

*In Stillwater, our goal is to ensure our students experience a well-rounded literacy experience that develops all of the skills needed to become strong readers, writers, and thinkers.*



## Child-friendly phonics

Grades PreK-1

Letterland is a unique, phonics-based approach to teaching reading, writing, and spelling for early readers. Letterland uses a narrative, character-based approach to teaching letters, letter sounds, and the foundational skills necessary to read and write. Letterland characters transform plain black letter shapes into child-friendly pictograms who live in an imaginary place called Letterland. These pictograms and stories help support students in the learning of abstract concepts of plain letters. While your children are learning these skills, they will acquire the character name and story first, the character sound and action next, and finally the letter name and letter sound absent of the character's picture support. You may hear your students talk about characters in Letterland, what these characters look like, and what they are called when they travel to the land of the children (actual letter names). This process allows children first to acquire understanding of letter concepts and then to transfer the learning to real-world learning.

### **Letterland is . . .**

**Story-Based:** The use of story is highly engaging to students, leading to long-term retention of concepts.

**Multisensory:** By activating kinesthetic and auditory learning channels, Letterland provides multiple opportunities for students to acquire/learn these important, early-reading skills.

**Orton-Gillingham-Based:** The Orton-Gillingham method is a proven approach to teaching early-reading skills to students with learning differences.

### **To support Letterland learning at home, ask your child to**

Tell you about the Letterland characters' names, stories, and sounds.

Show you the Letterland character's actions and sounds.

Sing to you the Letterland character's sound song and handwriting song (including the motion).

Tell you the Letterlanders' name "in the land of the children." Remember, these are the regular letter names and will take time to learn alongside the letter sounds.

Rhyme words and to tell you how to hear the sounds in words.

As the year unfolds, ask how the characters work together to make words or special sounds, and to show you how they can move sounds around in words to make new words.

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# UNITS OF STUDY *for* Teaching Reading

A WORKSHOP CURRICULUM, GRADES K-5

LUCY CALKINS, SERIES EDITOR

Grades K-5

The Reading and Writing Project's approach to literacy instruction recognizes that "one size fits all" does not match the realities of the classrooms and schools in which they work. When you walk into a workshop classroom at any given moment, you'll see instruction that is designed to:

Help teachers address each child's individual learning,

Explicitly teach strategies students will use not only the day they are taught, but whenever they need them,

Support small-group work and conferring with multiple opportunities for personalizing instruction,

Tap into the power of a learning community as a way to bring all learners along,

Build choice and assessment-based learning into the very design of the curriculum,

Help students work with engagement so that teachers are able to coach individuals and lead small groups.

The routines and structures of reading and writing workshop are kept simple and predictable so that the teacher can focus on the complex work of teaching in a responsive manner to accelerate achievement for all learners.

## **To support comprehension and vocabulary development at home**

Read to your children as often as you are able, and when they have developed the necessary skills, have them read a wide variety of books that interest them.

Talk about the world around them at every opportunity to help build object and concept vocabulary.

Ask your child to tell you about what they are reading. Model a curiosity about reading and stories.

Use "Tell me more" or "What made you think that?" when discussing their reading. You can also affirm and elaborate by repeating what they say and adding details to the idea.