school career - even in high school!

If we are willing to wait for growth so children will WANT to study without anyone telling them what to do, it will mean they will grow daily to learn better and to love learning.

Do not worry as to "when" this will happen. Every day in school and as long as it is necessary, until the students want to be involved, we will role-play how to ask for help. If your child asks you for help, just say, "Congratulations! I'm so glad you had enough sense to ask for help. That took courage, right?" Then smile at your child and wait for him/her to say, "Right!" in response to your question.

We will role-play another choice they could have. Your child may ask you to simply hear him/her read the paper fast. I hope you will say, "Yes, I'd love to!"

I am sure your child is going to enjoy reading his/her paper fast to me each morning. Thank you for your help in implementing this reading program. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Ms. Susan