

VALUES AND GOALS OF POETRY IN KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

Poetry expands children’s oral language abilities as it:

- ▶ Provides texts that are easy to remember.
- ▶ Builds a repertoire of the unique patterns and forms of language.
- ▶ Helps children become sensitive to and enjoy the sounds of language—rhymes, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia (buzz, whiz, woof).
- ▶ Supports articulation and elocution.
- ▶ Extends listening and speaking vocabularies.
- ▶ Expands knowledge of the complex syntax of language.
- ▶ Encourages children to manipulate and play with language.
- ▶ Develops phonological awareness (rhyme, syllables, onsets and rimes).
- ▶ Develops phonemic awareness (the ability to manipulate individual sounds).
- ▶ Makes it easy for children to isolate and identify sounds, take words apart, and change sounds in words to make new words.
- ▶ Provides rich examples of comparisons such as similes and metaphors.

Poetry expands children’s written language abilities as it:

- ▶ Gives them access to memorable language that they can then match up with print.
- ▶ Expands spoken vocabulary, making it easier later for them to read words.
- ▶ Helps them notice aspects of print.
- ▶ Provides opportunities to learn and recognize words that rhyme, end the same, start the same, or sound the same in the middle.
- ▶ Helps them begin to notice the letters and letter patterns associated with sounds.
- ▶ Provides a setting in which to develop the concept of a word and notice how spaces are used to define words in written language.
- ▶ Provides models of fluent reading helping children get the feel of it.

Poetry expands children’s content knowledge as it:

- ▶ Provides new perceptions and ideas for them to think about.
- ▶ Helps them develop conceptual understanding.
- ▶ Encourages them to develop a sense of humor.
- ▶ Sensitizes them to the forms and style of poetry.

Poetry contributes to children’s social knowledge and skills as it:

- ▶ Provides artistic and aesthetic experiences.
- ▶ Creates a sense of community through enjoying rhymes and songs as a group.
- ▶ Gives them access to English-speaking culture.
- ▶ Provides a window to many other cultures.
- ▶ Provides a common language for a group of children to share.
- ▶ Creates memories of shared enjoyable times.