

A Note of Commendation for JoAnne Moore

I am a seasoned teacher and have taught at various grade levels. This year, I was assigned a grade one and two classroom for the first time. I have always been committed to excellence in reading instruction but have never had the opportunity to begin at the grassroots level with children in grade one.

Thankfully, the student support teacher at my school had attended JoAnne Moore's workshop on the Smart Start in Language Arts program and she highly recommended that I use this program to teach my grade ones and twos. Smart Start has been a gift to both my students and me. My students are from a low socio-economic community and thrive on structure and predictability at school. Smart Start has provided the framework for a highly structured, yet creative reading program.

Smart Start is laid out with daily lessons for the students and concise notes for the teacher. The progression of skill development is masterfully planned and precisely organized so that each lesson flows perfectly into the next. With using JoAnne's program, I am always confident that the children are getting the instruction that they need when they need it and there has been steady growth in ALL of my students.

Throughout Smart Start, there are ideas for games, group and partner activities, puppetry, and role plays that make new concepts come to life. I see my students actively engaged and really enjoying the lessons. The accompanying writing activities give opportunity for young children to think carefully and apply the skills that they have learned.

I have found the program to be adaptable and it has been easy for me to provide differentiated instruction within its framework. When certain students require extra help, I can quickly draw from the suggestions and support materials that are offered.

Based on the standards set by our school division (in accordance with Fountas and Pinnell assessments), all of my grade one students are currently meeting or exceeding expectations in reading. My grade twos were struggling and reluctant readers at the beginning of the year. Most have advanced rapidly and are now reading at grade level.

I am most grateful to JoAnne Moore for her masterful work. I know of no other reading program that is so clearly laid out, user friendly, and thorough. Helping our students become competent readers is the best gift we can give them. Because of Smart Start, my students are receiving that gift.