

NEW LEAF PREP ACADEMY

Reading Program

Good Afternoon Families,

New Leaf Prep Academy is a school committed to the growth and development of best practices. Thorough data chats are held between studio teachers and the Curriculum Coordinator or Assistant Head of School each time testing scores are received to ensure we are properly implementing best practices based on data. We are continually evaluating reading scores and evaluating how our programming best meets the needs of each student enrolled at New Leaf Prep Academy. We are so excited to detail both additions as well as details of our comprehensive approach to reading! As always, our approach to teaching is interdisciplinary, and oftentimes, our reading curriculum is intertwined with writing as well.

Multi-Faceted Approach to Reading

New Leaf Prep Academy utilizes a multi-faceted and comprehensive approach to teaching reading through a systematic and sequential presentation of phonetic elements to reading for comprehension. Below are the most predominant components of our reading & writing curriculum. These components overlap, serving students across multiple cycle years, and are introduced and utilized based on your child's individual needs.

	Read Aloud for Comprehension	Pink, Blue, Green Series	Waseca Reading Program	Waseca Sentence Building	Waseca Continent Readers	Fountas & Pinnell Guided Reading	Novel Studies	Amplify ELA	
Primary	Light Green	Pink	Red						
		Blue	Orange						
Lower Elementary		Green	Yellow	Light Green	Light Green				
			Green						
			Aqua					Light Green	Light Green
			Blue						
Upper Elementary			Purple						
			Pink						
			Gold						
Secondary								Light Green	

Component Breakdown

Pink, Blue, Green Series Details

- **Pink Series** or short phonetic series
with a full emphasis on three-letter words that contain a short vowel. Students are given many opportunities to explore beginning and ending sounds as well. This series contains six main sections, with each section having the following sets of materials:
 - Beginning Decoding of three-letter, short vowel words:
 - Object word building (5 groups, one for each: a, e, i, o, u)
 - Picture word building (5 groups, one for each: a, e, i, o, u)
 - Three Part Card Matching (10 three-part card pictures for each vowel sound)
 - Beginning Encoding of three-letter, short vowel words:
 - Object/ label matching (15 objects – 3 for each vowel with corresponding labels)
 - Picture/Word Matching (8-10 pictures for each vowel sound for a total of 6 packets of 10 picture/label matching)
 - Puzzle Pictures (48 pictures with 12 pictures of each vowel sound)
 - Encoding of three letters, short vowel words:
 - Middle Vowel Sorting Activity (45 frames containing a picture and the beginning and ending sound corresponding to that sound)
 - Word Lists (42 word lists)
 - Middle Vowel Substitution (15 frames with each frame containing 2 words)
 - Reading three-letter, short vowel words for meaning:
 - Word/Not a Word (Sorting Work)
 - Phrases to Objects (6 sets of phrase cards with corresponding objects)
 - Reading secret three-letter, short vowel words (adjectives and verbs) for meaning:
 - Secret Words (32 words for verbs; 12 words for adjectives)
 - Reading phrases and sentences with three-letter, short vowel words for meaning:
 - Matching Phrases and sentences to pictures (4 sets with 6 sentences that match 6 pictures in each set)
 - Commands (8 command cards)
 - Books (5 storybooks with three-letter short vowel words and sight words)
- **Blue Series** or the longer phonetic series
with an emphasis on introducing blends with short vowel words of four or more letters followed by longer words that contain more syllables. The series contains 10 main sections, with each section having the following sets of materials:
 - Identification of blended sounds and associations to their symbols:
 - Blending Sorting Strips (Set of 9 strips with three blends in each strip. Includes 3 corresponding pictures for each blend sound) includes such blends as: br, cr, dr, fr, gr, etc.
 - Beginning Decoding of blends with short vowel words, more than three letters:
 - Object Word Building (~38 miniature objects in total)
 - Picture Word Building (~30 pictures to form 5 different groups)
 - Three Part Card Matching (~34 three-part card matching)
 - Object/Label Matching (labels to match 15 objects)
 - Beginning Encoding of blends with short vowel words, more than three letters:
 - Picture/Word Matching (~44 pictures)
 - Puzzle Pictures (~36 pictures that form vertical puzzles)
 - Middle Vowel Sorting Activity (36 frames with picture and beginning and ending sounds)
 - Word Lists (22 word lists)

- Encoding of blends with short vowel words, more than three letters:
 - Middle Vowel Substitution (16 frames with each frame containing two words)
- Reading short vowels, more than three letter words with blends for meaning:
 - Word/Not Word (25 words)
- Reading phrases and sentences with three-letter, short vowel words with blends for meaning:
 - Phrases to Objects (6 sets of phrases that go with corresponding objects)
- Reading Secret, short vowel, more than 3 letter words with blends (adjectives and verbs) for meaning:
 - Secret Words (~44 words for verbs; 24 words for adjectives)
- Reading Phrases and sentences with more than 3 letters, short vowel words with blends for meaning:
 - Matching Phrases and Sentences to Pictures (4 sets of 6 sentences that match 6 pictures for each set)
- Reading more than 3 -letter, short vowel words with blends in sentences for meaning:
 - Command Cards (8 commands)
 - Reading sentences with three letters short vowel words for meaning:
 - Books (6 books with more than three letter words, blends, and sight words)
- **Green Series** or the phonogram series

with an emphasis on diphthongs and digraphs. The materials in this series were developed not only using the traditional approach to phonemic awareness but also include activities that are based on current brain research.

The phonograms introduced in this series are:

- Long a: a_e, ai, ay
- Long i: i_e, ie
- Long o: o_e, oa, ow
- Long u: u_e, ue
- Long e: ea, ee
- sh, ch, th, wh
- ar, ir, or, ur
- oo (wood) and oo (spoon)

This series contains 8 main sections, with each section having the following sets of materials:

- Beginning Decoding of Phonograms:
 - Picture Word Building (84 pictures for phonogram word building)
- Identification of phonogram sounds and association to their symbols:
 - Sorting Strips (4 strips, with each strip containing 3 phonograms and 3 pictures for each phonogram)
- Beginning Encoding of phonograms:
 - Picture/Word Matching (84 pictures and corresponding labels)
 - Puzzle Pictures (80 pictures that make vertical puzzles)
 - Middle Vowel Sorting Activity (36 frames that contain a picture and the beginning and ending sounds)
- Encoding of phonograms:
 - Word Lists (2 types of word lists for a total of 54 word lists)
 - Short Vowel Words to Long Vowel (21 frames, with each frame containing two words)
- Reading phrases and sentences with phonograms for meaning:
- Reading secret words with phonograms (verbs and adjectives) for meaning:
 - Secret Words (Verbs contain 64 words; Adjectives contain 24 words)
- Reading sentences with phonograms for meaning:

- Matching Phrases and sentences to pictures (4 sets of 6 sentences with 6 pictures in each set – includes basic corresponding sight words)
- Commands (Set of 8 command cards)
- Reading phrases and sentences with phonograms for meaning:
 - Books (6 books with more than three letters, short vowel words, as well as sight words)

Waseca Reading Program Details

The Waseca Reading Program is structured to provide a systematic and sequential presentation of the phonetic elements used in the English language. The program uses a four-step approach: after you have introduced a phonetic element, the child uses the movable alphabet to spell, or encode, the word depicted on a picture card. Next, the child decodes the phonetic information by matching a picture card to its label. Then, the child further practices decoding by reading the phonogram booklet and doing writing practice. The picture cards use photographs to illustrate each word. Large print and color-coded highlighting emphasize the phonetic elements found in the word. The frame around the picture and the highlighting are color-coded for nine different phonetic groups. The groups cover the following:

- **Red** focuses on three-letter phonetic words and isolates short vowel sounds
- **Orange** focuses on blends: common beginning blends such as s, l, and r blends; ending blends; and words with both beginning and ending blends
- **Yellow** introduces consonant digraphs like sh, ch, th, and tch
- **Green** explores words ending with ng and nk
- **Aqua** focuses on the silent e rule as applied to each vowel
- **Blue** explores different phonograms used to make each long vowel sound
- **Purple** introduces various diphthongs, such as r-controlled vowels and oy, ow, and aw
- **Pink** focuses on combinations that produce silent letters like wh, mb, kn, and gh
- **Gold** explores less common phonetic rules, including spelling variations for the same sounds and hard and soft consonants

Waseca Reading Extensions: Sentence Building & Continent Readers

In Lower Elementary Waseca, our reading program is accompanied by follow-up works, including sentence building and continent biome readers. All components of Waseca follow the same color-coded systematic approach of phonetic elements. These extensions will be a great reinforcement of what students have learned through the use of the reading program, as described in greater detail in the section above. The sentences increase in sophistication, both in vocabulary and grammar, starting with simple sentences and progressively building to complex sentences that contain subordinate clauses and parenthetical phrases. Students will be required to complete the appropriate sentence builder at the conclusion of each colored reading program drawer by organizing the words into a sentence, recording the sentence with proper punctuation, spacing & capitalization, and including grammar symbols for each word. Sentences will be checked for neatness and accuracy and included in your child's language arts notebook.

Our continent readers allow emerging readers to read independently for content as they are studying a continent. These readers introduce phonetic elements with the same progression and color coding as our Waseca Reading Program. First, the child reads the unillustrated book so that she can focus on decoding. Next, the child reads the text on the corresponding text cards to match to the included picture cards. Numbers on the back of the cards serve as a control for error. Finally, the child can use the masters to demonstrate confidence and comprehension by illustrating a copy of the story to take home, add to their portfolio, or display within the studio.

Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading Groups

The Fountas & Pinnell Guided Reading program is executed in small-group instructional groups, in which each reader processes new, challenging texts with hundreds of original titles span text levels A through Z. Children read a teacher-selected text in a small group while the teacher provides explicit teaching and support for reading increasingly challenging texts. These texts are at the children's instructional reading level, and the children review key words and vocabulary, learn specific decoding skills, read the entire text to practice fluency, and answer comprehension questions.

By bringing together a small group of children who are at a similar point in their reading development and guiding them to process a text that is leveled on a gradient of difficulty, we are able to provide an incremental amount of challenge at each reader's edge of ability to process text. Guided reading teaching is responsive to individual student strengths and needs.

Please always remember your child is NOT a level, and a level does not mean your child is more or less capable as a learner... oftentimes one can hear "My child is reading at a Level J and they are only in kindergarten!" While this is spectacular, reading levels are for teacher planning, not a definitive indicator. Fountas and Pinnell created levels for teachers to categorize reading skills to aid in planning. For example, level A and B books are for students to learn voice-to-text matching with repetitive phrasing. At these levels, students are not expected to decode words — they are learning concepts of print such as but not limited to: Where is the front of the book, the back of the book? Where is the title? What does an author do? What does an illustrator do? How do you open the book and where do you begin reading? What does punctuation tell us to do? Young readers are learning to read left to right from the front of the book to the end.

Another example, levels C and D books begin to have sentences continue on a second line. This ensures students can master the left-to-right sweep required for multi-sentence text. These types of books also help a child practice fluency—reading through until punctuation. Students begin sounding out words such as "/c/ /a/ /t/ "cat!" One last example are levels E and F which introduce multiple characters, multiple settings, a simple problem-solution story, and dialogue. And the list continues!

More information will be made available after school at our first parent literacy workshop on April 11, Beverly Cleary's birthday, and the national Drop Everything And Read (D.E.A.R.) day! Please send your questions to Mrs. Tanya Olson, our reading interventionist, at tanya.olson@newleafprepacademy.org.

Novel Studies

Novel studies are similar to Fountas and Pinnell reading groups; however, they place a greater emphasis on reading for deeper understanding, independence, and responsibility. Students are assigned novel study books based on their grade level or targeted reading level and placed into groups of four to six students. Students engage in approximately three novel studies per year, reading three different texts. Novel studies are student-led but guided by the teacher, who may help students study their text by posing questions or helping them to explore themes and concepts deeper as related to interdisciplinary lessons across other subjects or across ELA curricula, such as types of writing or language usage. Activities in novel studies include dissecting the overall theme of the text, looking up and recording definitions of unknown vocabulary, and discussing the plot, characters, etc. Novel studies are included as part of the Amplify ELA curriculum for secondary students.

Amplify ELA

Amplify ELA is a blended English language arts curriculum designed specifically to support students in grades 7 and 8 and prepare them for high school and beyond. With Amplify ELA, students learn to tackle any complex text and make observations, grapple with interesting ideas, and find relevance for themselves.

Drawing on extensive research into learning, cognition, and literacy, Amplify ELA is designed specifically for middle school. In particular, the program has a strong research base behind its approach to differentiation and how it challenges all students to work critically and successfully with complex text.

Embedded assessments and reports provide insight into each student's progress without interrupting daily instruction. With data collected at every learning moment, teachers can respond to student needs faster than ever before.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum

Our interdisciplinary curriculum helps to support reading growth, not only through our reading program but through lessons across all subjects. Beyond our Reading Program, Language Usage and Writing are categories that fall into the ELA curriculum, which help to support reading development. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on reading within all subject areas through word problems, task cards, resource books, research, free reading, spelling lists, scientific articles, and many more.

Reading Assessment & Targets

Beginning in kindergarten, NLPA students will be assessed on upper and lowercase letter recognition, matching letters to sounds, and what is called "Concepts of Print," such as but not limited to demonstrating an understanding of first word, last word, purpose of punctuation, front/back of the book, and other book skills as mentioned above.

Students in first through third grade, will be assessed on their reading accuracy, comprehension and fluency using a leveled reader from the Fountas and Pinnell benchmark reading assessment. Each level has specific skills such as decoding words with short vowels, decoding words with blends (such as bl, br, gr, -mp, etc.), digraphs (two letters that make one sound such as /th/, /ch/, etc.). Students will be assessed in the fall, winter and spring. This will ensure that your children continue to grow as readers and writers and teachers group similar students together for guided reading groups. These levels will be reported to you during conferences. A student is required to reach 95-100% accuracy and a satisfactory comprehension score to determine their reading level and next steps.

Primary students are assessed through observation and past record keeping of progress. Using data from this benchmark assessment, we determine what type of reading support will be provided to your child.

The instructional level expectations for reading below are intended to provide general guidelines for grade-level goals and may be adjusted based on the input of our professional teaching team. While there is so much more that goes into accessing reading, the chart below will provide a basis of information on how we are approaching your child's reading needs. This assessment in no way defines or limits your child; rather, it gives us a basis to ensure we are providing them with proper support. We very intentionally will not begin students on guided reading groups until they have completed the primary cycle or the Green Waseca drawer, whichever comes first.

While all students move at their own pace, it is important to understand that reading is a foundational skill required for academic success in all other areas. For this reason, additional support will be utilized to help readers ensure they have the fundamental reading skills needed to succeed across all areas. Please note that we utilize formal observations to determine interventions at the primary level, not the Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessment. Below are the target reading levels for each grade we serve.

	August-September	November-December	February-March	May-June
Grade K		C+	D+	E+
		B	C	D/E
		A	B	C
				Below C
Grade 1	E+	G+	I+	K+
	D/E	F	H	J/K
	C	E	G	I
	Below C	Below E	Below G	Below I
Grade 2	K+	L+	M+	N+
	J/K	K	L	M/N
	I	J	K	L
	Below I	Below J	Below K	Below L
Grade 3	N+	O+	P+	Q+
	M/N	N	O	P/Q
	L	M	N	O
	Below L	Below M	Below N	Below O
Grade 4	Q+	R+	S+	T+
	P/Q	Q	R	S/T
	O	P	Q	R
	Below O	Below P	Below Q	Below R
Grade 5	T+	U+	V+	W+
	S/T	T	U	V/W
	R	S	T	U
	Below R	Below S	Below T	Below U

	August-September	November-December	February-March	May-June
Grade 6	W+	X+	Y+	Z
	V/W	W	X	Y
	U	V	W	X
	Below U	Below V	Below W	Below X
Grade 7	Z	Z	Z+	Z+
	Y	Y	Z	Z
	X	X	Y	Y
	Below X	Below X	Below Y	Below Y
Grade 8	Z+	Z+	Z+	Z+
	Z	Z	Z	Z
	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Below Y	Below Y	Below Y	Below Y

Exceeds Expectations
Meets Expectations
Approaching Expectations
Does Not Meet Expectations

In 1st grade and above:

- **Exceeds or Meets Expectations:** Students who are meeting or exceeding expectations work in guided reading groups three times per week.
- **Approaching Expectations:** Students who are approaching expectations work in guided reading groups daily with weekly check-ins from our reading interventionist.
- **Not Meeting Expectations:** Students who do not meet expectations work in guided reading groups daily, three of these reading groups being more extensive and led by our reading interventionist.

Reading Interventions

We are excited to introduce our newest team member, Mrs. Tanya Olson! Mrs. Olson has 21 years of experience working in special education and literacy. She began her career in the birth-5 Program in Montgomery County, Maryland. While there, she initiated two play and literacy parent support groups, one for newly emigrated families and one for Spanish-speaking families. She then worked on a literacy program for the Preschool Education Program which includes children aged 3-6 with unique learning profiles and receptive/expressive communication needs. From there, she was asked to join the Gifted and Talented/Learning Disabled Program in Rockville, MD, one of five such programs in the nation. Her Twice Exceptional students were identified with needs in reading, writing, and social-emotional development; in 2017, she moved back to her hometown here in Wisconsin to raise her four children with Midwest values and more outdoor sports. She worked as a cross-categorical special education teacher in a 4K program and as a reading specialist in Neenah before joining us here. Mrs. Olson has her MA in special education, M.Ed in early childhood education (pre-K-6th), master's certificate in gifted education, master's certificate in reading intervention and reading specialist, WI license 316/317.

Mrs. Olson is excited to partner with families and teachers to ensure students are meeting reading targets and staying on pace as developmentally appropriate based on their grade level. Please feel free to contact her with your questions for the April 11th Meet and Greet! Her email is tanya.olson@newprepacademy.org.

As an incredibly diverse team at a small school, we work incredibly close to ensure we are meeting the needs of every student who enters our doors through an individualized approach based on teacher observation, parent input, and implementation of best practices. We are always here to support your child's growth and development from the administrative and classroom levels. If you have child-specific questions or would like to understand how we individualize for your child specifically, please don't hesitate to set up a time with your child's teacher. We would be honored to discuss the individualized approach utilized to best support your child's specific academic and social-emotional needs, including reading targets and reading interventions. Data chats may also be set up with Mrs. Willmann to take a closer look at your child's testing scores and other data points once Maps growth assessments are complete and data is received in May.

Yours in Education,



Mrs. Paige Christoff
Head of School
New Leaf Prep Academy