Dear parents,

“Book Bags” are an important part of your child’s reading program. Each day, the children will bring home a book to practice. This will most likely be an “A-Z” reader, but it may also be a book or poem we have practice at school. Please have your child read the book(s) as part of his/her homework.

At this early stage of reading the story has very predictable text (I like red, I like blue) and the pictures are VERY important, as they support the child’s “reading” of the words. At times your child may forget the predictable part of the text (I like). If that happens, you can help them by reading the first few pages together.

When working with your child, please encourage him/her to:

* Point to each word as they say it (this helps develop one-to-one correspondence.)
* Look at the pictures if they get stuck.
* Go back and re-read if they get confused (you may help them by saying “I like…) then have them read the sentence again on their own.
* Get their mouth ready for the first sound in the word.

Learning to read is a lot like learning to speak. You must:

* Believe your child will learn to read.
* Praise and encourage your child’s every attempt.
* Reread books over and over and over…
* Make reading a relaxed and enjoyable experience. If you are frustrated your child will become frustrated.

Please be careful not to:

* Get impatient or upset when reading with your child (if you find you or your child is frustrated, put it away for another time).
* Expect your child to sound out each letter.
* Cover the pictures to prove your child is “really” reading.

Don’t worry if it appears your child has memorized the text…That is a GOOD thing! Just be sure they are pointing to each word as they say it.

A note on responsibility: I teach the students that these books are precious and their responsibility (not Mom’s or Dad’s). It is their responsibility to keep them in good condition and bring them every day. The Ziploc bag will keep them dry and generally unharmed in your child’s backpack. Once they have finished reading their books, please remind them to put them right back in their backpacks.

I have also included a home reading sheet and a “strategies bookmark” in your child’s Ziploc bag. Please comment beside the book your child read. I may send a book home several times if your child needs more time to master the text.

If at ANY time you are feeling discouraged or if you have ANY questions, please let me know. The home reading program is not meant to create work or stress at home. It is simply a tool to help provide the best chance at success in reading for your child.

Happy Reading!!

Mrs. Lazaruk