

Marlborough Elementary School K- 3 Reading

At MES, we are deeply committed to providing quality reading instruction to all students.

We have embraced opportunities to learn about the Science of Reading, reflect upon our practices, and make instructional shifts to align with research.



Our practices include explicit and systematic instruction with the goal that all students will become proficient readers.

Components of K-3 Reading Instruction at MES

Code Emphasis—Students in K-3 will have a focus on acquiring the skills to crack the code of our alphabet to the speech sounds in English. (There are approximately 44 speech sounds in English and 250 ways to read and spell them!) Students must first learn to decode/sound-out words before they can understand the meaning of text.

Explicit and Systematic Phonics Instruction—We adopted the Foundations program in grades K-2 (grade 3 implementation in 2022-23) to teach systematic phonics. Every student will learn, practice, and master foundational skills, leading to strong reading comprehension.

Phonemic Awareness—This is the ability to hear, isolate and manipulate the sounds of spoken language. These skills will be taught systematically, with the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness resources in K-1 in whole and small group settings.

Decodable Texts—Our early readers will be working with decodable texts. These books or passages will include words that students can sound out according to the skills they have been taught thus far. Decodable texts provide the reinforcement that students need in order to practice learned phonics skills.

High Frequency Words (HFW) - High Frequency Words have been referred to as sight words, flash words and trick words and are often learned by memorization. However, research says that learning whole words by sight is not the most effective strategy. Instead, integrating HFW into phonics lessons allows students to make sense of spelling patterns for these words. Most HFW have parts that can be decoded, like the word cat. You can hear all the letters in the word. When teaching irregularly spelled HFW, teachers will call these words “Heart Words” because some part(s) of the word will have to be “learned by heart”. For example: said. In this word, the first and last sound match the letter, but students need to learn that in this word **ai** makes the short e sound.

Knowledge and Vocabulary Building—Research indicates that building knowledge and vocabulary contributes significantly to reading comprehension and should be taught beginning in the early grades. Students have many opportunities for this type of learning through reading authentic texts during Reading, Social Studies and Science. These texts are often read aloud, followed by rich classroom discussions, enabling students to develop more complex vocabularies.

Comprehension—Understanding and thinking critically about what we read is the ultimate goal of reading and occurs when students have both decoding/word recognition skills and language comprehension skills.

MES Reading Model K-3

Reading Components		Approximate Minutes Per Day By Grade			
Name	Definition	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Phonemic Awareness	Short, explicit instruction in phonological awareness skills using <i>Heggerty</i>	15 <i>Beginning in 2022-23</i>	15 <i>Beginning in 2022-23</i>	As needed	As needed
Phonics	Systematic and explicit instruction on the relationship between phonemes and graphemes using <i>Foundations</i> . Handwriting will be addressed with this time.	30	30	30	30 <i>Beginning in 2022-23</i>
Differentiated Small Group/ Structured Literacy Instruction	Explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Including: -oral language practice -orthographic mapping -reading decodable and authentic texts -conventional writing practice	30	30	40	45

Read Aloud	Picture and chapter books 2-3 levels above grade level will be shared with students. Fluent reading (smooth reading and prosody) will be modeled. Students will develop their listening comprehension skills, build their vocabularies, and gain knowledge through classroom discussions.	15	15	15	15
-------------------	--	----	----	----	----

How You Can Help At Home

- ❖ Your child may be bringing home different types of books. These include:
 - Decodable texts: short passages or books that include words that students can sound out and practice on learned phonics skills.
 - Familiar texts: short poems, passages and books that students may be able to read by themselves, but also might need a little help. This is a great type of book to read together.
 - Student choice books: just for fun books are so important as we want students to be exposed to a variety of genres and to enjoy reading. These books may be too hard, too easy or just right. This is a great type of book to read just for fun! Students can look at the pictures to tell the story or enjoy reading this book to you (or you to your child).

Decoding:

When your child is reading and gets stuck on a tricky word, use the following prompts:

- ❖ Look through the whole word, left to right
- ❖ Use a finger to segment the words into sounds or syllables
- ❖ Sound it out/tap it out, then blend it
- ❖ Reread to make sure it makes sense
- ❖ If it is a word that your child cannot sound out, you can tell them the word

Fluency:

- ❖ Have your child read and reread familiar books to practice reading smoothly. Fluent readers read words automatically and with expression.
- ❖ After decoding a tricky word, go back and reread it so it sounds smooth, just like talking.

Comprehension:

- ❖ Reading aloud to your child helps to improve their vocabulary and comprehension skills.
- ❖ Engage in conversations about the topic or text before, during, and after reading.



For additional information on Structured Literacy [click here](#)