

Dear parents,

This year, your child will learn so much about reading and how sounds and letters work! I cannot wait to share the love of reading with your child and help them unlock the code!

One of the ways we see children learn to read is by learning "sight words." You'll see flashcards and children are expected to memorize those words. In our classroom, we teach high-frequency words (words that come up often in our reading) a little differently. Instead of memorizing sight words, we will use the heart word method!

What does that mean? With the heart word method, we focus on what parts of a word do work, before moving on to the parts of a word that don't "play by the rules."

What about words that do play fair and follow rules? In that case, simply let children use their knowledge of letters and sounds to decode. (Words like at, stop, and cat are all words that "play fair.")

How can you help? When reading a word that "doesn't play fair," try pointing out the parts of the word that do make sense! Then, simply tell your child the sounds of the letters that aren't playing by the rules.

When we teach children this method, they are no longer expected to just memorize words. By paying attention to the parts of the word that do make sense, we let our children know that English is a language with rules that help us learn to read

Example: from

From has 4 sounds. 3 of those sounds play fair! The only sound that doesn't is the o making the /u/ sound. So, we say the sounds the do play fair, and then put a heart above the part that doesn't (to let them know we must learn it by heart!)


from

Example: said

From has 3 sounds. 2 of those sounds play fair! The only sound that doesn't is ai making /eh/ sound. So, we say the sounds the do play fair, and then put a heart above the part that doesn't (to let them know we must learn it by heart!)


said