

*Illuminating Literacy*

**Avon Grove School District's  
Comprehensive Literacy Plan**



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The Avon Grove School District is committed to providing the foundations of literacy that will prepare our students for life. We wish to acknowledge the following people for their time, expertise, and input into the creation of this document. Your commitment to our children is inspiring!

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# Introduction

## Purpose

The Avon Grove School District (AGSD) is committed to ensuring that all students achieve the highest levels of literacy performance. To accomplish this goal, AGSD embarked upon developing a comprehensive literacy plan during the 2018-2019 school year. The plan is modeled after the Pennsylvania Department of Education's "Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan" (PaSLP) and embodies a theme of "Illuminating Literacy." The PaSLP encompasses a system that includes a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to support teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The purpose of this plan, much like the Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan, is to provide a system that ensures accelerated literacy growth for all students from the early years through high school graduation.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, "Students graduating from Pennsylvania schools in the 21st century need to be "future-ready" at the end of grade 12. Educators need to rethink the ways by which they approach literacy instruction at all levels, including early learning for students ages birth through five years of age. Students must be able to read more challenging and complex text; moreover, they will need experiences that enable them to use literacy as a tool for learning the content in each of the academic disciplines (i.e., science, social studies, math, and English language arts). The availability of technology has created a need for new ways of thinking about how students learn, as students of today have access to many different technological devices and social media." The Avon Grove School District's local literacy plan seeks to ensure that all Avon Grove graduates are "future-ready" in all aspects of literacy. A comprehensive literacy program provides equitable opportunities for all children and youth, especially those living in poverty, English learners, and those with disabilities (MSDE, 2017).

The Avon Grove School District's plan to illuminate literacy is built upon the notion that literacy is the foundation for all learning. "Students develop deep conceptual knowledge in a discipline only by using the habits of reading, writing, talking, and thinking, which that discipline values and uses" (McConachie et al., 2006). By illuminating literacy, the spotlight will be placed upon the concept of disciplinary literacy in all content areas. Schmoker (2018) stated that "ELA contributes mightily to career success and advancement." Illuminating all aspects of literacy development will undoubtedly advance the notion of all Avon Grove graduates being "future-ready."

## Development of the Literacy Plan

The Avon Grove School District implements a curriculum review cycle that is structured upon a six-year rotation consisting of five stages (Appendix A). As part of the English Language Arts review cycle, it was decided that a local comprehensive plan for literacy would be a tremendous benefit in addition to the regular review cycle stages, which include:

- Stage 1: Assess, Research, and Development
- Stage 2: Continued Development and Field Study
- Stage 3: Initial Implementation and Professional Development
- Stage 4: Full Implementation
- Stage 5: Evaluation and Monitoring

The timeline for the development of AGSD's local comprehensive literacy plan, "Illuminating Literacy," is as follows:

Curriculum Review Cycle	School Year	Action Plan
Stage 1: Assess, Research, and Development	2018-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data analysis determined the need to expedite the ELA curriculum review cycle and to begin with the purchase of new resources.</li><li>• Professional development pertaining to evidence-based practices that promote high literacy achievement began.</li></ul>
Stage 2: Continued Development and Field Study	2019-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schoolwide resources for reading, writing, and grammar were purchased for grades K-8 and Stage 2 of the curriculum review cycle was implemented.</li><li>• It was decided that to truly bring about improved performance and the complete development of a comprehensive literacy program, a local comprehensive literacy plan should be developed.</li><li>• A Literacy Needs Assessment was completed by the District's Literacy Panel team and the results were analyzed.</li><li>• A team of four members came together to draft the plan in the spring of 2019. During the summer of 2019, the plan was reviewed by additional staff members and stakeholders. Revisions were made based on their input.</li></ul>

Stage 3: Initial Implementation and Professional Development	2020-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Literacy Plan is rolled out to all staff members and the implementation process begins.</li> <li>• Pacing guides continue to be used as a “roadmap” for PLCs so that all members are implementing the same units of study within the same timeframe.</li> <li>• Curriculum leads continue to provide support as needed to grade-level teams.</li> <li>• Fidelity checks are implemented to identify areas of strengths and needs in the curriculum.</li> </ul>
Stage 4: Full Implementation	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The curriculum is vetted by the CCIU.</li> <li>• The Literacy Plan is in full implementation mode.</li> <li>• A guaranteed and viable ELA curriculum is in place for all students.</li> </ul>
Stage 5: Evaluation and Monitoring	2023-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A curriculum monitoring process begins.</li> <li>• Literacy Needs Assessment is administered.</li> <li>• Conclusion of the Action Items within the current Literacy Plan.</li> </ul>

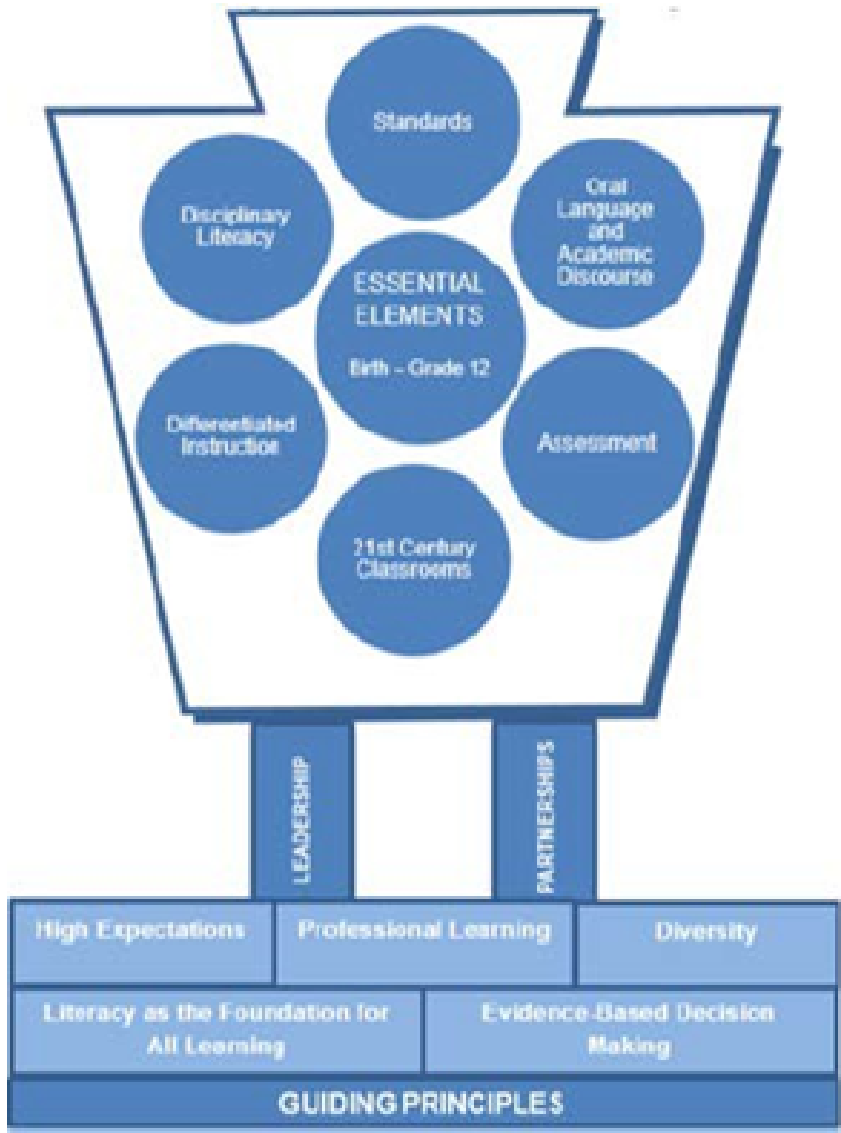
# Vision, Mission, & Beliefs

## Vision and Mission

To maintain alignment with the Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan, this plan incorporates the AGSD local vision and mission with the PaSLP vision and mission.

	Vision	Mission
Avon Grove School District	All Avon Grove students are well prepared to create their futures.	The purpose of the Avon Grove School District is to foster a learning environment for all students to be exceptionally well-prepared to succeed and lead full and meaningful lives.
PA State Literacy Plan	All students in Pennsylvania from birth through Grade 12 will become well-educated citizens with command of literacy that prepares them for the challenges of the 21st century and enables them to achieve their personal and professional goals.	The Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan (PaSLP) guides stakeholders about their roles in developing an integrated, aligned, and a comprehensive set of literacy experiences for students. The plan identifies and describes (1) essential evidence-based notions about the content of literacy (birth-Grade 12) and (2) processes by which all stakeholders (e.g., parents, caretakers, educators, community members, etc.) involved in students' literacy learning can facilitate that learning in a coherent and consistent manner.

# Beliefs: Guiding Principles and Essential Elements



The Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan consists of five Guiding Principles and six Essential Elements. This plan portrays the Avon Grove School District’s beliefs about those components of the PaSLP. To bring the belief statements to life, the bottom lines for literacy instruction are identified.



## Guiding Principles

### Literacy as the Critical Foundation of all Learning

*We believe...*

Literacy serves as a foundation for opportunity and success and is essential at all levels of development (Birth-Grade 12). Students' linguistic and literacy competencies impact their success in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, which extends to all academic content areas.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: A comprehensive literacy plan will be implemented across all grade levels and content areas to ensure students are adequately prepared for a future in which they will be expected to think critically and communicate effectively.

### High Expectations

*We believe...*

In providing equitable opportunities that ensure each and every child learns through the best effort of every adult every day.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: All stakeholders will set the same high educational standards for all learners.

### Diversity

*We believe...*

The strongest education connects to and celebrates students' knowledge, backgrounds, individuality, identity, and experiences.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: We will place value on the culture and language of the home in classrooms as a means of enriching the learning experience for all students.

### Professional Learning

*We believe...*

Teachers equipped with a growth mindset who are well networked, highly trained, and fully invested are a determining factor of building internal capacity towards student success.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: A commitment to high-quality professional learning and collaboration is necessary to generate effective instruction for all learners.

### Evidence-Based Decision Making

*We believe...*

Decisions made regarding literacy practices, programs, and resources must be evidence- based; meaning they are grounded in valid and reliable scientific research and have a record of success.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: Evidence-based literacy instruction that is responsive to the needs and interests of the students and is most likely to lead to high rates of achievement will be provided for ALL learners.

## Essential Elements

### Standards

*We believe...*

ALL students must have a consistent and cohesive learning experience across classrooms and grade levels that are aligned to PDE standards for ELA.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: A guaranteed and viable curriculum will be provided for ALL learners through the use of district-approved curriculum maps, pacing guides, resources, and common assessments.

### Oral Language and Academic Discourse

*We believe...*

Academic collaboration

between and among students and teachers is fundamental to student engagement and fosters comprehension as well as critical thinking, listening, and speaking skills.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: Academic conversations facilitated with accountable talk will be purposefully incorporated into daily literacy instruction.

### Assessment

*We believe...*

A comprehensive reading and writing assessment system must be aligned to the PA Core Standards, complete with common measurements to guide instruction from Pre-K to grade 12.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: Formative and summative assessments will be administered according to the content and timeline of the curriculum documents and pacing guides.

### 21st Century Classrooms

*We believe...*

Literacy skills guided by the 6 C's of 21st-century skills (M. Fullan, 2018) are an essential component of a comprehensive educational program, which produces students who are well prepared to create their own futures.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: Media literacy, including the agile use of media to acquire and share knowledge, is crucial to our student's success and requires access to both technology and training.

### Differentiated Instruction

*We believe...*

Awareness of every child's developmental and academic potential enables daily responsive instruction that can be leveraged to make academic growth.

*Therefore,*

AGSD Bottom Line: The individual needs of students will be addressed within the instructional framework of the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) and the Workshop Model.

### Disciplinary Literacy

*We believe...*

Literacy development should prepare secondary students to identify and use specialized reading practices to understand, analyze, and interpret important ideas in discipline-specific texts.

*Therefore,*

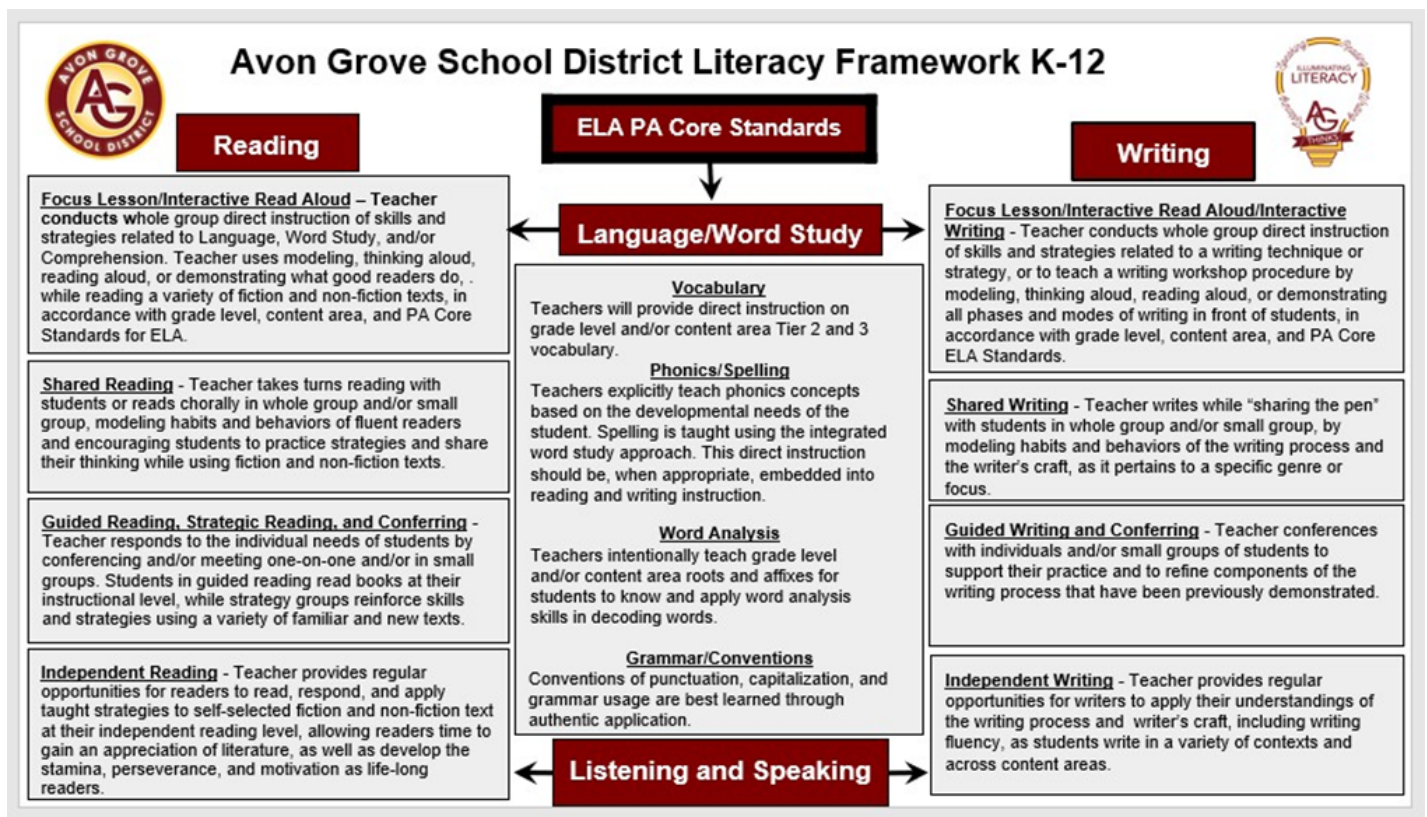
AGSD Bottom Line: Students will be provided with explicit instruction in the disciplinary-specific practices for effective reading, writing, and thinking about what they are learning within a discipline.

# Avon Grove's Balanced Literacy Program

The Avon Grove School District is committed to providing a literacy-rich environment that meets the diverse needs of all students. The district's language arts program reflects a literacy-rich curricular methodology because there is a focus on explicit instruction, the immersion in and use of high-quality mentor texts, and reading and writing for authentic purposes and across disciplines. Our curriculum prioritizes purposeful and balanced instruction of reading, writing, word study, speaking, and listening that is aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Academic Standards for English Language Arts. The PA Core Standards include Foundational Skills (K-5), Reading Informational, Reading Literature, Writing, and Speaking and Listening.

We believe *how* we teach is as important as *what* we teach. Our mission in ELA is to develop, expand, and build student's analytic and critical thinking skills, using evidence-based teaching strategies and tools that students can use to make meaning of and interact with complex text across all content areas and into the future.

## Balanced Literacy Framework



- **Language (Vocabulary, Phonics, Spelling, Word Study, Grammar, and Conventions):** In grades K-3, explicit phonics instruction occurs daily. In grades 4-12, students receive instruction in word study where there is a focus on word patterns in morphemic units, as well as Greek and Latin roots.
- **Reading:** The 5 essential elements of reading instruction (phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) are represented in the PA Core Standards and addressed in our curriculum and instruction. In grades K-1, the focus is on phonological awareness, phonemes, and phonics as well as fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. In grades 2-5, there is an emphasis on phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Finally, in grades 6-12, the focus is on vocabulary and comprehension. In all grades, children read for a variety of purposes and interests.
- **Writing:** Students write in response to reading and across genres. Students are taught to write about topics that interest them. They are guided in the process by the teacher's presentation of mentor text, which models the format and style of accomplished authors. Writing can also be in response to a prompt or question related to a particular text. In this type of writing, children closely read a text to find evidence that supports a claim, opinion, or argument. The teacher consistently gives students opportunities to read and write to build stamina and fluency necessary to become proficient readers and writers.
- **Listening and Speaking:** Students will practice and refine communication skills that enable critical listening and effective presentation of ideas, in both small and large groups, across grade levels and disciplines.

*"It's imperative to recognize that, while important, phonics, spelling, word analysis, and grammar and usage strategies are not the end goal of literacy education. Their importance lies in their contribution to reading and writing continuous text. The more that students can solve words, derive the meaning of words, spell words, and parse language syntax rapidly, fluently, and unconsciously, the more likely they are to read and write with competence and ease." (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017 p. 2).*

## K-12 Essential Practices

Practice	Description
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Literacy Skills	A combination of Learning, Literacy, and life skills makes up the 12 abilities that today's students need to succeed in their careers during the Information Age. These skills include the six C's of Critical thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, Character, Citizenship, and Communication. Additionally, these skills also include a variety of literacies and soft skills such as Information Literacy, Media Literacy, Technology Literacy, Flexibility, Leadership, Initiative, Productivity, and Social skills.
Academic Conversations and Accountable Talk	Learners practice being active listeners and speakers while engaging in collaborative, academic discussions with agreed-upon rules, building on and evaluating others; ideas, points of view, and use of evidence. Effective speakers consider their audience and purpose, using the appropriate tone, voice, and vocabulary to express their ideas and/or opinions clearly. Active listeners pay attention through eye contact and body language and respond to what others say through relevant comments and questions.
Academic Vocabulary	The words that are traditionally used in academic dialogue or text are not commonly encountered in everyday conversation. This type of Tier 2 vocabulary is critical to understanding the concepts students encounter across content areas.
Anchor Chart	Anchor charts are authentic representations of teaching and create opportunities for students to access information that will support them as independent learners. They are co-created with students and are representative of the learning taking place in the classroom. They are also a good resource for students to use to support them with their learning. It is important to keep the anchor charts displayed either on the walls or if wall space is limited you can take pictures of them.
Annotating Text/Active Reading/Talking to the Text/Thinking Notes, etc.	Annotating text is a reading strategy used to show the reader's thinking while reading. Good readers need to practice interacting with text independently. Through this practice, readers mark up the text to show what is clear and what is not clear while engaging in multiple readings of the text. Readers must be explicitly taught how to annotate the text to notice and note confusing, important, and interesting parts of the text. The goal is for readers to independently use this strategy: knowing how, when, and what to annotate. This strategy can begin in kindergarten by teachers modeling the process through a think-aloud and continue through post-secondary.
Classroom Library	A designated space for a classroom library will help facilitate an ongoing love for reading. Classroom libraries should be organized and inviting for students. It is optimal to have a section of the library organized by reading level and a section organized by genre and/or topics, themes, categories, etc. Students can and should be involved in the organization and maintenance of the library. Having labeled baskets is a nice way to keep books organized, inviting to students, and helps with book choice. This organization helps children be more purposeful in their self-selection of books. Students can keep their selected books in a book box or book baggie. Teachers will need to guide students to select books that match their abilities/interests and goals.
Close Reading	Close reading requires the reader to read and annotate, to identify what the text says, how the text says it, and what the text means. Close reading is meant to engage the reader in a thoughtful, critical analysis of a complex while engaging in a series of repeated readings connected to text-dependent questions. The goal of close reading is to foster independent reading of a complex text. It is a key requirement of the PA Core Standards.

Conferring: Reading and Writing	The purpose of conferring is to work one on one with students to observe, teach, and assess how students are doing with the information being taught. When conferring, teachers initiate conversations with individual students to see how they are doing and to provide differentiated support. These conversations provide the most useful opportunities for formative assessment, feedback, and goal setting. They allow teachers to gather information about their students' reading and writing habits, interests, processes, and strategies. Conferring provides the opportunity to make instructional decisions that match the individual reader/writer and to choose methods that grow and change with the student.
Guided Reading (K 6)	Guided reading is used to facilitate a student's growth as an independent reader. To become proficient readers, students need opportunities to read more challenging texts with teacher support. This helps to ensure each reader's continued development. The purpose is to use the text as a vehicle to help students gain control of important reading strategies they can use when they read the next piece of text independently.
Independent Reading	Students should have the opportunity to independently read in the classroom daily. During this time, students read individually from a variety of materials and genres at their independent or instructional reading level. The books are primarily self-chosen using a previously taught method to determine "just right" or "good-fit" books or student reading levels. Books are kept in individual book boxes or bags and a system is used to monitor and replace books at appropriate times. Primarily, the learners are using what they have already learned and practiced to problem solve successfully on their own.
Independent Writing	The purpose of independent writing is to encourage students to experiment in all three writing types (narrative, informational, argumentative), choose their topics, problem-solve, monitor, and explore the use of written language based on audience and purpose. During independent writing, teachers/students choose a form or genre and students utilize their newly acquired knowledge and skills to improve their craft and become lifelong writers. Students may practice writing numerous drafts before choosing one to take through the entire writing process to publication.
Interactive Read Aloud and Reading Aloud	Reading aloud creates a classroom community by establishing a known text that can be used as the basis for building on critical thinking skills that are related and unrelated to reading. Discussions generated by reading aloud can be used to encourage listeners to construct meanings, connect ideas and experiences across texts, use their prior knowledge, and question unfamiliar words from the text that is at or above the listener's reading level. Reading aloud allows students to hear the instructor model fluency and expression while reading technical or literary language.
Mentor Text	Carefully selected pieces of literature are used to build a community of readers and to return to often to model how authors craft text and how readers engage with the text. Classroom conversations about these stories, characters, subjects, structures, illustrations, or themes become part of the classroom culture where talking and thinking deeply about books are at the heart of literacy.
Reading/Writing Partnerships (Book Club, Literature Circle, etc.)	Reading together and talking about books can provide partners with enriching experiences, conversations, and thinking that would not take place if reading independently.
Reader's and Writer's Notebook (2 12)	A notebook that students use to build their reading and writing lives over the school year. Readers and writers use notebooks to respond, react, and reflect on what they read, as well as to record thoughts and observations about the world to use in their writing. Teachers modeling the use of a notebook by keeping one themselves is just as crucial and powerful an experience as it is for the students. In this way, teachers are living this practice along with the students, modeling what writers do, finding teaching points, and most importantly, showing that vulnerability revealed through writing can teach us so much about ourselves and each other.

Strategy Groups (K 8)	The purpose of a strategy group is to differentiate reading instruction in a focused, intense manner to address specific skill or strategy gaps. This is an alternative to the traditional guided reading group that is more fluid and flexible. Based on formative assessment, students are placed in groups (ideally of no more than 5 participants) based on trends related to a targeted skill or strategy gaps for short-term intense instruction. Students may be reading at different reading levels but have the same targeted need. The lesson sequences align to the gradual release model with modeling then guided instruction eventually leading to independent application. Students may read the same or different texts during the lessons with the outcome of applying the focused strategy. Groups can last as little as 3 days or 3 weeks depending on need.
Think Aloud/Meta cognition	Teachers describe out loud for students the things they are doing in their head as they read to monitor their comprehension. The purpose of the think-aloud strategy is to model for students how skilled readers use their schema to construct meaning from a text. This can also be used by teachers to share their thoughts while engaging in the writing process.
Total Participation Techniques (TPTs)	Total Participation Techniques are teaching techniques that require evidence of participation and higher-order thinking from all students at the same time.
Turn and Talk (Partner Talk)	Turn and Talk is an oral language support strategy that provides students scaffolded interactions to formulate ideas and share their thinking with other students.
Workshop Model	Instruction that is designed similar to GRR to help teachers address each child's learning, explicitly teach strategies students will use not only the day they are taught but whenever they need them, support small-group work and conferring, with multiple opportunities for personalizing instruction, tap into the power of a learning community as a way to bring all learners along, build choice and assessment-based learning into the very design of the curriculum, help students work with engagement so that teachers can coach individuals and lead small groups. The routines and structures of the reading and writing workshop are kept simple and predictable so that the teacher can focus on the complex work of teaching responsively to accelerate achievement for all learners.
Word Wall	A word wall is an ongoing, organized display of important words used during instruction. These should include sight words and vocabulary words. Word walls provide a visual reference for students throughout a unit of study or a term. These words are used continually by teachers and students during a variety of academic experiences across the day.



## Curriculum Overview

The Avon Grove School District is directly aligned to the Pennsylvania state standards for each course and organized around the Big Ideas students will take with them to each subsequent course in their educational career. The development and revision of curricular documents and expectations follow a multi-year cycle so that all curricular areas regularly monitor and adjust to the expectations for teaching and learning in the 21st century.

The Avon Grove School District's ELA curriculum mapping process utilizes the three-stage backward design model of Understanding by Design (UbD). The district firmly believes that an effective curriculum is planned backward from long-term, desired results through a three-stage design process to avoid the common problems such as treating the textbook as the curriculum rather than a resource, and activity-oriented teaching in which no clear priorities and purposes are apparent. Embedded in this process is an underlying philosophy that teachers are the driving force behind the curriculum, therefore, teachers must be the primary participants in the creation of curriculum maps. Furthermore, ongoing curriculum revisions and development of learning plans must occur with all members of a grade-level team within a PLC structure. The curriculum mapping process is critical to ensure that a cohesive, guaranteed, and viable curriculum is in place for all students in our district.

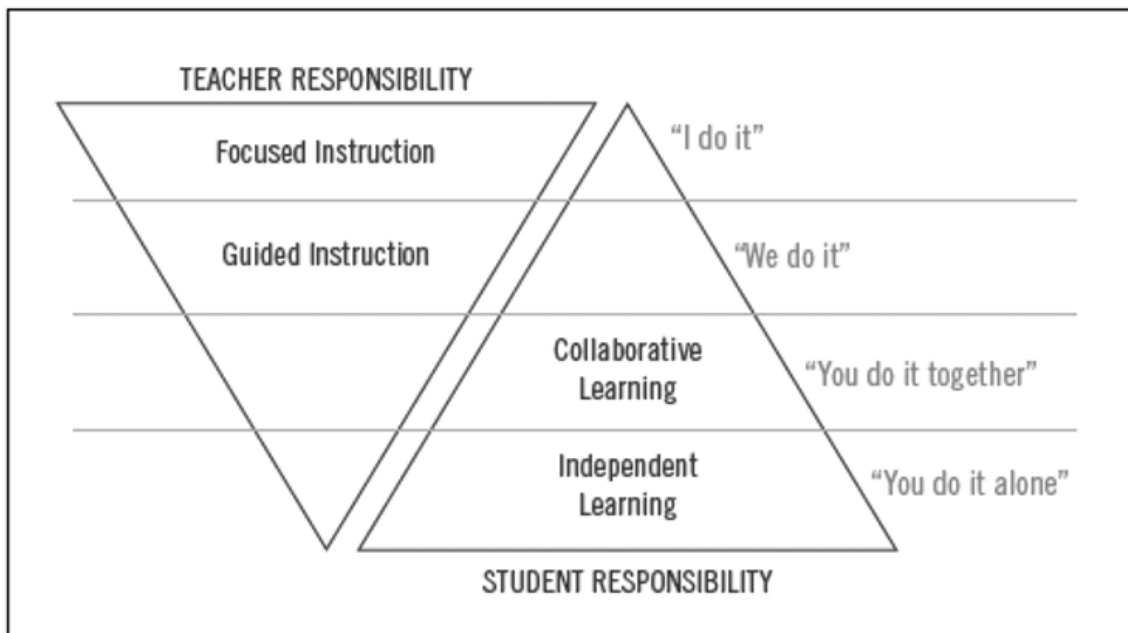


Upper Perkiomen School District (2021).

## Instructional Overview

The Avon Grove School District utilizes the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) framework, developed by Fisher and Frey, to organize learning and instruction within each classroom. The value of this research-based framework is that it combines the various systems in use in Avon Grove, including the supervision model, curricular structures, and technology, into a clear and manageable process for lesson design and assessment on a day-to-day basis.

The foundation of the GRR framework is that the cognitive load within each lesson (responsibility for learning) is intentionally planned to shift from the educator to the student such that students are responsible, both collectively and individually, for demonstrating the intended outcomes of a lesson or unit. By planning intentionally for students to be able to demonstrate learning after working collaboratively to derive and consolidate that learning, this framework will be preparing students intellectually, socially, and emotionally, to demonstrate the characteristics of future readiness (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, citizenship, character).



<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/113006/chapters/Learning,-or-Not-Learning,-in-School.aspx>, retrieved July 9, 2019

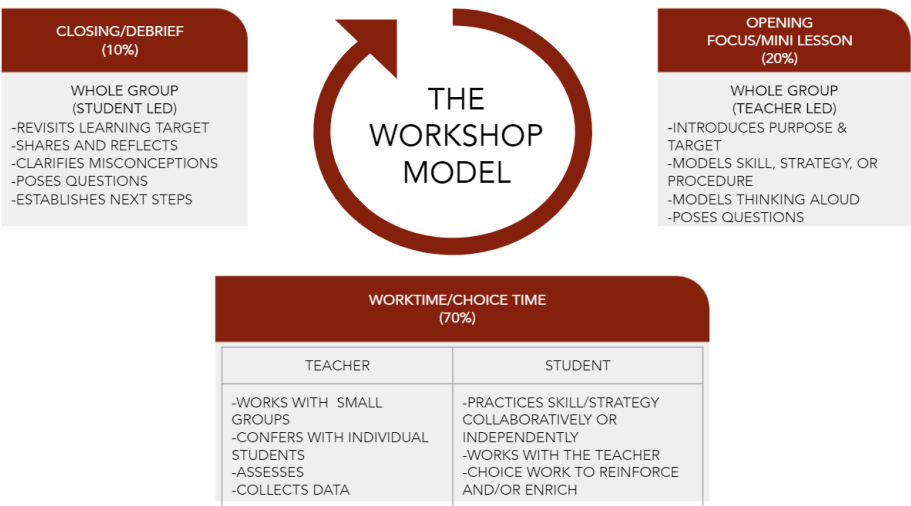
# The Workshop Model

The Avon Grove School District addresses literacy through the instructional framework of the Workshop Model. The workshop model reflects the “Gradual Release of Responsibility” or GRR model in which the teacher provides a focus or mini-lesson to model/demonstrate literacy skills and strategies. “In the gradual release of responsibility model, the focus lesson is the modeling phase. For a focus lesson to be effective, teachers must clearly establish a purpose and model their own thinking” (Fisher & Frey, 2008, p. 4).

Students spend the bulk of their time participating in guided practice, collaborative practice, and independent practice resulting in more opportunities for student-centered learning with increased student talk. Our goal is for each student to become a lifelong reader and writer and the workshop model greatly supports students in achieving this goal. The Workshop Model is a researched-based instructional model that allows for a gradual release of responsibility, leading to student independence. The workshop provides a structure to carry out the components of balanced literacy and differentiation for students. The Workshop Model may be used for both reading and writing instruction and provides extended time for independent practice while allowing time for:

- Whole group
- Individual conferring
- Partner work
- Small group

The graphic below (click [here](#) to see it enlarged) provides an example of how much time is allotted to each of the workshop components. The recommendation is that the bulk of workshop time is dedicated to students independently working, conferring, or meeting in small groups with the teacher for instructional purposes.

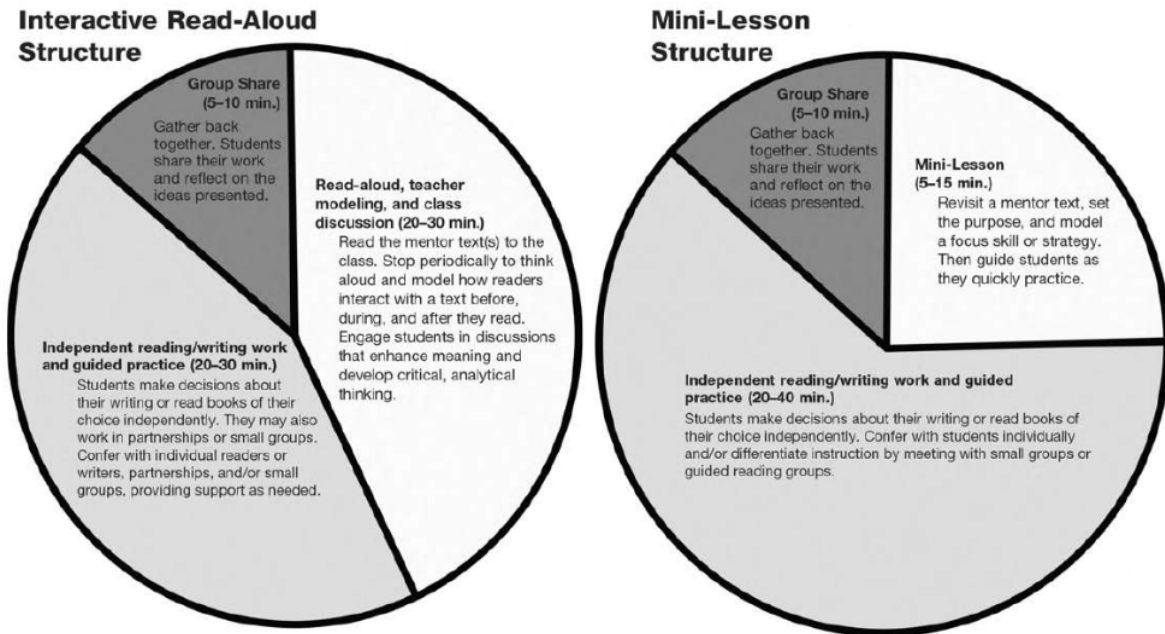


## ELA Instructional Design

Reading Fundamentals Units of Study exist inside a balanced literacy framework. Within this framework there are opportunities to read to students (mentor texts), to read with students (shared texts), and to have students read independently (books or texts at their independent reading levels). During read-aloud time, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading, students will have multiple opportunities to read and review various texts to enhance genre knowledge and attain a deeper understanding of genre-specific information.

### Focus Lesson

- Interactive Read-aloud - Mentor/Anchor text is shared for eight or more lessons during which the teacher will read the mentor texts aloud, thinking aloud and modeling how readers interact with complex texts to make meaning and build knowledge. Text-dependent questions are embedded in the lessons to reinforce close, analytic reading and to guide students in using textual evidence to respond to and analyze texts. You will immerse your students in the key ideas, genre features, and reading strategies and guide them on this learning journey. These lessons serve to build schema for the next phase of learning.
- Mini-Lesson - After the Interactive Read-Aloud lessons, there are ten or more Mini-Lessons. These Mini-Lessons revisit and examine the specific strategies that were introduced during the Interactive ReadAloud lessons. The key ideas and strategies we selected are seen as the most essential for readers of the nonfiction texts in this unit. In the Mini-Lessons you will return to the mentor texts and/or shared texts to focus on a single skill, strategy, or routine and engage and guide students as they practice these together. This modeling and guided practice will enable students to begin to independently apply the strategies taught.



### Workshop Components

The goal of the workshop is for students to understand how and when to authentically use the various strategies as they read and write a variety of texts on their own that relate to building their knowledge and understanding of the genre. After each Interactive Read-Aloud lesson and Mini-Lesson, students will transition to the workshop portion of the literacy block which may consist of the following components:

- **Guided Reading** – Guided reading is the heart of the workshop and therefore must occur daily. Some students will require daily sessions of guided reading while others only need biweekly sessions. The teacher must identify the reading needs of individual students and establish a guided reading schedule to meet their needs. The purpose of guided reading is to intentionally set the reader up for a positive reading experience that allows them to stretch themselves as readers in one particular area while still engaging in mostly familiar text. The teacher's primary job is to observe readers, record data, take notes, and provide support to readers as the “guide on the side”.
- **Independent Reading** – Students must have daily opportunities to read independently for increasingly longer periods so they can begin to readily apply essential strategies without teacher prompting or support. After each lesson, students will transition to independent reading, while the teacher meets with individuals, partnerships, and/or small groups of students to provide additional guidance and reinforcement of the focus strategies. The goal is for students to understand how and when to use the various strategies as they read and write a variety of texts on their own.
- **Collaboration and Reading Partnerships** – Students will have opportunities to work in groups or with a partner to read and discuss a variety of texts to build knowledge of the

genres of content they are studying (ex. turn and talk, elbow partner, literature circle, book club).

- Writing in Response to Reading - Reading response encourages students to practice writing for a range of genre-specific tasks. These writing opportunities increase learner responsibility, support analysis of challenging content, and extend students' thinking. "Writing develops both thinking and learning by creating a means for learners to modify and extend their understanding" (Hoyt, 1999).
- Conferencing – Teachers initiate conversations with individual students to see how they are doing in their independent reading and writing work and to provide differentiated support. These conversations provide the most useful opportunities for formative assessment, feedback, and goal setting.
- Small group instruction - Teachers meet with small groups of students to differentiate instruction and for purposes other than guided reading instruction (ex. reading or writing strategies, word work, etc.). Small groups are formed based on formative data related to whole group instruction or in response to other observations noted during the reader's or writer's workshop.
- Choice Board options – Students have additional options to choose work related to their individual needs as readers and writers. Examples of choice board options are ExactPath individualized learning path, word work, meet with partners, and additional time to engage in independent reading and writing.

### Group Share/Debrief

The goal at the end of each lesson is for students to reflect on the learning for the day. The students come back together as a whole group for a reflection or debrief. They may share samples of their work from small groups or independent work, or share successes and challenges. Student feedback assists the teacher in planning for future instruction.

## Curriculum Resources

ELA Core Instruction (Tier 1)				
Literacy Components	Grades K 3	Grades 4 5	Grades 6 8	Grades 9 12
Phonics & Word Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phonics and Spelling: Foundations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Word Study/Spelling: AGI Word Study Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary/Word Study: Morphemic Analysis of Greek and Latin Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sadlier Academic Vocabulary (Grades 9-10)</li> <li>SAT Vocabulary (Grades 11-12)</li> </ul>
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Reading Fundamentals Units</li> <li>Leveled Text using the Fountas and Pinnell System</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Reading Fundamentals Units</li> <li>Leveled Text using the Fountas and Pinnell System</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Reading Fundamentals Units</li> <li>Leveled Text and Articles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentor Text: Fiction and Nonfiction Text and Novels</li> </ul>
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Writing Fundamentals Units</li> <li>Schoolwide Grammar Units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Writing Fundamentals Units</li> <li>Schoolwide Grammar Units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Writing Fundamentals Units</li> <li>Schoolwide Grammar Units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentor Text: Fiction and Nonfiction Text and Novels</li> </ul>
Speaking & Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Reading and Writing Units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Reading and Writing Units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schoolwide Reading and Writing Units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literature Discussion</li> <li>Academic Conversations</li> <li>Book Club</li> <li>Reciprocal Teaching</li> <li>Socratic Seminar</li> </ul>

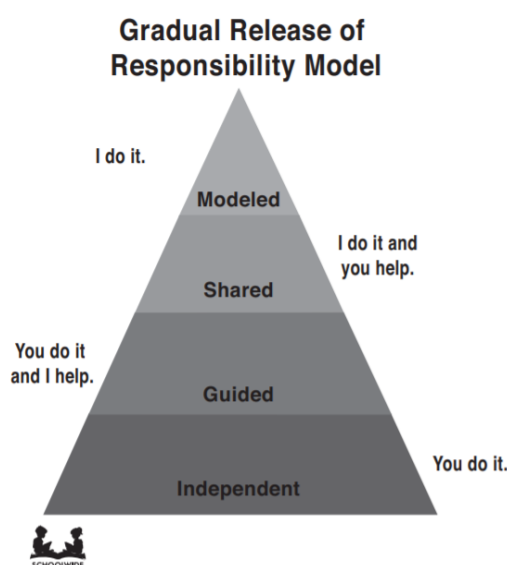
## Schoolwide Reading Fundamentals: Foundational Research

Schoolwide's Reading Fundamentals Units of Study are grounded in research-based best practices and proven teaching strategies and techniques. Each Reading Fundamentals Unit of Study integrates reading skill and strategy instruction with the study of genres (characteristics and features). The teacher modeling and guided practice from the Interactive Read-Alouds and Mini-Lessons enable students to begin to independently apply the strategies taught.

The goal of Reading Fundamentals is for students to understand how and when to apply various strategies as they read a variety of texts on their own. "The rationale for the explicit teaching of comprehension skills is that comprehension can be improved by teaching students to use specific cognitive strategies or to reason strategically when they encounter barriers to understanding what they are reading. Readers acquire these strategies informally to some extent, but explicit or formal instruction in the application of comprehension strategies is highly effective in enhancing understanding. The teacher generally demonstrates such strategies for students until the students can carry them out independently" (National Reading Panel, 2011, p. 14).

During the Interactive Read-Aloud phase, teachers read mentor texts aloud, thinking aloud and modeling how readers interact with the text to make meaning. The Interactive Read-Alouds serve to build schema for the next phase of learning, the Mini-Lessons.

The Mini-Lessons revisit and examine the specific strategies previously introduced during the Interactive Read-Alouds. In the Mini-Lessons, teachers return to the mentor texts and/or use shared texts to focus on a single skill and engage and guide students as they practice this skill together. Modeling and guided practice enable students to begin to independently apply the strategies taught. Independent practice and application take place after each Mini-Lesson.



**Model** the reading process, or how effective readers make and maintain meaning during Interactive Read-Alouds using high-interest mentor texts.

**Read and revisit** mentor and shared texts with students during Mini-Lessons to practice focus skills and strategies and involve students in the reading process.

**Support students' application** of skills and strategies through guided reading, strategy groups, and independent reading conferences.

**Differentiate and extend learning** through suggested ideas for reading responses, assessments, and home-school connections.



## Assessment Overview

Students in the Avon Grove School District participate in a comprehensive literacy assessment program that provides important information to teachers, students, and parents regarding the progress of all students toward their goals in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Assessment in literacy takes place when we gather and analyze information from various sources to understand and evaluate students' knowledge and understanding, as well as their proficiencies and skills. The results should be used to guide and shape ongoing, and future, instruction.

In other words, we believe that literacy assessments are utilized to respond to students' needs, not simply to rank them or assign them scores or grades that may not lead to deeper learning. Combining diagnostic and formative assessments, common assessments, state assessments (PSSA, Keystone, WIDA, etc.), and national assessments (AP, PSSA, SAT, Exact Path, etc.), teachers and administrators will work together to analyze student performance and develop literacy learning paths to help all students reach their full potential. Assessment data and learning goals will be shared with students and parents to promote learning partnerships with families, as well as encourage students to have an active role in their learning path. Literacy assessments are used throughout the school year to provide additional data on each student's progress. Data from literacy assessments and a variety of other sources will help the data teams make informed decisions concerning the level of service for each child,

Furthermore, summative assessments, including standardized tests, can be used to evaluate and reconsider what and how content and skills are taught in ELA and across content areas. Teachers and administrators must use literacy assessment data to continuously evaluate the level of rigor, expectations, and alignment reflected in the curriculum, assessments, and instructional practices.

AGSD's ELA Assessments					
Name	Type	Purpose	Grade	When?	How is the data used?
Early Literacy Assessment (COP, PAST)	Diagnostic Benchmark	Reading	K-2	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsive instruction</li> <li>• Intervention focus</li> </ul>
Exact Path	Diagnostic Benchmark	Reading	K-6	Fall Winter Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsive and individualized instruction</li> <li>• Projects performance on PSSA</li> <li>• Intervention focus</li> </ul>
F&P Reading Records*	Diagnostic Benchmark	Reading Accuracy Fluency Comprehension	K-6	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsive instruction</li> <li>• Intervention focus</li> </ul>
aimsweb Plus	Benchmark	Reading/Math	K-8	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress monitoring</li> </ul>
Common Assessments	Summative	Reading Writing Language Grammar	K-12	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures end-of-unit proficiency</li> </ul>
PSSA	Summative	Reading Writing Language Grammar	3-8	End of course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures grade-level proficiency</li> </ul>
Study Island	Formative	Reading	3-10	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies learning focus for intervention</li> </ul>
CDT	Diagnostic Benchmark	Reading	7-10	Fall Winter Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects adequate progress towards proficiency on PSSA and Keystone</li> <li>• Identifies learning focus for intervention</li> <li>• Scores used for course placement recommendations</li> </ul>
PSAT SAT	Summative	Reading/Writing/Math	10-12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures college readiness</li> <li>• College admissions applications</li> </ul>
Keystone	Summative	Reading	10	End of course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures end-of-course proficiency</li> <li>• Pathways to Graduation</li> </ul>
AP Exam	Summative	Content of AP Course	10-12	End of course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures end-of-course proficiency of college-level content</li> </ul>

# Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Accelerated Learning Toolkit, a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a data-driven, problem-solving framework to improve outcomes for all students. MTSS relies on a continuum of evidence-based practices matched to student needs. In order to develop an effective MTSS Framework, school systems should consider best approaches to (1) accelerate learning through universal supports (2) address the core learning landscape through explicit instruction (3) implement class-wide interventions and supports, (4) systemically address strategic and intensive supports, (5) access additional accelerated learning experiences, (6) ensure considerations are in place for supporting students with significant learning and behavioral needs, and (7) meet the needs of gifted learners.

In order to accelerate learning during the 2021-2022 school year, Avon Grove School District identified the following goal:

Design a multi-tiered system of scaffolded supports (MTSS) to provide a continuum of evidence-based academic, behavioral, social, and emotional supports aligned with student needs. Each building will develop a plan for accelerating growth using the three strategies below and aligned to the areas of:

- PA standards-aligned, high-quality core instruction
- Universal screening
- Shared ownership
- Data-based decision making
- Responsiveness to intervention
- Family engagement



This goal will be accomplished using the following strategies as each building develops and implements an Accelerating Growth Plan. The plans should seek to strengthen the MTSS Frameworks in each building so that achievement gaps can be closed with an integrated system of support.

Avon Grove School District believes in providing high-quality literacy instruction to accelerate literacy growth. Tier 1, core instruction provides all students with access to a high-quality ELA curriculum, instruction, and assessments. In addition, classroom teachers use evidenced-based literacy strategies to address individual student needs. Avon Grove School District recognizes that all students learn differently, and we are committed to helping all students succeed. Therefore, implementing this three-tiered approach to meet the academic and behavior needs of all students is essential to the success of the program.

AGSD MTSS Resource Chart ELA Intervention				
Tiers	Grades K 2	Grades 3 6	Grades 7 8	Grades 9 12
1	See page 16 - Curriculum Resources	See page 16 - Curriculum Resources	See page 16 - Curriculum Resources	See page 16 - Curriculum Resources
	ELA Core Instruction (Tier 1)	ELA Core Instruction (Tier 1)	ELA Core Instruction (Tier 1)	ELA Core Instruction (Tier 1)
	Exact Path  Decoding - K-2: Foundations  Comprehension- Grade 2: Fountas and Pinnell LLI Kits	Exact Path  Decoding – Gr. 3: Foundations; Level 3  Grades 4-6: Just Words, Wilson Reading System  Comprehension - Grades 3-5: Fountas and Pinnell LLI Kits  Mastery Learning Model w/ push-in support	Comprehension- Exact Path: Individualized Learning Path	Comprehension- Leveled Text  Reciprocal Teaching
2	Decoding - K-2: Foundations	Decoding - Grade 3: Foundations Level 2 Grade 4 - 6: Just Words (Wilson Intervention Program)	Comprehension- Read 180	N/A
	Phonemic Awareness - Manipulating Phonemes (Kilpatrick)	Comprehension - Grade 3- 6: Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)		
	Comprehension- Grade 2: Fountas and Pinnell LLI Kits	Assorted Leveled Text (from bookroom)		
3				

# AGSD Summer Reading Program

AGSD believes the purpose of summer reading is to promote a love of reading by strongly encouraging all students to read over the summer. Avon Grove's Summer Reading Program aims to motivate students to develop good reading habits, explore new genres of literature, enjoy the books that they choose to read, and prevent "Summer Slide." [Research](#) shows us the wonderful benefits of reading 30 minutes daily, therefore, we strive to challenge our students to read as many books as possible over the summer. This [article](#) provides more information about the importance of continuing to read over the summer.

The purpose of Summer Reading is to:

- encourage students to read and enjoy a new book.
- develop students' ability to choose books for themselves.
- allow students the opportunity to explore topics of interest and genre.
- sustain literacy skills over the summer to avoid "summer slide".
- foster a vibrant and diverse community of readers upon students' return to school in the fall.
- support AG's balanced, literacy-based program ([see research](#)).

When choosing books to read, students are encouraged to:

- read a balanced diet of books. Push yourself to read outside of your typical selections.
- choose new books or revisit old favorites.
- choose books that are not too easy or too hard ([link to selecting "Just Right" books](#)).



# Glossary of Terms

**21st Century Skills** – A combination of Learning, Literacy, and Life skills that makes up the 12 abilities that today's students need to succeed in their careers during the Information Age. These skills include the six C's of Critical thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, Character, Citizenship, and Communication. Additionally, these skills also include a variety of literacies and soft skills such as Information Literacy, Media Literacy, Technology Literacy, Flexibility, Leadership, Initiative, Productivity, and Social skills.

**Balanced Literacy** – Balanced literacy includes a variety of reading and writing instructional models. These models should be incorporated during the reading and writing workshop block at various times throughout the week to ensure student success. The idea of balanced literacy does not mean equal time dedicated to each instructional model. Literacy models must change as students progress through the years, with varying amounts of time being allocated to different areas of literacy across grades.

**Benchmark Assessment** – Evaluates student performance at periodic intervals, frequently at the end of a grading period. Can predict student performance on end-of-the-year summative assessments.

**Comprehension** – Reading comprehension is the ability to read a text, process it, and understand its meaning. Comprehension comes from engaging with ideas and constructing a sense of a whole text or work. Comprehension is evident when readers can interpret and evaluate events, dialogue, ideas, and information; connect the information to what they already know; adjust their current knowledge to include new ideas or look at those ideas in a different way; determine and remember the most important points in the reading, and read "between the lines" to understand underlying meanings.

**Curriculum** – An educational plan that ensures that all students have an equal opportunity to learn the content of a particular course. The curriculum must be "guaranteed" in its commitment that each student has access to effective teachers, the same content, knowledge, and skills to have the opportunity to succeed in school. The curriculum must also be "viable" in that it ensures that students have been allotted enough time to learn the guaranteed curriculum.

**Diagnostic Assessment** – Assesses a student's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills prior to instruction. Also, can be used as a baseline to start instruction from or administered only to students who demonstrate a deficit in a particular area.

**Disciplinary Literacy** – The joining together of content knowledge, experiences, and skills merged with the ability to read, write, listen, speak, think critically and perform in a way that is meaningful within the context of a given content area or field. These abilities are important in ALL courses and subjects.

**Fluency** – Fluency is the ability to read text accurately and quickly. During independent

reading, fluent readers recognize words automatically and group them so they can understand what they are reading. Fluent readers do not concentrate on decoding words. Instead, they focus their attention on what the text means.

**Formative Assessment** – Assesses a student’s performance during instruction, and usually occurs regularly throughout the instruction process like a doctor’s “check-up” to provide data to revise instruction.

**Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR)** – This instructional model moves classroom instruction from teacher-centered, whole-group delivery to student-centered, collaborative work and, finally, to independent practice. It is also known as the “I do, we do, you do” model.

**Guided Reading** – Small-group, homogeneous reading instruction designed to provide differentiated teaching that supports students in developing reading proficiency. The guided reading instructional model scaffolds students by supporting them in dealing with challenges as they read and comprehend text. In guided reading, all students are using the same text. The teachers use a text that matches each student’s instructional level or ability. The teacher introduces the text, listens to students read, prompts and guides students, and engages in conversation to provide readers with the tools they need when reading independently. It is important to note that the teacher may be pulling these students together to provide specific instruction that only applies to that group, especially in the case of above or below-level readers. Additionally, there are times when the teacher wants to use the guided group as a touchpoint to determine reading strengths and weaknesses (as suggested by the definition), and there are times when a specific lesson is needed.

**Media Literacy** – Media literacy builds upon the foundation of traditional literacy and offers new forms of reading and writing. It is the ability to access, analyze, and evaluate, create and act using all forms of communication to be critical thinkers and makers, effective communicators and active citizens.

**Metacognition** – Metacognition is the self-awareness that people have of their mental or thought processes. It includes their ability to monitor, regulate, and direct those processes to the desired outcome (e.g., problem-solving).

**Phonics** – Phonics can also be referred to as sound-symbol connections or graphophones. It is the understanding of how letters or spelling patterns (graphemes) represent sounds of speech (phonemes). Phonics involves awareness of the sounds of individual letters or letter combinations. It requires the understanding that sounds can blend to make a word and a mastery of rules about certain sound patterns.

**Phonological awareness** – This is the awareness that spoken language can be taken apart in many ways: Sentences can be broken into words, words can be divided into syllables (e.g., sis/ter), and syllables can be divided into smaller individual sounds (i.e., phonemes, such as /c/a/ /t/). Phonological awareness includes knowledge of rhyming, intonation, and alliteration (i.e., hearing the similarity of sounds, as in “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers”).

**Summative Assessment** – Measures a student’s achievement at the end of instruction. Important questions to ask after it is over are what went right and what went wrong?

**Vocabulary** – Vocabulary includes the words that people must know to communicate effectively, including oral and reading vocabulary. Oral vocabulary is comprised of words we use when we speak and words we recognize when we listen. Reading vocabulary is comprised of words we recognize and use in print.

**Word Study** – Word study is any instruction used by the teacher to introduce, teach, and provide students with opportunities to practice using their knowledge of phonological and phonemic awareness, letter recognition, letter-sound relationships, phonics, spelling patterns, and vocabulary. The purpose is to help students achieve the automatic word recognition necessary for fluency and proficient comprehension. Examples include phonics, phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, spelling, and vocabulary.



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