

Focus Poetry

The teacher is responsible for carefully selecting appropriate pieces of poetry that will provide a challenge, but keep enthusiasm and interest at a high level for students. The focus poem is presented in a "surprise" atmosphere. Jill Eggleston describes it as "unwrapping a special present for the kids each week." So, it needs to be "unveiled" on day one. Copy each poem onto chart paper so that it is easy to read with a large group. (At the end of the week, the poem chart may be added to previous selections to make a poetry big book. Kids love it!)

Monday:

- Introduce the focus poem.
- Read the poem to the children.
- Invite them to predict what it might be about.
- Briefly discuss the message.

Tuesday:

- Read the focus poem together.
- Discuss any new or interesting vocabulary.

Wednesday:

- Read the poem together.
- Use the poem to introduce or reinforce any print concepts or other targets in the language areas, including spelling.

Thursday:

- Read the focus poem together.
- Move in some way to the rhythm of the poem (e.g. clap, stamp, thump)
- Change the way the poem has been said (e.g. make a tune for it, read it like a rap or a chant.)

Friday:

- Photocopy and glue the poem into each child's individual poetry book and allow them to illustrate it in their own way.
- Students take their poetry notebooks home to share with family and friends.