

A Note on Reading

To read, children must be able to hear distinct sounds, turn symbols (letters) into sounds, sounds into words, and words into meaning. Reading success is built upon a foundation of specific skills. These skills are: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Each of these skills must be taught to guide children toward literacy. Unlike speech, humans do not learn to read simply by being immersed in human culture; it requires direct instruction. The human brain did not evolve to help humans read; it is a relatively new human endeavor. Multiple parts of the brain and multiple processes are used when reading. Research has helped educators learn about the general process of reading in the brain and best practices for teaching reading. The complexity of both the task and the brain, however, means each child will learn to read a bit differently. Each of the five skills listed above are taught in our Montessori classrooms as children emerge into reading and then progress onto increasingly complex texts. Many of you got a taste of these lessons at our Curriculum Night last Monday.

As a follow up to our Language Curriculum night, we will have Wendy Lynde, our Learning Specialist, share how she works with students to support their classroom and life learning, specifically in the area of literacy. Through observation and assessment, teachers determine when a child needs more direct instruction in one skill than another. There are many ways we provide additional support to children in our classrooms. To learn more about how we help children who need support with one or more of these foundational skills, please join us for a conversation with Wendy.

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