

Ed Extras

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Poems at Home

*Roses are red
Violets are blue
We like poetry
How about you?*

While our poetry may not be very good, our ideas for sharing it with young kids definitely are! National Poetry Month is a time to celebrate poets, rhymes, rhythm, and word choices that make poetry fun for kids.

Sharing poetry with kids is a great way to highlight language. Poems include humor, interesting words, tongue twisters and alliteration (the same consonant sound at the beginning of each word). Choral reading of poems, where more than one reads the same thing at the same time, and several rereading of the same poem also builds fluency.

How to Plan a Family Poetry Jam

Start with playful, rhyming poetry about topics that are familiar to your child like animals, food, and bedtime. Nursery rhymes and Mother Goose collections are early favorites.

Read the poetry aloud slowly. Emphasize the sound of the words and the rhymes. Read dramatically to emphasize the breaks and phrasing of the poem. Have fun with the colorful language and word play.

Reread the poem several times. Many popular poets for kids (for example Shel Silverstein and Jack Prelutsky) have several of their poems online. These can be printed and used for rereading. Favorite ones can be arranged into a family poetry notebook.

Once a poem is familiar to your child, take turns reading! First you read one line or one stanza, and have your child read the next. See if you can do that while maintaining the rhythm of the poem.

Plan your own family poetry jam. Have each member of the family choose and practice a favorite poem to share with the family. Set aside a special time to celebrate poetry by having each person share their poem.

While April is National Poetry month, there's enough excellent poetry for kids to share all year long. Ask your local librarian for help finding poetry collections that are a good fit for your child.

**For more ideas, read *Nursery Rhymes: Not Just for Babies!*
www.ReadingRockets.org/article/14017**

