

Emerald Academy

Foundational Literacy Skills Plan

Last Updated: October 18, 2021

Approved: June 14, 2024

This Foundational Literacy Skills Plan has been approved by the Tennessee Department of Education and meets the requirements of the *Tennessee Literacy Success Act*. All portions of the Foundational Literacy Skills plan were submitted to the department and approved. To view the supplemental artifacts, please contact the district directly.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades K-2

At Emerald Academy we use two curriculums that teach foundational literacy skills. We use a phonics curriculum called Magnetic Ready (part of the iReady curriculum) to teach phonics explicitly. We also use Wit and Wisdom which incorporates foundational literacy skills and reading comprehension skills. Scholars in grades K-2 spend 115 minutes participating in foundational literacy skills instruction daily through these curriculums. During foundational literacy instruction scholars are introduced to all 44 sounds in the English language in addition to practicing spelling and grammar. These curricula also focus on decoding and word recognition to build student's reading fluency. Students develop phonemic awareness through the curriculum by learning letters and their corresponding sounds. Magnetic Reading is aligned to Tennessee State Standards and is supported by research. Lessons contain phonics, writing, spelling, fluency, and phonemic awareness components and will be our primary form for foundational skills instruction. Research that supports this program suggests that students are more likely to become better readers when they are engaged in phonics instruction through a program that explicitly teaches foundational skills but also does so in a relatable and engaging way.

Daily Foundational Literacy Skills Instruction in Grades 3-5

At Emerald Academy, our ELA core curriculum in grades 3-5, Wit and Wisdom, engages students in foundational literacy skills through a research-based approach that aligns with TN state standards. The curriculum reinforces literacy skills through novel studies and application. Each lesson includes many parts that teach core foundational skills such as morphology, grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Within each lesson, scholars are introduced to these skills through an embedded approach. Lessons contain vocabulary deep dives, in which students engage in word meaning activities, in addition to a styles and conventions component, which aligns to foundational literacy standards. The curriculum also integrates writing and speaking skills daily. Students are often asked to write in response journals in addition to learning how to develop strong paragraphs and multiple paragraph essays. By 4th grade, scholars are expected to write 4-5 paragraph essays. Students also engage in Socratic seminars in which they have rich text dependent discussions. Wit

and Wisdom also requires students to build their reading fluency by having multiple reads of a text. Typically, students will spend at least two weeks on one novel. Students are able to build their fluency and comprehension by having multiple attempts at each novel. Students are then able to apply their knowledge and understanding to more complex skills, such as analyzing a character's actions and words to determine motive. In all, students in grades 3-5 spend 90 minutes daily on ELA instruction. 30 of these minutes are dedicated to foundational skills instruction such as writing and vocabulary, while the remaining 60 reinforces reading skills in a holistic style. In addition to the 90 minutes students also spend 30 minutes in book clubs. In these book clubs, scholars are exposed to vocabulary instruction and reading comprehension. Students are engaged in reading the entire 30 minutes, while the teacher may stop occasionally to highlight vocabulary and ask rich text dependent questions.

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades K-2

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom (approved waiver)

Approved Instructional Materials for Grades 3-5

Great Minds Wit and Wisdom

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Magnetic Reading (iReady)

Universal Reading Screener for Grades K-5

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Suite K-5

Emerald also administers the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener (aimswebPlus) to students in third grade for the Spring Benchmark.

Supplemental Screeners

AimswebPlus and iReady are used for progress monitoring.

Intervention Structure and Supports

Scholars at Emerald complete the NWEA MAP assessment in reading and math as our universal screener. We use these benchmarks to identify scholars through the RTI process. Scholars at Emerald that perform above the 40% only receive Tier 1 instruction. Scholars at Emerald that fall between the 16th-40th in reading are placed into Tier 2 intervention. Tier 2 instruction takes place during GRIT time, in which every scholar, regardless of Tier, participates in a group. This means even Tier 1 scholars receive extra direct instruction. Licensed teachers, interventionist, and associate teachers all teach T2 and T3 depending on the grade level. Because we have an extended school day, Tier 2 instruction is 45 minutes. In some grade levels due to the number of groups, 30 minutes is direct instruction from a teacher while the remaining 15 minutes is spent on a computer based approved program. Teachers use a researched based program to instruct students, iReady. The iReady curriculum supports scholars in foundational skills, such as vocabulary, phonics, fluency, and comprehension. Scholars that perform at the 0%-15th are enrolled in Tier 3 intervention. Tier 3

students in grades K-5 use Voyager and Language Live (5th only) for ELA intervention. Scholars spend 45 minutes in Tier 3 intervention daily. Scholars in grade 5 spend 45 minutes with a licensed teacher for Tier 3 intervention. Once a month the RTI team (school administrators, general education teachers, and Intervention teachers) meet to discuss the progress of students in intervention. Decisions are made on whether students need a change in intervention or to continue with their intervention plan. These decisions are made based off their progress monitoring in Aimswebplus (Tier 3) or Iready (Tier 2). Scholars are progress monitored each week if they are in Tier 3, and bi-weekly if they are in Tier 2. Scholars who are not making progress are moved to a more intense Tier intervention, their curriculum is changed, a change of instructor, and or any other change, such as location, group, etc. If scholars continue to show little to no progress, an evaluation for Special Education Services is requested.

Parent Notification Plan/Home Literacy Reports

Parents of K-5 students at Emerald who are "at risk" are notified of tier enrollment after the first universal screener. The parent letter, or home literacy report, is written in parent friendly language and expresses the importance of being a proficient reader by 3rd grade and the pathways to 4th grade. The letter communication also identifies the specific skill deficits in ELA including the depth and extent of student need. We also provide information on how the skills gaps will be addressed during intervention. (we removed math since this is specific to a home literacy report). The letter includes no-cost activities for families to support learning at home. This communication is sent to families three times a year for K-3 and at least annually for students in grades 4-5. Teachers also analyze student performance and families whose student(s) that exhibit characteristics of dyslexia are also notified by letter.

After students are placed in a tier program, scholars then take a diagnostic assessment in either IReady or aimswebplus. This provides the interventionist with detailed information on skill deficits to guide instruction during intervention. Intervention teachers also give a weekly (Tier 3) or bi-weekly (Tier 2) progress monitoring assessment that guides their instruction as well. Intervention teachers have access to several curriculums that they can use to teach to individual skill deficits. Each curriculum contains placement tests which tell the intervention teacher exactly how to proceed with instruction. Data teams come together once per month to analyze student progress provided by progress monitoring data and teacher input. Following these meetings, teachers send home a progress monitoring notification and student data to families. In the letter to families, the intervention teacher will explain the decision made at monthly RTI meetings. For example, if a student needs to increase intervention from Tier 2 to Tier 3 based on data, the intervention teacher will communicate to the family what the target scores are and current levels of the student. At Emerald we have parent nights at least once a month in which we share academic strategies and resources for families to implement at home with their scholars. Families are given online resources that they can use at the school's cost (no-cost to families) to reiterate reading skills at home. As a part of our family and school commitment, parents must sign a contract that states the importance of reading requirements nightly by students. This is an expectation at Emerald for which students receive a letter grade. In addition to monthly meetings, parents are required to attend parent teacher conferences 3 times a year. At these conferences teachers share skill strengths and deficits,

in addition to sharing ways in which families can support their scholars at home. Lastly each report card teachers are required to indicate one piece of actionable feedback in reading for families. This is so families can better support their scholars at home on their skill deficits. Our universal screener is done 3 times each school year and new RTI enrollment is decided after each screening. Families are notified each time. New families are informed of RTI enrollment in the same manner as indicated above. Since the 3rd grade retention law took effect, we have several times a year that we send home communication to 3rd grade families. At the completion of each universal reading screener, we send a parent letter home attached to a report that predicts TN Ready performance, as we use NWEA MAP that has conducted an alignment study. In addition to this communication, we host required parent meetings and share student progress as well as promotion pathways. When TN Ready results are in, we call every 3rd grade family to let them know of their student's performance and pathway choices.

Professional Development Plan

Teachers at our school go through a 3-week professional development summer program. Teachers in grades K-2 receive training on the implementation of Magnetic Reading each summer and how to teach foundational skills. All 3-5 teachers will also receive training on how to implement Wit and Wisdom in the classroom with an explicit focus on foundational literacy skills, including writing and vocabulary. Teachers complete a deep dive of all standards, including foundational literacy standards, to understand what mastery looks like and how to best plan and teach them. Intervention teachers also attend curriculum training on the programs they will be using. Teachers are also trained on how to deliver rigorous instruction during GRIT time (Tier 2 and enrichment) by learning how to use iReady and NWEA MAP to identify skill gaps. Teachers learn how to analyze this data to plan and teach fluency-related skills. Teachers will demonstrate competency of trainings by planning and using skills learned, in our Summer School program with scholars on campus. All teachers have also completed the required Reading 360 course and any new teachers will be expected to complete this reading training too.