

The Academy: A “laser” approach to boosting skills

READING COMPREHENSION and FLUENCY

WHY AM I HERE?

The goal of The Academy is to move students to grade level in their literacy skills. This course is designed to improve your reading comprehension by providing practice in specific skills that are part of the comprehension process. Two periods are offered to better fit schedules for some and to provide double the help for others. The name “Comprehension” is used for module 6 and “Fluency” for module 7 but the goals remain the same. Students who take both classes will pursue the same goals in both classes, but use different tools to accomplish those goals. Within a period, classes of different levels are provided so that students can get instruction that best meets their needs. Classes are also designed so students can move at their own pace and accelerated learning is expected.

Key ESLRs:

- Literate Citizen--to learn basic reading comprehension and fluency so as to better participate as a literate citizen in our society.
- Self-directed Learner--to set goals and make choices to learn reading skills as quickly as possible. Be focused, on task, learn from mistakes.

WHEN WILL I KNOW I AM DONE? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT’S MY GOAL?

Major goals:

Goal #1: Phonics: Letter names and sounds. Basic sight words. Beginning reading.

Goal #2: Independent second grade reading skills. Students at this level have basic phonics and basic sight word skills enough to work independently in SRA materials and to learn at their own speed.

Goal #3: Strong 5th/moving into 6th grade independent reading skills qualifies students for standard English 1-2. These students continue to receive support in the Academy at the semester and will be able to change to only taking one Academy reading class instead of two.

Goal #4: 8th grade reading fluency as measured by timed readings. (Reading fluency and comprehension line up closely so we can use one to measure the other.) Fluency tests occur weekly. Specifically what does this look like? 150 words or more in one minute on an 8th grade level passage--three times in a row.

Goal #5: Strong 8th grade reading skills as evidenced by quarterly Scantron testing AND 80% or higher scores on five level H SRA books.

Goal #6: Success in a high school English class. If student has met all other goals, but not this goal, student will continue to receive support in the Academy.

Goal #7: Pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Students can exit the Academy before taking the CAHSEE, but any students who do not pass CAHSEE will receive Academy support until they pass.

WHAT WILL I BE DOING IN THIS PROGRAM?

Answer: Whatever works best for you! Here's what we have for you:

Inside the U.S.A. National Geographic School Publishing

Essential language and literacy skills for newcomers to learning English.

Rosetta Stone

Interactive computer program designed for second language learners. Students new to English will be placed in this program. GOAL: complete levels quickly with a minimum of 80% accuracy.

SRA Skill books

Skill books are leveled in alphabetical order, all create practice for building skills to an 8th grade level. GOAL: to complete skill books quickly with a minimum of 80% accuracy. Level H is at an 8th grade level.

Read Naturally

Interactive computer program designed to build oral reading fluency. GOAL: Read level 8 at 150 wpm or more.

REWARDS and REWARDS Plus

These two programs build students' ability to decode multisyllabic words and then to apply that comprehending social studies or science text.

Longman Academic Reading Series and Longman Keystone

Leveled programs designed for English language learners and struggling readers to help them reach academic success.

Independent Reading

Students will be encouraged to read books at their independent level to build comprehension and reading stamina. Classes will use tools such as reading ladders, a method to help students evaluate their own reading, and book tests from bookadventure.com to check comprehension and record progress.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

- Weekly letter recognition, sight words, and fluency tests. Once these are passed, students only need spot checks here and there.
- Scantron Performance Series computer interactive reading comprehension test. The goal: at least eighth grade level. Tests are given quarterly. Student must have a current quarter passing score in order to exit the program
- SRA: student must complete five level H books in order to exit the program. All students with skills in the 6-8th grade range will be working on SRA. Students with lower skills may also have an opportunity to use SRA to demonstrate their reading ability and build their skills.
- Each classroom will also have their own assessments as needed.

HOW WILL I BE GRADED?

40% formative: that means participation in daily work in class, small quizzes, and homework
60% summative: that means 40% for tests throughout the semester and 20% for the final.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME IN THE CLASSROOM?

Come on time in uniform with several pencils and pens, at least two clean sheets of paper, a folder for handouts, and be ready to learn. You may be required to bring an independent reading book.

Respect:

1. the teacher who has the right to teach in a respectful environment
2. any other school employed adult who enters the room--substitute teacher, administrator, office worker, security personnel, facilities personnel, an aid, or any other adult guest in the room--who have the right to carry out their duties and be responded to with respect
3. other students who have the right to learn in a respectful environment
4. the room, the furniture, and all books or materials provided that future students have the right to continue to enjoy
5. yourself who has the right to learn quickly and efficiently. Don't disrespect yourself by getting in the way of your own learning.

Responsibility:

Be a responsible community leader within the classroom. Your job is to grow your reading skills as quickly as possible within a community of fellow learners. Use self-control and make good choices. Take responsibility for your choices.

1. First of all, that means look carefully at your mistakes or wrong answers on schoolwork, figure out what's wrong, and correct your thinking. Make sure the "failure leads to success".
2. Secondly, that means that you are quick to admit when your behavior is out of line and you take responsibility to make it right. "The buck stops here."

Integrity:

All work must represent original work done by the student alone. Any work on an assignment that comes from someone else must include acknowledgment of that person's contributions. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. At the first offense, the student will receive a zero or be required to make up the work on his or her own time and the office and parents will be notified. Subsequent consequences include suspension.

Technology Use

Use all technology with respect and integrity as it is intended for the use of classroom learning only.

During independent work, ipod music is at the teacher's discretion. Misuse of technology means no more technology. If the teacher asks for an electronic device from you, you are expected to hand it over immediately. It will then be given to Mr. Robinson. You may need a parent to retrieve it from him.

Attendance in all classes for which a student is registered is an essential part of meeting the requirements to pass each course. Students will not receive credit for this course if they have more than 7 excused or unexcused absences within any one semester. Course absences can be made up by completing the missed course work through an independent contract provided the missed course work is completed within 2 weeks of the due date or by completing the missed course work during Saturday school.

Food

No food in the classroom, except on special occasions at the teacher's discretion. Water bottles only are encouraged.

Rewards and consequences

Rewards involved classroom privileges and lots of learning. Consequences include warning, teacher-student conference, timeout, parent contact, administration contact.