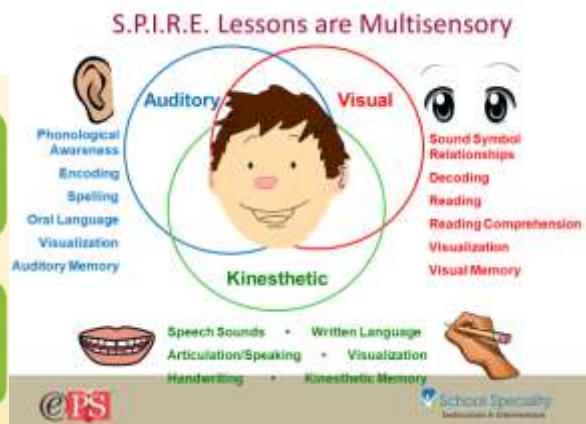


Dear Parent,

We are pleased that your child is participating in the S.P.I.R.E.® (Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence) reading program at their school. S.P.I.R.E. is designed to help your child experience reading success through a systematic and structured curriculum. The program follows the Structured Literacy Approach, and incorporates phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency instruction that leads to permanent reading gains.

Through a consistent 10-step lesson, S.P.I.R.E. is designed to increase students' reading skills through...

- explicit, teacher-led instruction
- a systematic, sequential, and consistent structure that supports learning and retention
- multisensory learning: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic teaching techniques are woven throughout the 10-Steps to keep students actively engaged so they can learn and retain information
- teaching to mastery: data-driven instruction with continual practice and reinforcement



The S.P.I.R.E program is designed to include seamless ongoing formative and summative assessments that determine student progress without the parent struggle/student stress of "tests," which tend to reflect word/sound knowledge in isolation rather than applying this knowledge as they are reading passages.

Normally, as students begin to progress in S.P.I.R.E. and become more proficient on their letter/sound knowledge, their reading rate may slow down while their accuracy scores will increase. This is occurring because the students are beginning to understand how to decode the complex phonetic patterns that make up the English language! They are learning to decode words rather than rush through text using the "glance and guess" strategy. Fluency rates will improve as students continue to practice their skills

and eventually reach automaticity as they read words, sentences, and passages using the concepts they have learned and mastered. Please be patient as your students experience this “slowing down” phenomenon, because accuracy and understanding what is read is the first step to literacy! Fluency increases after accuracy and decoding skills are mastered.

As your child progresses through the program, we encourage you to support their reading with activities at home. This [SPIRE Parent as Partners video](#) shares information on the 10-step lesson and a range of tips and advice to support your child in keeping focused, interested, and balanced with SPIRE instruction while learning at home.

Additional at-home activities:

- read aloud to them - Reading aloud is a great activity to help children learn to read fluently and with inflection.
Read to your child every single day. Hearing someone else read has the amazing possibility of sparking creativity and interest and offers a chance to work on comprehension without the battle of decoding the text. A struggling reader may only be able to read short books which offer little motivation to continue to work on reading. When you read aloud or have a program such as an iPad app that reads books aloud, your child has the opportunity to focus on the meaning of the words and content. They develop background knowledge and it allows them to use their imagination. Reading books to your child (or listening to audio books) allows him or her to get into books that his peers are reading and holds interest because they are age appropriate. Reading to your child aloud gives an added bonus by providing explanations and further detail when needed. And, don't forget to take this time to snuggle up for reading time in a comfy chair or bed. Make this part of your child's daily routine. This special time together can help create positive feelings about reading or talking about books together.
- engage in conversation and ask questions
Ask questions about what your child is reading. What has happened so far? What do you think will happen next? Reading involves thinking about characters, events, and ideas. And having lively conversations about books can help your child work on these important skills.
- play word games
Play reading and other games, too. Encourage your child do as much of the reading as possible. For example, in Monopoly, have your child read all the cards. That means her cards and your cards. Give yourself permission to be a bit ridiculous. Pretend you can't read, that you left your glasses somewhere, or that you are too tired. Follow through with whatever it takes to increase reading time even a little bit more.
 - Play simple rhyming games that boost sound-recognition skills, for example, make up sentences where every word begins with the same letter or phoneme.
 - The simple games of Scrabble, Memory, or Tic-Tac-Toe work well.
 - Give points for pointing out letters of the alphabet, vowels, and current key word concepts whenever possible.
- provide books that they can read independently. Your child's teacher can recommend appropriate books at their level.
Set a goal to read every day. For example, you might suggest that your child read a certain number of decodable pages a week the teachers assigns, or you might set a goal of reading an interesting book with your child. Make a countdown and cross out each book or chapter, respectively, until you reach your goal.

- Teach them poetry or nursery rhymes, which help build up a word bank for kids, as well as provide a steady stream of memorable rhymes.

As your child reads to you, be sure to have them track the words on the page from left to right with their finger. Also, instead of “guessing,” when they come to an unfamiliar word, encourage them to sound the letters and patterns out in the word out, (also from left to right.). Often, just identifying the vowel sound in the word is all the help they need to figure out the word.

We are looking forward to integrating S.P.I.R.E. into our curriculum and are excited to witness the benefits that it brings to our students. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to one of us.

To learn more about S.P.I.R.E. visit epsbooks.com/SPIRE.

Sincerely,

The School Specialty Curriculum Team