



## ***Tapestry Case Studies***

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# How the **University of Cambridge Primary School** uses **Tapestry** as a **communication tool** to **celebrate** and **share children's learning**.

[The University of Cambridge Primary School](#) (UCPS) opened in 2015, and is now a learning community of 660 children, from Nursery to Year 6. They've used Tapestry online learning journal from the beginning, for all children in their Nursery and Reception classes, and for their children with additional support needs throughout the school. At UCPS Teaching Assistants are called Learning Coaches.

EYFS Phase Leader Charlotte Bray and Director of Inclusion and Community Aimee Durning MBE shared some of the ways they use Tapestry to support teaching and learning in their school.

## SUPPORTING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

At UCPS all educators explore pedagogical approaches and reflect on their own practice. Video of teaching and learning taken via [Tapestry's Observations feature](#) supports this reflection. The Learning Coaches have a short weekly meeting together, and video observations of children learning can be used as a talking point:

"I think it's important we use Tapestry as a reflective tool to help us in all that we do. I watched a video the other day with a colleague supporting a child; we considered our practice in the video to make sure that we were doing our best. It's an opportunity to reflect back and think, does it link to our teaching and learning policy?

Within that moment has it captured our values? Is there something we could be doing differently?"



## CAPTURING CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND PROGRESS

When children reach personal milestones, a photo or video of these can be shared with them, their families and other staff members:



"What's great with Tapestry is that you capture those moments that the rest of the team can't see because they're in another classroom. Then later you can look back at the observations made that day and see a child reach a milestone within a little video. There they are, and it's just so fantastic."

UCPS use Tapestry to share Wow! moments with the team back at base when children go on school trips, connecting everyone together. And when the children return, their self-esteem develops as different staff members celebrate their achievements.

## SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH SEND, AND THEIR FAMILIES

Staying connected with children and families living with SEND is really important to the school community at UCPS. To make sure everyone is ready for individual children as they arrive at school, parents and carers use Tapestry to inform staff about how their child is feeling each day:

"Some parents use it as a communication tool to let us know how their child's morning has been before they arrive in school just to give us their heads up in case we need a different approach for when they walk through the door. So that's really helpful."



All of the children with EHCPs at UCSPS use the [Cherry Garden Branch Maps](#):

"Our Learning Coaches and Teachers are able to assess children in the moment and match this to a branch, add it to a Tapestry post and share with parents. Or it might be we take pictures of their books and what they've put in there, or an activity they've taken part in and share that with parents and carers."

Aimee says that the Cherry Garden framework helps the team to positively frame conversations with parents, avoiding a deficit model and focusing on discussions about growth, progress and celebration.

# How Dolphins's Pre-School support children's learning and development with Tapestry

**Dolphins Pre-school** is an Ofsted 'Outstanding' family run early years setting based in Hove. It is a long-established nursery, founded in 1960, with strong roots in its community.

There are usually around 30 children at Dolphins on a daily basis, and they have been using Tapestry since 2015.

We talked with Head of Operations at Dolphins, Peter Farrant.

## BUILDING AND MAINTAINING PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

One of the ways Dolphins supports partnership with parents is by using the **Observations feature on Tapestry** to share photos and videos of each child. This helps the team to retain the parents' connection with children's daily experiences at the setting:

**"I can't overstate how important Tapestry is for connecting with parents, it's really good for that engagement. We use observations to build parent partnership. Sharing photos and videos of their child helps parents to get a picture of their development and progression, and allays everyday worries about their child."**

Dolphins makes use of the Tapestry tutorials for parents to help families become familiar with Tapestry when their child begins at the setting. This includes the About Me feature, which parents are encouraged to fill in as part of the transition from home to setting, giving staff valuable information to make sure the environment is ready for each child.

Staff can update About Me together with parents during the settling-in period and beyond.



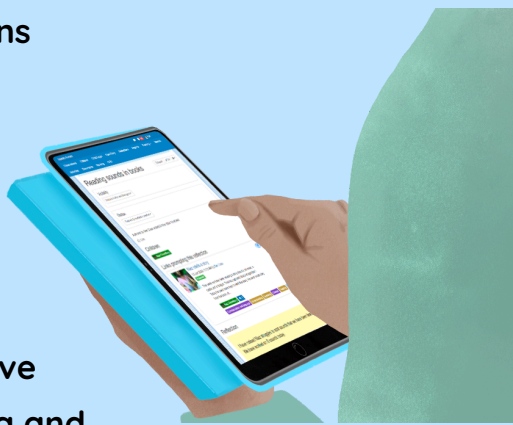
## MONITORING AND REFLECTING ON THE PROVISION FOR EVERY CHILD

Dolphins have been using Tapestry's Areas of Concern Screen to quickly identify any children who may be struggling in a particular area. This information can then be used to develop targeted support:

**"Staff use their professional judgement with the Areas of Concern screen. It is about seeing what impact they've made on that child's progress, so we are aiming for a flow, a movement towards no concerns for each child, because we have adapted our provision to support their development."**

The team uses the **Reflections feature** to record their thoughts and plans for individual children.

**"While some staff were initially reluctant to use Reflections due to the perceived extra workload, we have found that this is not the case. Reflections have helped staff to stay organised and focused on each child's individual needs without adding to their workload. They also provide a valuable record of progress over time. The use of the Areas of Concern screen with Reflections has had a positive impact on the development of the children. By identifying and addressing concerns early on, staff are able to help children reach their full potential."**



## ORGANISING THE TEAM'S KNOWLEDGE ABOUT EACH CHILD

It is important for each Key Person to really know their key children, and also for other staff members to get to know every child. At Dolphins, they use the **Observations** and **Reflections** features to help them retain and share their knowledge about the children.



**"Staff have to recall a vast amount of information, as they get to know each child and their families... Tapestry helps to hold that information through any observations we decide to make. At Dolphins we work together to notice the learning and progress children are making, so we can all observe something about a child and just grab a quick photo to add to their learning journal and share with parents."**

Later, that child's Key Person might decide to flag that observation, as a prompt for them to remember some significant development or that a child is showing a specific interest. Then they might use Reflections to note down how they are going to support the progress.

All this really helps with communicating as a team, for example for dual key people to share knowledge and understanding about their key children."

# How Knowles Nursery School uses Tapestry to facilitate, reflect on and embed their good practice

[Knowles Nursery School](#) is a state funded maintained setting in Milton Keynes. Children can start at the nursery the term after they turn 2 years old, and a maximum of 52 children attend each session.

We spoke with Headteacher Natalie Fowler, and Part Time Assistant Headteacher Liz Jones.

## SUPPORTING PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The team at Knowles use the [Observations feature](#) on Tapestry to share photos and videos with parents. This helps to reassure parents, enables them to respond, and adds another tool in the team's toolbox of ways they can connect with families.

**“Our relationships with our families are fundamental to their child’s development. Not all our parents and carers have had positive experiences of education themselves and they may be reluctant to engage.**

**Tapestry helps parents to know their child is safe and happy - it helps us to allay those fears when a child is settling in. And when parents look at those photos**

**and videos with their child, it really supports the child’s recall and language development. We encourage parents and carers to ‘like’ and comment on the things we send them, and once they get used to the idea that we love to see photos about their child from them too, it sort of snowballs and we can learn loads about the child. We reinforce this by sharing any photos sent from home when we have group time with the children.”**



## EMBEDDING GOOD PRACTICE



**“Tapestry helps us with the nuts and bolts of how everything fits together. We use the flags on our observations, and these mean we can see whether there are any gaps in our provision as a whole as well as what we can do to support an individual child. It helps us embed this good practice across the team.”**

The staff at Knowles are always looking for ways to enable their good practice, and Tapestry is one of the tools they have to facilitate this. They use [Flags](#) to organise their observations - this helps educators to see quickly what a child is showing them they can do. It also enables the leadership team to have an overview of all the areas of learning so they can look at where they may need to adapt their provision. Watching video observations of children helps the team reflect on their approaches.

## SUPPORTING SEND PROVISION

Knowles have a high proportion of children with learning differences and disabilities and they are developing their use of Tapestry to support them. The team are using [Bespoke Frameworks](#) to record children's individual targets. This allows staff, families and other relevant professionals to see, follow and adapt the unique framework made for each child.

**“It is so important to us to have inclusive systems in place that work for all our children, especially those who need additional support. We are really excited about this new way of using Tapestry to simply and easily develop individual frameworks for our children with SEND. It will help our team and those who work with us, as well as the children.”**

They are also exploring [Reflections](#) and Page Links to help them complete EHCP and LA funding applications for children, ensuring observations, reports and documents about a child are easy to find and refer to.





# How the **teachers** and **children** at **Arundel C of E Primary School** use **Tapestry** to support learning

**Arundel CofE Primary School** (ACE) has 206 children aged 4 – 11 and has been using Tapestry’s online learning journal in EYFS since 2016. In 2020, the school extended its use of the learning journal to include Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and it is now successfully used across all year groups.

Headteacher Andrew Simpson explained why and how they use Tapestry at ACE.

## ACTIVELY ENGAGING CHILDREN WITH THEIR LEARNING

**“You can’t beat a platform which makes children excited about their learning.”**

When extending Tapestry into Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the school was keen to utilise the **Child Login feature**. This allows children to upload their work quickly and simply. Andrew says that adding their own content to their learning journals supports children in understanding what the purpose of the learning session is and helps to fulfil the ethos of ‘Know More, Remember More and Do More’.

Oral feedback is enhanced through discussions with the children after they have added their own content. Children are more engaged and excited about their learning, making a positive contribution to their self-esteem.



## INVOLVING CHILDREN IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Throughout the school, teachers at ACE build on the principles in the Early Years classroom, where teaching and learning can be at its most powerful in terms of impact and intervention, through first-hand experience. They use Tapestry’s Child Login to give children an active role in the learning and assessment process, rather than this being just something that is done to them. Andrew shared how this approach helps children to explain and articulate their learning.



**“We have found that Tapestry’s Child Login enables children to have an excellent understanding of their attainment and progress. We have been using Child Login for the past two years in KS2, giving children ownership over their observations and developing self-assessment.”**

## DEVELOPING A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO ASSESSING, PLANNING AND PROGRESS MONITORING

The school makes use of **Bespoke Frameworks** on Tapestry to create and upload their own curriculum, assessment frameworks and milestones directly onto their account. Andrew explained that this gives his team the ability to transform an assessment system tailored to the needs of the school. The ethos of the curriculum at ACE is that it should never be narrowed, and Andrew says that their use of Tapestry promotes this by shining a light across the whole curriculum. Tapestry gives senior leaders the opportunity to dig deep into children’s understanding. It allows SLT and teaching teams an in-depth view

of individual pupils, whilst identifying common patterns and the impact of teaching. He says that the ability to add a bespoke assessment framework for the unique nature of their

school context means that their assessment is both fit for purpose and takes into consideration the national requirements from the DfE.



**“We feel that Tapestry has the potential to provide a continuous assessment programme throughout primary school, which informs teaching and allows teachers to plan, based on where children are on their individual learning journeys. Tapestry is the tool that provides the link between the cycle of planning, teaching and assessment.”**

WATCH [THIS VIDEO](#) TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW ACE USE TAPESTRY!

# How Corey's Farm use Tapestry in their work with children with complex additional support needs

Corey's Farm is a charity run setting which opened in 2022, and is based on the Cornwall/Devon border. The team offer daily sessions for children with complex additional support needs. They have 12 children currently accessing Corey's Farm, of various ages and stages of development. The children are referred to the setting, which offers a unique Therapeutic Curriculum adaptable to the needs of each child, and includes Animal Assisted Therapy and nature-based activities – the farm now has 140 animals. Corey's Farm have been using Tapestry for about a year.

We spoke with founder and CEO Holli Alway and COO Lotte Skinner about how the team uses Tapestry to support their practice.

## SUPPORTING PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Families can see the experiences their child has at the farm via Observations added on Tapestry. The team include photos and video relating to a target the child may be working towards, as well as lots of fun things that happen around the animals. They also encourage families to share experiences their child has with them.

**“Hearing from families about what their child has done at home is so important for us in how we support children. For example, it really helps a child’s transition from home to the farm. We can talk to them about what they did at the weekend, and this can enable them to open up and to regulate.”**



## COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES



Holli and Lotte explained that when a child comes to Corey's Farm, the whole family are involved in whatever way they want to be. Because of the individual approach for each child, there can be a lot of communication between the setting and parents. The team use Tapestry as a tool to manage this important connection:

**“Before introducing Tapestry, there were a lot of phone calls and emails back and forth with families at all times of the day and evening. Tapestry has helped us and our families to manage our communication in a really caring and professional way, giving us one tool for all our communication needs.”**

## CONNECTING AND INFORMING OTHER PROFESSIONALS AROUND A CHILD

**“Giving key professionals around a child access to their learning journal means they can work as a team to support that child. It may be that a child doesn’t engage anywhere else, so seeing their journal shows everyone what they can do and how they are reaching their full potential. Tapestry offers a bridge between us and all the other people working with each child. It’s a stepping stone, opening things up for everyone.”**



The children who attend Corey's Farm may have other professionals supporting them – teachers at their school, specialists, or social workers. With parental permission, selected professionals can be given access to a child's learning journal. This allows them to see the progress a child is making through the unique experiences at the farm.

# How Tapestry Supports Naomi with her childminding business

Naomi Sullivan has been a childminder for 5 years. She runs 'Naomi's Childminding' from her home in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. Alongside her assistant, together they currently work with 8 children. Connection and relationships with community and family is at the heart of Naomi's approach. Naomi uses Tapestry to support her childminding business and her early years practice.

## EVERYDAY CARE - NAPS, NAPPIES AND FOOD

Throughout the day, Naomi is looking after the important basic needs of the children in her care. Nap time, nappy changes, and having lunch or snacks are key moments of connection with each child. These are also routines and information that Naomi shares with families, using Tapestry's Care Diary

**"The Care Diary is beyond worth its weight in gold. I use it to record all the everyday care information parents want to know, and add little notes like 'they loved the sandwich filling today'. It's all that kind of stuff that can sometimes bog down handovers at the end of the day, and then you might end up forgetting something you really wanted to say! With Tapestry's Care Diary, all the information is in one place with no paperwork, so I can spend more time with the children. And the parents love it."**



## CHILDMINDING ADMIN - REDUCING PAPERWORK

Running a childminding business can mean lots of paperwork. Naomi looks for ways to reduce this. She says **"I do all my registration on Tapestry"**. She uses the app on her phone to quickly tap children in as they arrive at her home, and out again as they leave with their parent at the end of a busy day. Naomi also adds all her policies and procedures to Tapestry Documents, which parents can access.



**"Rather than having all that paperwork in a file, I share my documents with parents via Tapestry. That way they only have to sign once, saying they have read all my policies and procedures. It also means they're easy for everyone to access whenever they need to. I upload a half-termly newsletter for parents onto Tapestry as well."**

Spending quality time with the children is key to Naomi's childminding practice. She doesn't want anything to distract her from that.

**"Being engaged with the children is the most important thing. With Tapestry, I don't need to have lots of books to stick or write things in, I have everything I need right there on my phone or tablet ready for me to add things. It's really easy to use."**

## PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS - MORE THAN A CHILDMINDING BUSINESS

Naomi considers her childminding children as an extension of her own family.



**"I know all my parents, I know the children, their likes and dislikes, what they've been doing at home. I love having that real connection with the children and families."**

She shares children's experiences with their parents by adding photos or video observations to their individual Tapestry learning journals.

**"The joy of working with little ones is that nothing quite goes to plan! I love sharing that with the parents in their child's online journal, showing them activities we've done and where we've been. Parents can comment on photos and videos, and they can talk about them with their child. Using Tapestry keeps them in touch with what their child's doing and that makes a really good working relationship between me and the families."**

# How Tapestry helps Wentworth Nursery School to support parental engagement

Wentworth Nursery School is an Ofsted 'Outstanding' state-maintained setting for 2-4 year olds which opened in 1951. Wentworth has a long tradition of valuing parental engagement, developing strong connections with families and being part of its community. Headteacher Farzana Chowdhury shared the practice and pedagogy at Wentworth Nursery School, and how they use Tapestry to support them.

## BUILDING TRUST AND ENGAGING FAMILIES

A sense of belonging is central to the ethos at Wentworth. It begins with being representative of their community, with many staff members living in the local area. The team care passionately about their community and the families within it. This helps to build and sustain trusting relationships with parents and carers. Practitioners use Tapestry to communicate children's experiences with their families right from the start, promoting parental engagement and nurturing confidence.

**“Tapestry is so helpful when children and families are settling in with us. We use it to share small video clips of what their child is doing and what they are interested in at nursery. The parent can see how secure their child feels, and this builds that trust. And we know when children can feel that the parents trust the process then they're probably going to start to feel comfortable themselves.”**



Keeping families connected with their children's learning, and understanding why this matters, is seen as a vital part of partnership with parents. The team help children and families to be excited about learning by sharing achievements.



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Staff at Wentworth expand their knowledge of each child by truly valuing input from parents and carers. They encourage parental engagement in their child's learning by sharing ideas and showing the learning that happens in the setting. Tapestry is one of the tools that enables them to do this.



**“When we're focusing on something with a child that they could also be doing at home, we send a quick video on Tapestry, so the parent/carer is exposed to this approach and this enables them to do the same with their child at home.”**

# How Tapestry helps Wentworth Nursery School to support parental engagement continued

## KEEPING IN TOUCH WHEN YOU'RE IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE

Being headteacher means Farzana isn't able to join in with the learning all the time. Staying connected to each child's development, their interests, and their family, is really important to her. Conversations with staff are key - the planning meetings are a place where knowledge is shared. Farzana also uses Tapestry to keep her up to date and to connect with families, always encouraging and valuing parental engagement.



**“I check in on Tapestry every day. It's a very quick way for me to have an understanding of children's learning. I can interact with parents as well, I can see the comments they have made, and I can respond. It has that personal touch, which I think is a really useful way of interacting with parents. It feels safe and it feels professional.”**

## REDUCING WORKLOAD TO FACILITATE JOYFUL LEARNING

'Joyful learning' is at the heart of provision at Wentworth. This is built on practitioners asking 'why are we doing this' (activity, interaction, observation) and it's supported by team planning discussions to ensure children's experiences relate to their interests and enable them to make progress. Most importantly, it is about taking time to tune into each child. Farzana explains how Tapestry facilitates this approach.

**“One of the most important things we can give children is time. This means reducing staff workload. Tapestry helps us to do this - we can celebrate children instantly and record their journey without spending time cutting and sticking photos into books. The fewer barriers we have between the practitioner and the child the better. A tablet can be used quickly and discretely when needed to film or take a photo.”**



At Wentworth, children are encouraged to engage with these videos and photos of themselves. They talk about their achievements and what they did, which supports their language development and metacognition.



**“Children can see their experience and they have the opportunity to choose what they want to talk about or which picture to add to their online journal. It all fits like a puzzle for them when they see the video or photo of themselves, and they're more likely to use the language that they've been exposed to.”**

# How Tapestry helps Hull Family Hubs demonstrate their impact on child development

Hull Local Authority has 8 main Family Hubs and 4 satellite hubs, delivered by a mixture of community sector groups and the Local Authority. Each Hub is unique, serving the needs of the children and families in its community.

Helen Tan, who is Early Years Standards Improvement Officer for Hull LA, implemented the use of Tapestry across the Hubs to support good practice.

## USING LEARNING JOURNEYS TO SHOW THE IMPACT ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT

The driving force behind introducing Tapestry was to enable Helen and the Family Hub teams to show the impact of the work they were doing. They take a case study approach, with 'deep sampling' of individual children's learning journeys.

**“We’re looking for the qualitative information about the progress a child has made. A learning journey on Tapestry tells a story of what attending sessions at a Hub has meant for a particular child and their family.”**



## A STRATEGIC OVERVIEW FOR MONITORING AND REVIEWS

As a leader supporting a group of Hubs, Helen uses Tapestry to give her an overview of all the Family Hubs across Hull. She can quickly show other members of the LA leadership team any specific areas of impact on child development and what different Hubs are focussed on.



**“From my point of view Tapestry makes things so much easier. Wherever I am, I can log in to Tapestry. I don’t need to go and look through lots of paper journals, I can quickly and easily look up a case study to refer to for monitoring purposes. This helps me with performance**

**management as well, which we do for each of the Family Hubs. Tapestry is there to support the practitioners as they talk about a child, helping them remember their learning and development story.”**

## SUPPORTING THE HOME LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A key focus for the Hull Family Hubs is finding ways to support the home learning environment, because this can have a positive impact on child development.

They use Tapestry to connect parents and carers with their children's learning and to help them understand how important their own input is.

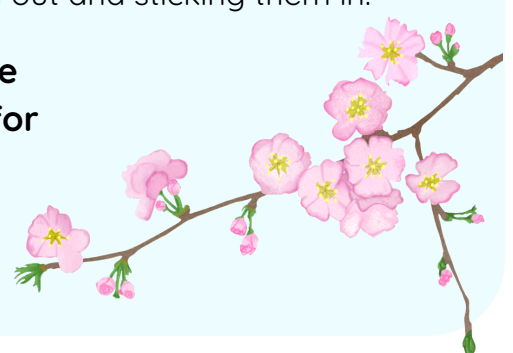


**“We wanted to enable parents to be more aware of how an activity could support their child’s learning, particularly around Communication and Language, or Number. With Tapestry, practitioners can share a photo or video of an activity and how it supports their child’s development. This helps parents to know why it is important and how it fits together. Tapestry also helps us share a child’s experiences with family members who aren’t at the Hub sessions.”**

## TIME SAVING, COST EFFECTIVE AND ECO-FRIENDLY

Prior to using Tapestry, the Family Hubs used paper journals to record children's experiences. This meant time and money spent printing photos, cutting them out and sticking them in.

**“Now all the Hubs use Tapestry, which has saved us time and money, and not printing all those photos is better for the environment too. Tapestry just keeps everything in one central place for us, which means our practitioners can spend more time with children and their families.”**





# How international school **Amity School Dubai** uses **Tapestry** to support teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage

Amity School Dubai have around 800 children in their Foundation Stage and they have been using Tapestry for two years.

Parita Patira is Head of the Foundation Stage and introduced the use of Tapestry with staff, parents and children.

## SUPPORTING PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Educators at Amity School Dubai encourage families to use Tapestry right from the start. They fill in the About Me section which helps staff to get to know and understand the children better. Parents input continues as they share learning that happens at home adding photos/video to their child's Tapestry online journal.

**“Once parents start using Tapestry, there is no looking back because they love it. We are very happy to see this kind of involvement of the parents, and this wouldn't have been possible without Tapestry being there.”**



At the same time, educators regularly update parents about experiences children are having at school, via Tapestry. This gives parents a consistent insight into classroom activities and their child's learning and development. And because families are aware of their child's progress, staff no longer get emails from parents asking how well their child is doing.

**“There's a perfect accord between the home and the school through Tapestry.”**

## DESIGNING A CURRICULUM AND MONITORING CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

A strong and enriching curriculum is an important aspect of Amity schools. At Amity School Dubai, they recently implemented the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF). They use Tapestry to support their implementation of the NCF and to evaluate its impact at their international school.

**“Tapestry has really helped us in establishing the new curriculum. We can see which curriculum areas we have covered and what the outcomes are for each child. Educators can analyse how well a child is doing, and plan for their next steps. It would not be possible for us to do this without Tapestry.”**



## USING FLEXIBLE FEATURES CREATIVELY



One of the main Tapestry features used by staff and families is Observations. Educators use a mixture of individual and group observations, and they add a personalised note for a child's family and their online journal. Staff use the Activities feature to share ideas

for activities to do at home at specific times of the year in their international school community, for example as part of their summer enrichment programme for children.

**“This was really appreciated by parents and children - everyone enjoyed the activities we shared using Tapestry.”**

Designed as a teacher-parent communication tool, the team at Amity Dubai use Tapestry's Memos feature as a reading log. Books are shared from school to home, and families record their feedback on how the reading at home is going via Memos.



**“I can't express in words how grateful we are that we came across Tapestry.”**