



Canon-McMillan
School District

LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

OUR APPROACH TO K-6
STRUCTURED LITERACY

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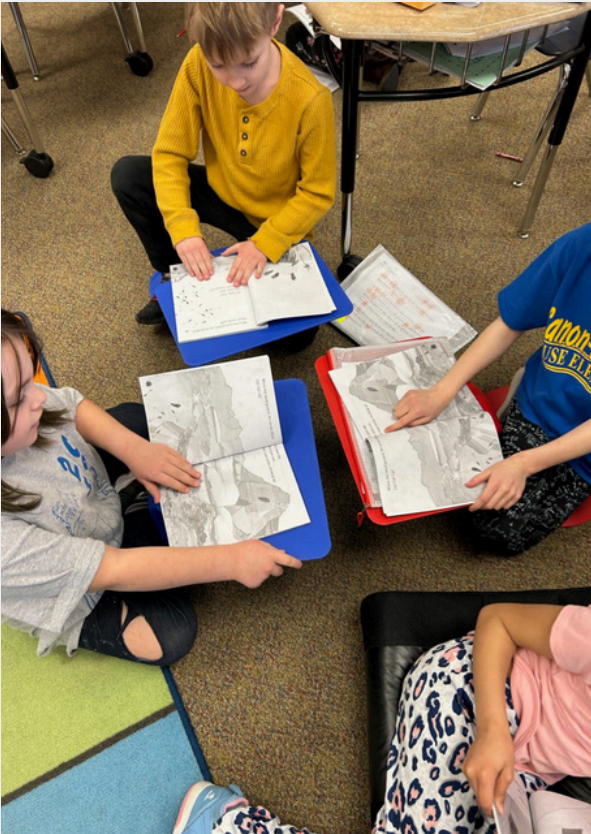
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Canon-McMillan

Welcome to our Structured Literacy Program



Structured Literacy is an evidence-based approach to teaching literacy skills. This approach emphasizes the systematic and explicit instruction of phonology, phonics, morphology, syntax, semantics, vocabulary development and knowledge building which are the fundamental components of reading and writing.

By breaking down the complex process of reading and writing into smaller, more manageable parts, students are able to develop a strong foundation in literacy that will serve them well throughout their academic and professional lives.

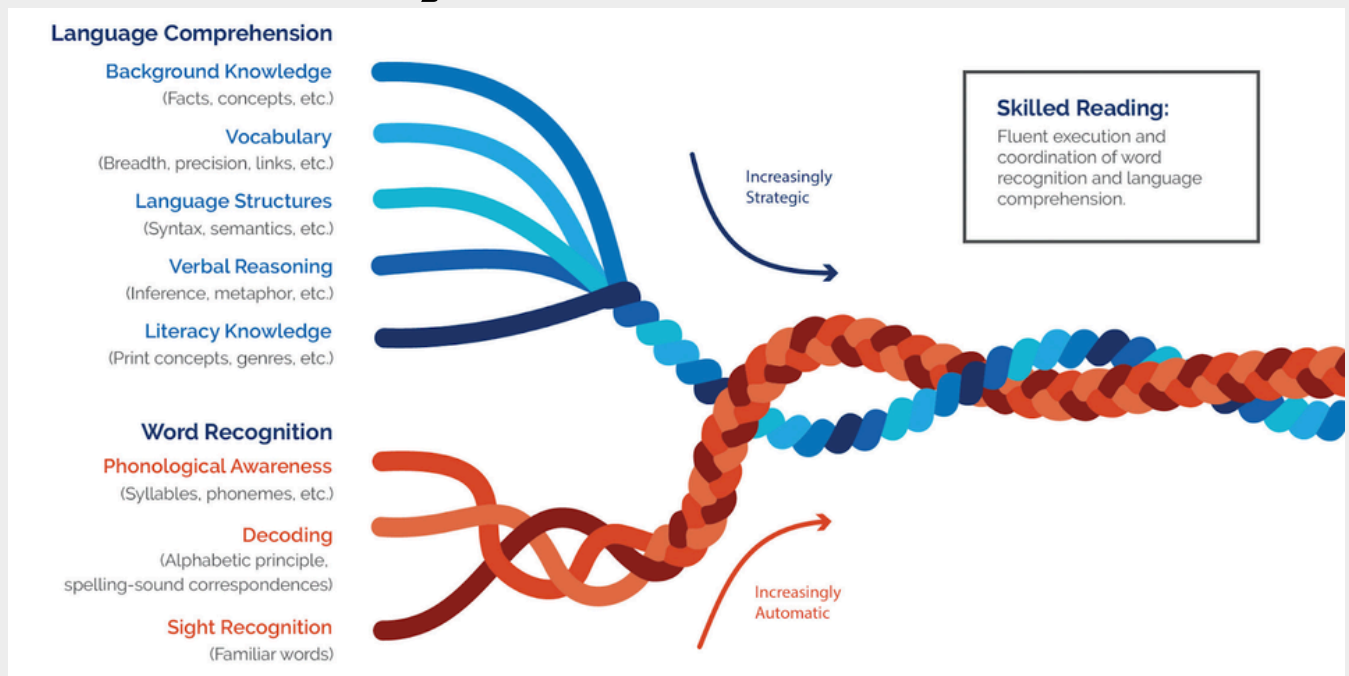
In grades K-2, we place a heavy emphasis on *learning to read* while making a shift to *reading to learn* in grades 3-6. One of the key benefits of Structured Literacy is that it helps students to become more confident and independent readers and writers. By providing them with the skills and knowledge base they need to decode and comprehend written language, students are able to engage more fully with academic content and become more active and informed members of their communities.

Greg Taranto, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Canon-McMillan

What is Structured Literacy?



Scarborough's Reading Rope is a metaphor that represents the various strands of reading that need to be woven together to create a strong reader. These strands are comprised of two sub-strands: 1. Word Recognition - the ability to decode a word; 2. Language Comprehension - the ability to understand and draw meaning from the text.

Word Recognition is comprised of *phonemic awareness* (ability to identify and manipulate individual sounds in words); *Phonics* (understanding of how written letters and sounds work together to form words); *Sight Recognition* (ability to identify sight words). Grades K-2 place a heavy emphasis in this area of the rope - learning to read.

Language Comprehension is comprised of *background knowledge* (facts and concepts that build on one another); *vocabulary* (body of words used in a language); *language structures* (which include syntax & semantics); *verbal reasoning* (ability to infer and make comparisons); and *literacy knowledge* (the understanding of various print concepts and genres in literature). Grades 3-6 place a heavier emphasis in this area of the rope - reading to learn.



Grades K-2

Learning to Read

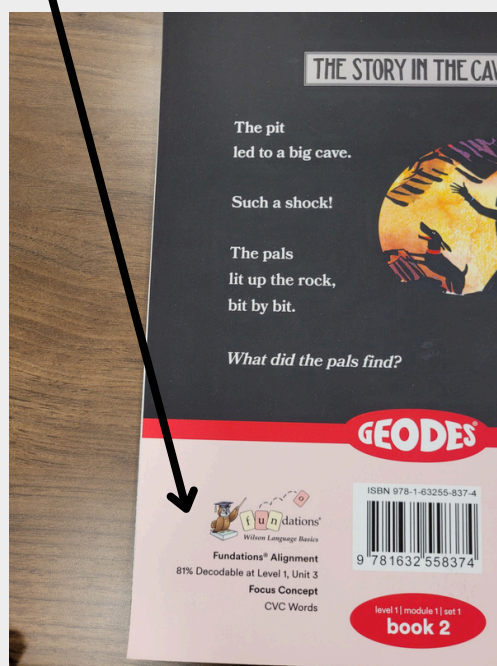
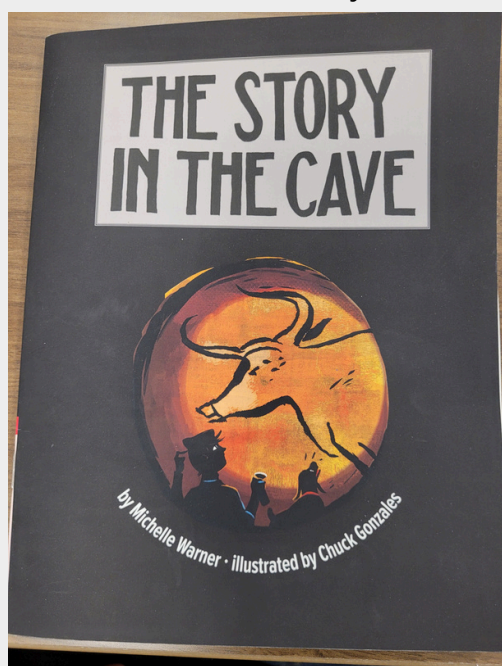


The K-2 literacy block is comprised of two major parts: Foundational Skills and Knowledge Building.

Students start their foundational skills with [Heggerty](#) which is a method to teach phonemic awareness. After the Heggerty segment, students transition to [Foundations](#) for the bulk of their foundational skills where they learn to decoding and word recognition skills. Please visit the [Curriculum & Instruction](#) website page for specific skill-by-skill curriculum information.

In the Knowledge Building segment, our K-2 students have the opportunity to apply their newly acquire skills (ex. CVC words) reading a knowledge building decodables called a Geodes. These unique decodables are organized in modules around central concepts or themes allowing students to build understanding as opposed to random stories with little to no meaning.

In the example below, you can see the corresponding skills in this particular Geode called, "The Story in the Cave."



Grades 3-6

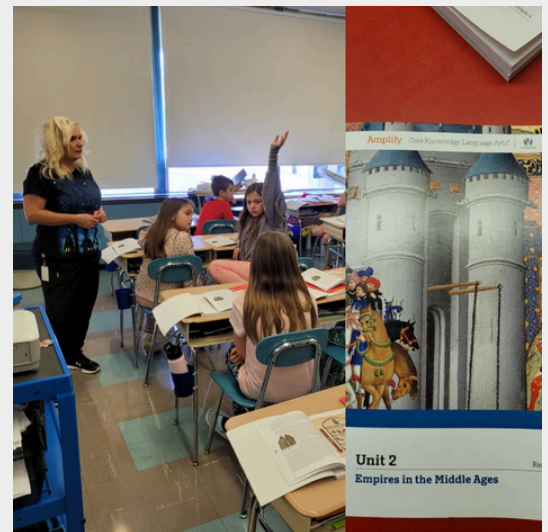
Reading to Learn



Starting in 3rd grade students start to switch classes and will have a dedicated ELA teacher for reading instruction. This is the time we start placing a heavier emphasis on reading to learn.

We utilize [Amplify CKLA](#) (3-5) and [Amplify ELA](#) (6) as our reading program. The reading program is a knowledge building approach to reading designed to build students' content knowledge, vocabulary, writing and language skills. Amplify's program has received a top score in [EdReports](#) for text quality, building knowledge and usability. It is an all encompassing curriculum and has all the necessary resources to complete it. The adoption of this program has allowed us to complete all aspects of Scarborough's Rope which will give our students a complete structured literacy experience.

[Background knowledge](#) plays an extremely important role in overall reading comprehension once a student has the ability to decode and recognize words. Other approaches to reading neglect to take into account the text as a vehicle to build background knowledge. A true structured literacy program has well-designed thematic units where students spend weeks on the same content reading various stories, building vocabulary and writing about their reading experiences. Examples of these units include: Classic Tales, The Middle Ages, Poetry, The Human Body System and Shakespeare. For a complete list and curriculum, please visit our [Curriculum & Instruction](#) website page.



There is a clear intentional and cohesive design from grade to grade that builds upon established knowledge known as schema building.



Reading Intervention

Identification



Canon-McMillan utilizes the [Acadience](#) diagnostic screener. All K-4 students take this diagnostic three times a year (beginning of the year; middle of the year; end of the year). The Acadience data is shared with the classroom teachers and principals. Our reading specialists are asked to analyze scores that show any red flags. Students may receive additional testing based on their Acadience screener to help determine the need for more intense reading intervention. In addition, all new K-6 students receive a reading screener as part of their enrollment and any student who shows signs of reading struggle in grades 5-6 receive screeners.

The sooner a reading disability is identified, the better for intervention purposes.

Interventions



Students who demonstrate a reading deficit through the screening and testing process receive reading support interventions. Canon-McMillan is fortunate to have a dedicated team of reading specialists in our K-6 buildings. They utilize a number of intervention strategies including [Foundations III](#), [Just Words](#) and [Wilson Reading System](#).

Our reading specialists continue ongoing professional development and meet on a monthly basis in order to stay on top of best practice. In addition, the District employs a part-time literacy coach who helps our reading specialists and classroom teachers with reading intervention strategies and ideas.



Summary

Dedication

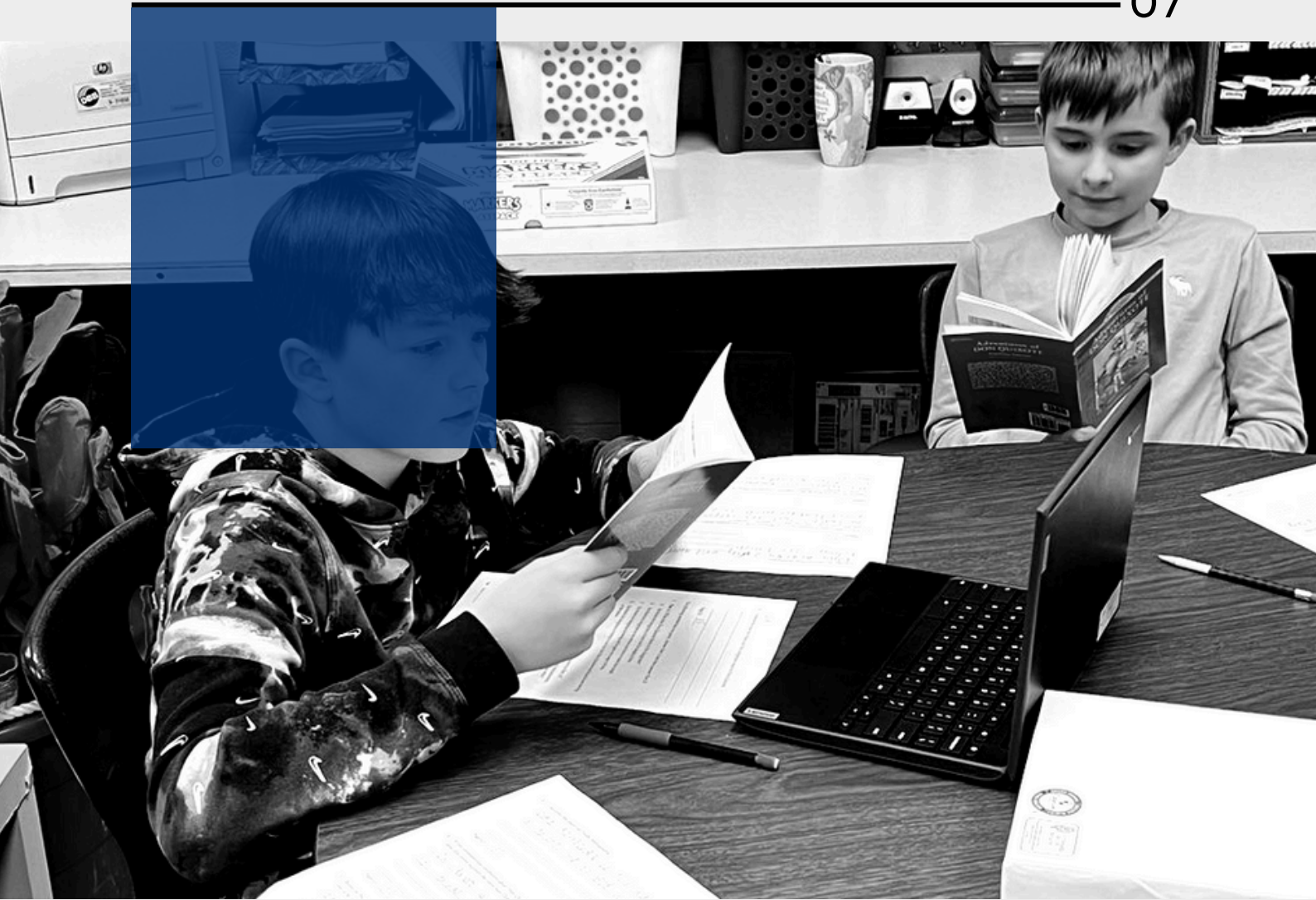


Our K-6 teachers, reading specialists and principals are dedicated to provide the absolute best approach to literacy development as possible.

Our team has dedicated time and resources to train and continually develop in order to provide this experience. We are confident in saying that Canon-McMillan is a true model for structured literacy. [Click here](#) to learn more about our journey to structured literacy.

A special thank you to all our teachers, staff, principals and school board curriculum committee members who have embraced this approach and do what is necessary in order to deliver it.





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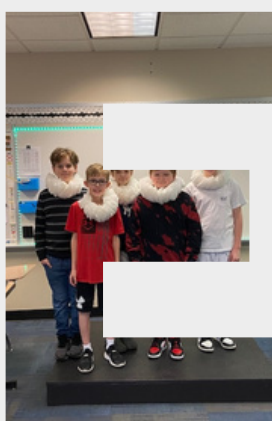
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