

Trumbull Reads and Writes!

In all of its elementary schools, the Trumbull Public Schools employs a Balanced Literacy approach, integrating Reading and Writing at each grade level K-5. Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, the Writing thread of each grade's Balanced Literacy curriculum has been based on the research-based Writing Workshop approach developed by Teachers College, Columbia University. Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, the Reading thread of each grade's Balanced Literacy curriculum is based on the Reading Workshop approach developed by Teachers College, Columbia University.

What is Reading Workshop?

Reading Workshop is a model of instruction that focuses on the work of the reader. Teachers model and directly teach the skills and strategies that proficient readers use. Students are taught that these strategies can be applied to many types of reading; therefore, students have the opportunity to self-select books and read a wide variety of text. Daily, students engage in a mini-lesson, independent reading, small-group instruction, and conferring. A child also has ample opportunities to discuss and write about his/her reading.



Are Reading Workshop and Writing Workshop similar?

Yes. The elements of workshop are similar for both reading and writing, including a focused mini-lesson, independent writing, small-group instruction, and conferring, all based on student choice and rich mentor texts. Thinking long-term, the process of writing tends to be more important than the product of writing.

What do those Workshop elements mean?

- **Mini-Lesson:** A whole-group lesson that includes demonstration of specific reading or writing strategies. The strategies taught can be used not only that day, but also utilized independently while reading and writing a variety of texts.
- **Independent Reading:** Students practice skills by reading self-selected “just right” texts or writing their own texts. This gives the students the opportunity for building stamina, reading/writing with focus and engagement, and practicing skills. During this time, students may read/write alone and/or with a partner and will jot down thoughts, ideas, and/or reflections based on the strategies taught.
- **Small-Group Instruction:** The teacher will pull small groups of students to work on targeted strategies. Strategy groups guide students’ reading/writing and teach skills needed to advance to the next reading/writing level, deepen comprehension, and practice reading/writing strategies.
- **Share:** Students have an opportunity to share and discuss their reading/writing with other students to deepen comprehension and apply what has been learned. Teachers will also share to emphasize skills and strategies that proficient readers/writers use.



Why the Workshop model?

- Teachers use authentic literature to teach a variety of strategies.
- Students work at individual levels to allow for differentiation.
- Teachers model the work of real readers/writers, so skills transfer to a variety of texts/genres.
- Students have a choice in what they read, and therefore are more engaged.
- Students practice listening and speaking in partnerships and groups.

How can I help my child develop as a reader at home?

- Talk about books as a family.
- Read with your child every day.
- Ask your child to share with you what he or she is reading. Ask questions such as *What was your favorite part; Why? Tell me one thing you learned about your topic that you are reading about.*
- Make reading a priority. Young readers can reread old favorites, read the pictures, and tell stories and nursery rhymes with the adult reader. Older readers can benefit from reading a series or many books by the same author. Adults can read the same book and discuss it with the child.
- Trust your child's teacher to match the reader with the right text for learning – each book is essential!

Reading Words to Know:

- Comprehension: Understanding what is read
- Fluency: The ability to read at an appropriate rate, with accuracy and proper expression
- Stamina: The ability to slowly increase the amount of time spent reading independently with focus and engagement
- Just-Right Book: A book at an independent level that a child can read with understanding for practice of skills being taught
- Instructional-Level Text: A text read with teacher guidance to assist the reader in advancing levels with direct teaching
- Reading Log: A place to record book titles, pages read, and time spent reading, and used to monitor and understand the child as a reader

Besides Reading Workshop and Writing Workshop, are there other elements of the Balanced Literacy curriculum K-5 in Trumbull?

Yes. In the K-5 grades, Interactive Read-Aloud is incorporated on a daily basis. In the K-2 grades, Shared Reading is also utilized daily, as well as Word Study based on the *Foundations* program. Additionally, in grade 3, students are taught cursive writing formation. Reading and writing are also incorporated throughout other K-5 content areas, including mathematics, science, and social studies.

*Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading,
to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs,
is good for him. ~ Maya Angelou*