



Reading Without Rules

I'm sure most of you have a fond memory of reading, or being read to, as a child. Maybe it was your parents, your siblings or a favourite teacher. I am a spurt-reader (a term I just made up) meaning I read in spurts. Sometimes I read a lot, sometimes I don't pick up a book for months. Right now I am reading a lot. My Kobo even told me "I Eat Books For Lunch" - I think that may just mean I usually read around lunch time which is true on the weekends. There is no doubt about it, reading is so great for your brain! I absolutely notice a difference in my thinking and articulation when I am engrossed in a good book.

The thing about a good book is it can take you to places you may never get to go. It can expand your experiences and horizons and what you know about the world. This is so important for young children. To understand how others live, how many interesting things there are in this universe, to learn more about something they like, the possibilities are endless!

At ABC Head Start literacy is just as much a part of our program as any other aspect. It is something our teachers deliberately plan for making sure all children have a chance in the day to experience the mystery of a good book in a way that is meaningful to the individual child. Some children want to hear the story and sit quietly while you read internalizing every detail, some stop you mid sentence asking tons of questions about the stories and the pictures, some like to touch and feel the pictures and turn the pages before you can even finish the words on the page. No matter what the style of the child, the great thing about books is there is no right or wrong way to do it! Reading without rules! As a preschooler the important thing is the child gets to experience the book.

Sure it's important that the child learns that there is a start and an end to the book, the correct way to turn pages, that the words tell a story, that the illustrations mean something as well, there is lots of learning that can take place! But a love of books may come with time, or in spurts, and we can let our preschoolers navigate that world in due time. Our job as adults is to expose our children to books, often and in many different ways, that is meaningful and fun.

This week at some of our ABC Head Start sites we are celebrating "Read In Week." Where guests come to the classrooms and read to the children. It is a great way to get the community involved and another vehicle to bring books to children's lives. So if you'll excuse me I have to go share some of "Pete The Cat's" antics with some eager ABC Head Start students.