

Dear Families,

Welcome to *Bookworms* K–5 Reading & Writing! *Bookworms* is a literacy program for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. It was written with a commitment to active learning. In *Bookworms* RW students are actively reading, writing, listening, and speaking about complex ideas every day.

A *Bookworms* classroom has three designated literacy blocks each day. The Shared Reading block features real books that are written for that particular grade level. Students will read these books with the support of teachers and peer partners. The purpose of these lessons is to build students' ability to read fluently, build vocabulary, and to think critically about text. The English Language Arts block features an Interactive Read Aloud that is nearly always above grade level. The purpose of working with an above-grade-level text is to build language and vocabulary knowledge, build world knowledge, and improve students' inferential thinking. During this time, students also participate in high-level grammar instruction by studying sentences that are written by authors of the read aloud book. The final block of time is called Differentiation. During that time, teachers address the needs of students revealed through assessments. When they are not working with the teacher, students write in response to their Shared Reading and then choose books to read on their own.

Another component of the *Bookworms* Reading and Writing day is a dedication to word study. Word study is a type of spelling instruction that is designed to help students link understanding of the sound of words and the patterns we use to spell them so that they can read and spell unknown words. In the primary grades, there is a set list of words for each week featuring two to four patterns. There is a traditional Word Study Assessment each week to help us understand progress. For Grades 3–5, word study helps students decode longer words and builds their vocabulary knowledge. Words are selected each week from the Shared Reading text. They also have a traditional Word Study Assessment each week, with three words to spell and three words selected to be written in sentences that demonstrate their meanings. Students in all grade levels have a daily designated time for word study instruction and for time to practice the words across the week.

Our approach to teaching writing is to engage students over and over in the work that writers do to plan, draft, revise, and edit. Our goal is for your child to confidently compose original texts in the three genres highlighted in our standards: narratives, opinions, and informational selections. We do this by providing extensive teacher support at first, and then by reducing support over time.

The best way you can help at home is to read to and with your child every day. The type of text chosen does not matter. Students can choose magazines, books, newspapers, blogs, informative texts, fiction texts, cookbooks, or any other text you have at your home, or you can find in the library. All provide an opportunity for students to build vocabulary, world knowledge, and understanding of text structures. You can also talk to your children about the books they are reading in class. You will likely find them willing to share much about the road to becoming a bookworm this year.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

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