



# Connell's Corner

## Reading in 5B

This month I thought I would spend some time explaining the components of our new LA program. The first components of our new LA program in 5B is scheduled and purposeful reading time on Days 1 & 2.

On these days students have approximately an hour of reading time, during which they are required to do a book report on one of the books they have chosen from the library.

Also on our reading days I spend time with the four Guided Reading groups that I have put together. Working with two groups on each of these days, this small-group reading instruction is designed to provide differentiated teaching that supports students in developing reading proficiency

Lastly on Days 1 & 2, I also read to students for 15 minutes. Called a Read Aloud, this builds many important foundational skills, introduces vocabulary, provides a model of fluent, expressive reading, and helps children recognize what reading for pleasure is all about.

## Writing in 5B

The last component in our new LA program in 5B is scheduled and purposeful writing time on Days 4 & 5.

This time includes direct lessons on grammar, and writing sentences, paragraphs, poetry and short stories. It also includes working individual and in groups on assignments, including journal writing, through Mahara. Mahara is our new electronic portfolio program that we are piloting for the school division. It allows us to upload assignments, and share them with myself, and group members for feedback. If you have internet at home, or would like to come to the school to check it out, Mahara is web-based (<https://lc.myghsd.ca/login/index.php>) so your child can share what they are working on with you at any time.

## Word Work in 5B

The second component of our new LA program in 5B is scheduled and purposeful word work on Day 3.

Word work includes direct teaching and group work learning phonics - a method for teaching reading and writing the English language by developing students' phonemic awareness - the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate phonemes - in order to teach the connections between these sounds and the spelling patterns (graphemes) that represent them.

Word work also includes building vocabulary Building vocabulary is among the most critical pieces of language development. Children who acquire a substantial vocabulary are often able to think more deeply, express themselves better, and learn new things more quickly. They are also very likely to be successful not only learning to read, but also in reading at or above grade level throughout their school years. Research shows that children who reach school age with smaller vocabularies, less depth in prior knowledge and background experiences, and fewer experiences with hearing stories and exploring with print are more likely to have significant problems in learning to read. In 5B students work at their ability level to develop vocabulary, which is reinforced through reading at a level that allows them use the practice the vocabulary in context, and through their writing which allows them to use their vocabulary in practice.

Please note that my teacher page is up and running on our school website  
<http://www.greentree-school.com/>.