

## Early Literacy Tips: by Miss Holliday

Hello Parents and welcome to a brand new school year at Clear Vista. My name is Brenda Holliday and I have worked almost my entire career in the primary grades. Last year, I started a position as the literacy/numeracy teacher for our school. My position is to provide intervention for students who are missing gaps in their learning. I am hoping to expand my role to communicate with parents on what best practices are happening in the classroom and what extra support they can offer at home.

This month, I would like to talk about sight words. What are sight words and why are they so important in the primary years? Sight words (Dolch, Fry) are words that are found most frequently in early readers. They are taught alongside phonics to develop early reading and writing skills. Most sight words can be sounded out as children learn the different sound combinations in the classroom but initially, they need to be 'learned by heart'. Some of these words don't follow a regular phonetic pattern ( from, the, said). The vowels don't match the sounds that are made. These are called irregular sight words. Sometimes, they are also referred to as heart words. As your child learns to sound out, the teacher will point out this irregular part.

What can you do to help your child learn sight words? Definitely, flash cards are beneficial. Take the time to sound out each of the sounds and point out the phonetic patterns. Play sight word games with your child. You will be amazed how fast they are mastered. One free site I use is called [sightwords.com](http://sightwords.com). It has games, flashcards, videos and more and it is all free! Check it out.

