

I have been using Smart Start in Language Arts for more than ten years in my grade one classroom, with superb results. JoAnne has developed a resource that provides structure, continuity and excellent learning strategies in all areas of the Language Arts program.

In reading, the children quickly develop decoding and word attack skills, and comprehension strategies that give them success and a sense of being a reader. By the end of grade one the vast majority of my students are reading independently, with comprehension, beyond grade level expectations as indicated by school board achievement results, and common diagnostic assessment tools.

The students' spelling skills are integrated into their daily reading assignment using a guided approach. Verbalizing the spelling rules, effective use of repetition, and spelling phonics posters have proven to be a very successful part of my Language Arts program.

I have found the most difficult skill to teach to grade one students is effective writing. I am always amazed at the writing growth my students display at the end of grade one, not only in their daily writing in the classroom, but on district level writing assessments. Using the many strategies in Smart Start, Sequence Stories, and Writing with Results, they grow from writing simple sentences to success in all genres and all subject areas.

There is no greater reward for a grade one teacher, than to see students reading and writing successfully at the end of the year. Searching for tools to enhance that success is always an important part of my job. I have used and discarded a great number of resources throughout my career of more than 20 years. Smart Start will continue to be an important part of my resource library.

Sincerely,

Gayle Broks

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