

Reading Our Way - Empowering The Disempowered Reader

Reading can be a challenging task in the early years of learning. Many students start school without the ability to recognise high frequency words or even their name. Teachers have the tough task to give students a holistic approach to reading in order to give students the best chance at being a strong and confident reader. However this is not always the case; studies have shown that many children are falling through the cracks. Schools often take on a phonics approach to early reading; however statistics show that 65% of what we learn, we learn through what we see. This is where the 'Reading Our Way' program will help enrich the reading environment.

Reading Our Way is an innovative reading program that has been designed to teach early reading and word recognition to both children and adults. The all-inclusive program teaches sight words through fun, interactive and engaging activities, with everything that is needed to implement the program included in the kit. There is no singular way to teach reading to learners, schools and teachers need to be delivering a rich reading environment that uses a number of different reading strategies. Dr. Mark Greenberg, a specialist in language and social emotional learning says:

"Rich and complex language environments in early childhood (are) essential to help children set up the skills now to accomplish the challenge of reading. We know that that's also related to having warm environments. So warm, responsive parents and teachers that expose and engage them in frequent and productive communication are critical for early reading development."

Students who feel disempowered with their reading tend to be emotional and non-responsive to tasks, this then can carry over to other areas of learning. Dr. Greenberg states that 'the more students feel angry or sad, the less likely they are to think clearly...or pay attention and be on task; and when you have a complex task like reading, the less likely they are to be effective readers.'

Reading Our Way will help empower the disempowered reader by giving them a visual 'whole word' approach to reading. The program allows students to set their own pace and allows the teacher to incorporate words that are in their everyday learning as well as high frequency words in the English language. Students will be able to celebrate their successes with this highly structured program that comes with everything you need to get your reader started on their journey.

ⁱ Dr. Mark Greenberg - Social-Emotional Learning and Learning to Read:
<http://www.childrenofthecode.org/interviews/greenberg.htm#HowEarly>