

Comprehensive Literacy Goals

Our common goals for the implementation of *Houghton Mifflin Reading & Handwriting Without Tears*:

Basic Implementation:

- Provide a Literacy Block that is 90 minutes in length.
- Complete all grade level themes by year end and work to keep pace with grade level teachers.
- Provide regularly scheduled Leveled Reading experiences for each reading group.

Assessment:

- Assess individual student reading levels using one or more of the following assessments: HM's Emerging Literacy Survey (K-1); HM's Leveled Reading Passages; HM's Oral Reading Record; HM's Baseline Group Test; and DRA. Pages 14-17 of the *Teacher's Assessment Handbook* outline the resources available for assessing different aspects of Literacy.
 - Administer the Trimester Common Literacy Assessment during the designated testing window.
 - Using teacher discretion regularly assess student progress within themes utilizing varied methodologies including but not limited to Practice Book Assignments; Student Writing samples; observation checklists; Weekly Skills Test; Theme Skills Tests. Teachers should ensure that there is a portfolio of HM based evidence to support trimester evaluations as reported on the Standards Based Report Card and communicated to parents through conferences.
- **Word Study:** Teach and assess word study utilizing the Phonics/Vocabulary and Spelling components of *Houghton Mifflin Reading*.
- **Writing Instruction:**
- Utilize HM Reading-Writing workshop as the primary method of instructing and modeling the art of writing.
 - Grade 3 – 5 continue to use the John Collins system to provide a common language and management for infusing writing across the curriculum and throughout the K-12 continuum, its best fit for use is for writing in the content areas or as an overarching management system for increasing the volume of writing for Grades 3 and up.
- **Handwriting:**
- Handwriting instruction for grades Pre-K – 3 should be done using the Handwriting Without Tears materials and student workbooks.
 - Grade 4-5 teachers should have and be familiar with the HWT Teachers Guide and reinforce the process previously taught.
- **Extensions:** HM provides our core or baseline. Teachers are encouraged to extend Literacy opportunities beyond the core Literacy Block. Through grade level collaboration teachers should discuss/identify appropriate opportunities to enrich the reading core with their classroom libraries, independent reading and literature study groups.

Comprehensive Literacy Core Beliefs

Adapted from Toward a Definition of a Balanced Approach to Reading Instruction by Edwin Cowen

We believe that a comprehensive reading program should provide:

1. Opportunities to read, experience, and enjoy the rich language of authentic literature from a variety of genres (fiction & nonfiction) and cultures;
2. A comprehensive, writing-process approach that developmentally engages students in daily writing experiences (Writing Workshop);
3. An integrated language arts and phonics skills developmental approach that requires skills to be taught from the context of authentic literature as well as from student writing;
4. Within the reading process, engagement in the three cueing systems --- semantics (meaning); syntactic (language); and graphophonics (letter/sound associations) --- to give students the required blend of skills which will enable them to read texts;
5. reading comprehension strategies with opportunities to develop learning methods to use in new situations and to acquire new information to develop higher order thinking skills;
6. Ongoing assessment for continuous progress that engages students at the independent or instructional reading level and avoids reading materials at their frustration reading level; i.e.: DRAs, running records, CARS and STARS;
7. Oral storytelling, dictation, and other listening activities, including phonological and phonemic awareness development at the primary level; i.e.: discussions, literature circles and study groups;
8. An interdisciplinary context area reading approach, stressing the use of a wide variety of trade books as well as textbooks across the curriculum;
9. Divide reading instruction into 3 segments: “*Reading To Children*”; “*Reading With Children*” and “*Reading By Children*”. When *Reading To Children*, choose materials that are on or above their reading level. The type of reading done will be modeled/ demonstrated or shared reading. When *Reading With Children*, teachers are providing reading instruction to students. When *Reading By Children* takes place students are to be reading self-selected books independently, at their reading level, for practice;
10. Time commitment to on-task reading, writing, and related language arts activities
11. Opportunities for individual and small group exploration in all areas of the language arts (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing); this exploration would be managed by the teacher and it would be differentiated as needed for all children.
12. Promotion of ongoing family involvement in children’s literacy development.