

Reading Programs at Germantown Elementary

Below Grade Level Readers	On Grade Level Readers	Above Grade Level Readers
*Small guided reading groups (instruction at students' level) Grades K-5	*Small guided reading groups (instruction at students' level) Grades K-5	*Small guided reading groups (instruction at students' level) Grades K-5
Ruth Rales' Reading Program Grade 2 only		
Wilson, Corrective Reading or Phonics-based instruction (Decoding focus) Grades K-5		
Soar to Success (Comprehension focus) Grades 3-5	Soar to Success (Comprehension focus) Grades 3-5	
Junior Great Books Grades K-5	Junior Great Books Grades K-5	Junior Great Books Grades K-5
	Jacobs' Ladder Grades 3-5	Jacobs' Ladder Grades 3-5
		William & Mary Grades 2-5
Whole group instruction (grade level curriculum) Grades K-5	Whole group instruction (grade level curriculum) Grades K-5	Whole group instruction (grade level curriculum) Grades K-5

*At the beginning of the school year, students are placed in classrooms based upon their reading levels/small reading groups. Students reading at various levels (below, on, and above) are included in each classroom. Groupings are flexible throughout the school year.

(Formal and informal assessments/data are utilized to include students in various reading programs such as Wilson, Corrective Reading, Soar to Success, Jacobs' Ladder, and William and Mary.)

Instructional vs. Independent Reading Level

Instructional Level: This is the level that the student's reading instruction is based on for guided reading. A child reading at their instructional level needs adult guidance to be successful.

Independent Level: This is the student's "just right" reading level. It is always lower than their instructional level and he/she can read this material without adult assistance.

Summary of Reading Programs

Guided reading groups: Guided reading is small group instruction in which the teacher supports each reader's development of effective strategies for processing texts at increasingly challenging levels of difficulty. The teacher works with a small group of children who use similar reading processes and are able to read similar levels of text with support. The teacher introduces a text to this small group, works briefly with individuals in the group as they read it, may select one or two teaching points to present to the group following the reading, and then ask the children to take part in an extension or follow up to the reading. The ultimate goal of guided reading is to help children learn how to use independent reading strategies successfully.

Ruth Roles: This reading network is a structured tutoring program that provides one-on-one intervention to students in second grade that are reading below grade level. The program focuses on fluency and comprehension, using active learning and a carefully sequenced set of experiences to help tutees become motivated and independent readers. The children meet once a week with a tutor for 45 minutes. This program stimulates high levels of interest in reading, while nurturing cooperation, collaboration and mutual support.

Wilson: The Wilson Reading System directly and systematically teaches students how to fluently and accurately decode. Instruction is very interactive and multi-sensory. Students learn to spell as they learn to decode. This program teaches sound/symbol relationships in a multi-sensory manner. It also thoroughly teaches, total word construction, not just phonics.

Soar to Success: Soar to Success is a small-group reading intervention program. It uses authentic literature, reciprocal teaching, and graphic organizers in fast-paced lessons to help intermediate-grade students accelerate their reading growth. The program is designed to be used with a group of 5-7 students for 18 weeks. It has been developed to help teachers accomplish two goals:

- accelerate reading abilities as quickly as possible
- help students learn to apply and use the comprehension and decoding strategies and skills of an effective reader as they read across the curriculum.

Junior Great Books: The goal of the Great Books program is to provide all children the opportunity to interact with thought-provoking stories as they develop their reading, writing, oral communication, and critical thinking skills. The JGB curriculum develops students' reading comprehension in the context of thinking about genuine problems of meaning. Through the curriculum, students practice many reading and thinking skills; recalling and organizing details from the story, drawing inferences, analyzing characters' motives and finding the main idea of a passage or the text as a whole. The teacher's role is that of the shared inquiry leader, facilitating active questioning as students work together to discover the meaning in a story.

Jacobs Ladder: Jacobs Ladder is a learning journey for students that begins with targeted short readings and moves through an inquiry process from basic understanding to critical analyses of the texts read. There are three levels available that are targeted to students in 3rd grade, 4th grade, and 5th grade.

Each Unit of Jacobs Ladder is focused on five goals:

- To develop prediction and forecasting skills, judging probable outcomes based on data provided
- To develop deductive reasoning skills, moving from the concrete elements in a story to abstract ideas
- To develop literary analysis skills, based on understanding literary elements
- To develop synthesis skills, moving from restating to creative synthesis
- To promote learning through interaction and discussion of reading material in the classroom

The units are designed to enhance reading comprehension and abstract thinking. Tasks are organized by skill ladders, each containing questions and activities for students to complete independently. In addition, ladder rungs are organized to increase complexity in intellectual demand promoting critical and creative thinking.

William and Mary: The William and Mary Language Arts Program was developed to challenge students with complex literary texts. Through the program's specific teaching models, students strengthen competence in reading, writing and critical thinking. Students are challenged to think through complex concepts, issues and themes. Implementation is required in Grades 3 through 5 for highly able students and students with the potential or motivation to accept more challenging instruction. Teachers integrate William and Mary instruction with lessons from the MCPS instructional guides. Writing instruction follows the MCPS and 6 traits guidelines.