WELCOME PARENTS!

We are excited to help you learn more about how to raise your child’s reading achievement! Please sign in, take a snack, and make yourself comfortable!
The SFA Charter School implements a research-based reading and language arts approach that exposes kindergarten through fifth grade children to a wide range of literature and print materials, and nurtures children’s reading in an environment which promotes authentic opportunities for growth as readers.

Our workshop framework must be responsive to the needs of the students. We believe that reading workshop is the best practice approach we should be using in all Texas classrooms, not just within SFA Charter.
Word Study: Students learn about word construction and word meaning to help support their ability to read and understand texts.

Read Aloud: Comprehension of texts is fostered through teachers modeling reading and students engaging in meaningful conversations with one another.

Mini-Lessons: Each day, students are provided a mini-lesson that explains and promotes the use of a helpful reading strategy.

Independent Reading: Perhaps the most beneficial thing a reader can do is simply spend time reading texts that are at his or her independent, or “just right” level. During this time, teachers are moving about and conferring with students individually to assess learning and extend thinking.

Small groups: Instruction in small groups is often conducted in addition to the aforementioned components according to assessed needs.
We believe that all students have the ability to learn and to read. To help guide them in becoming independent readers, we must be sure they are in appropriate texts where they are experiencing success.

Therefore, the texts from which students choose for independent reading during the reading workshop, and often to take home, are leveled according to text difficulties.

Please see the bands of text difficulties to understand more about how books are leveled in classrooms.
We perform assessments to determine students’ independent reading levels and match these students to texts to be handled with independence, thus allowing students to grow ideas, theories, envisionments, predictions, etc. about the text and characters within a text.

In addition, students are conferred with daily where listening to the reading and engaging in deep conversations about the texts guides instruction.
I was walking across the grass towards the house and was about twenty yards away when I saw a large green snake go straight up the steps of Fuller’s house and in through the open front door. The yellowy-green and its great size made me certain it was a green mamba, almost as deadly as the black, and for a few seconds I was so startled and dumbfounded and horrified that I froze to the spot. Then I pulled myself together and ran to the back of the house, ‘Mr. Fuller! Mr. Fuller!’
I was walking across the grass towards the house and was about twenty yards away when I saw a large green snake go straight up the steps of Fuller’s house and in through the open front door. The yellowy-green skin and its great size made me certain it was a green mamba, a creature almost as deadly as the black mamba, and for a few seconds I was so startled and dumbfounded and horrified that I froze to the spot. Then I pulled myself together and ran round to the back of the house shouting, ‘Mr. Fuller! Mr. Fuller!’
I was walking across the grass towards the house and was about twenty yards away when I saw a large green snake go straight up the steps of Fuller’s house and in through the open front door. The yellowy-green skin and its great size made me certain it was a green mamba, a creature almost as deadly as the black mamba, and for a few seconds I was so startled and dumbfounded and horrified that I froze to the spot. Then I pulled myself together and ran round to the back of the house shouting, ‘Mr. Fuller! Mr. Fuller!’
We would be glad to share the research behind our approach to reading workshop.

What are the benefits of leveled texts?

- Students are able to learn and practice strategies that great readers use to gain deep understanding about texts.
- Students see growth in themselves as readers over time.
- More time is spent experiencing successful reading which in turn becomes a motivating factor for readers.

Students are not restricted to reading only leveled texts as they have ample opportunity throughout the day to choose non-leveled books available throughout classrooms.
As you learn more about the books our readers are taking home and about the strategies students are using to become proficient readers, you may decide to locate books outside of school that are at his or her independent reading level or determine the level of some books you may already have at home. The following links can assist you in determining levels of books:

- [http://home.comcast.net/~ngiansante/](http://home.comcast.net/~ngiansante/)  
  - Search by grade level or by titles or authors of books.

- [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com)  
  - Search for book titles in the “quick search” bar.
In order to help foster a sense of richly literate lives, we are expecting students to take books home with them each day and spend time reading outside the classroom.

**Reading Logs:**
- The purpose of reading logs is to have visible, tangible evidence of our reading lives. Reading logs allow children and teachers to analyze reading lives and monitor progress.
- Reading Logs will vary between grade levels.
HELPING YOUR CHILD SUCCEED AS A READER

- Make reading with your child and to your child a priority and possibly a scheduled part of your evening.
- Ask questions about the child’s book: “What is this story about? What are you thinking? Tell me more. Who are the characters? What do you know about them? How do you know that?…”
- Ask also about what the child is working or what has helped him or her as a reader. In upper grade levels, you might listen for responses such as, “making a mental movie”, “retelling the most important parts”, “rereading”…
- Children in lower grade levels may be prompted by asking questions about making predictions, using all the sounds in a word, making connections, or asking, “Did that make sense?”
- Your child’s classroom newsletter may provide you with a reading focus for the week.
HELPING YOUR CHILD SUCCEED AS A READER

- Use the bands of text difficulties to help guide conversations you have with your child about his or her books if the books are leveled.

- Encourage your child to choose interesting books from the book store or library, regardless of the level, and support the reading or read to your child if necessary.

- Model a love for reading in your own life and share the interesting things that are happening in your book, magazine, or newspaper and how this reading has affected you.
IN CLOSING

- Remember that there are many pieces to our reading workshop that can be observed through our observation booths.
- We know that because you are great parents and a significant part of our team, you will support your children in becoming readers who wear a love for reading on their sleeves. With your support, we know our students will soar!
