

Star Name Interviews

"Star Names" is the name of the program that we use to introduce the letters and sound in Kindergarten 1, at ISS. The program was adapted from work done in the New York City Schools through the work of Lucy Calkins at Teachers College at Columbia University.



The 'Star Names' programme is an invitation to Word Study and is a highly effective way to ignite interest in words. After all, what is more interesting to a five-year old, than their own and their friends names?

Each week the teacher will choose a child's name, starting with names that that follow these rules - short vowels should follow consonants and then names with blends, digraphs and then rule breakers at the end.

On the first 'Interview' day, the 'Star Name' is introduced and the letters and sounds examined. The children ask the 'Star Name' person a series of questions. In the second phase children discuss 'words that start like'. Students should volunteer words that start with the same beginning sound as the child's name. Sometimes children will suggest a name with the same sound but is spelled different such as 'phone' for 'Fred'. Any word with the same sound is accepted and children are told that "ph" also makes the /f/ sound. Next the children are asked what they notice about the different features of letters, i.e.: John - has a letter that looks like a hook (J). As children continue with this, they will begin to call the letters by name and will find them in other names and words around the room. Lastly, children will be encouraged to see what other things they notice about their 'Star Name', i.e.: what the 'Star Name' rhymes with or how many letters it has.

Handwriting is also tied into the programme as the formation of the letters are studied and practised in a range of situations.