



Goosehill Primary School
Weekly Notes-January 22, 2016



Dear Parents,

Thank you to the GPFA for sponsoring our author visit yesterday. The children enjoyed meeting author, Steve Metzger, hearing him read his books and learning about his work as an author. Mr. Metzger was very impressed with how engaged and polite our children were. He was even more impressed with their responses to his presentation. He told me he has never had a young audience demonstrate such knowledge of facts (about space and other topics), vocabulary, and nursery rhymes. (Knowledge of nursery rhymes was critical to understanding his book, Detective Blue) I felt like a proud parent, especially as our students confidently recited so many nursery rhymes! But of course, the credit goes to our teachers and to **you**---their parents and *first* teachers. You have given your children a solid literacy foundation on which our teachers can build the skills of lifelong readers, writers, and thinkers.

The fact that our students can recite nursery rhymes is very important. Nursery rhymes build phonological awareness---the awareness of the sounds of language---which is the foundation of early reading and writing skills. So much learning happens through nursery rhymes---here are some ideas from Tony Stead, a nationally-known literacy consultant:

- Nursery rhymes teach children to hear, learn, and enjoy the sounds of language---the sounds that vowels and consonants make. This is critical to developing their ability to decode and spell words.
- When young children recite nursery rhymes, they also practice pitch, volume, inflection, and rhythm.
- Nursery rhymes teach vocabulary like “fetch” (*a pail of water*) and “lean” (*his wife could eat no lean*).
- Because nursery rhymes are patterns, they help children learn easy recall and memorization.
- Nursery rhymes usually tell a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. This teaches young children that events happen in sequence.
- Nursery rhymes use patterns and sequence, and many also use numbers. Nursery rhymes incorporate counting and math concepts that children need to learn, such as size and weight.
- Nursery rhymes introduce alliteration (“Goosie Goosie Gander”), onomatopoeia (“Baa Baa Black Sheep”), and imaginative imagery.
- Funny nursery rhymes help children to develop a sense of humor.



According to all the research on reading, it is clear that the single most important thing you can do to promote your children’s success in school is read aloud to them **regularly**---nursery rhymes, poetry, fiction and nonfiction picture books, and even chapter books.

Based on Mr. Metzger’s observations of our students, you are likely already doing so. Thank you! Please continue---keep reading to your children... for many years to come.

Stay safe and warm this weekend.

Lynn Herschlein

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