

Guided Reading, Guided Writing and Word Study are key instructional components of the *Balanced Literacy* approach.

Students will experience a balance of direct and indirect instruction as they move from support to independence in word study, reading and writing.

Steps of the *Guided Reading* program:

- Reading Aloud_teacher reads a selection aloud to a small group of students. This provides a model of how fluent reading sounds. It also builds a community of readers and helps students develop active listening skills.
- Shared Reading_teacher and students read a text together. This allows the teacher to model reading strategies and it provides students with essential demonstrations of how reading works and what readers do to construct meaning.
- Guided Reading_teacher introduces a selection at the student's instructional level. This gives the students the opportunity to practice their reading skills, increases comprehension and encourages independent reading.
- Independent Reading_this allows students to choose texts that interest them. It develops fluency by reading just-right books and fosters self-confidence by reading familiar and new text.

Steps of the *Guided Writing* program:

- Modeled/Shared Writing_teacher and students collaborate the write the text; teacher does the writing. This models the connection among and between sounds, letters, and words.
- Interactive Writing_teacher and students compose together using a shared pen technique where students do some of the writing. This helps students learn how to plan and construct texts and it increases spelling knowledge.
- Independent Writing_students write independently. This supports reading development and develops active independence.

Word Study:

In order to become fully literate, students must have the ability to accurately recognize words. They also have to adequately use written words to convey meaning. Because word study is based on phonics spelling and vocabulary, it's a way for students to manipulate and fully examine words.

In *Word Study* students use meaningful games and activities to discover:

1. Letters and the sounds they make
2. How to pick out root words, and how suffixes and prefixes can change the meaning

3. Spelling involves finding patterns
4. How to get clues to word meaning and pronunciation by examining the parts of a word.

In *Word Study* teachers use a variety of activities to improve spelling, word recognition and vocabulary: word searches, pattern sorting and proofreading

Students who struggle will be provided with timely, focused intervention to ensure that all students have the opportunity to be successful.

Reading programs will use leveled books, allowing students to master increasingly difficult text while providing parents with an understanding of their child's development in relation to grade level outcomes.

Teachers will receive high quality professional development training in literacy acquisition to help them provide our students with high quality learning experiences.

The Department is also supporting schools by purchasing and developing resources to support the initiative. We have purchased English language leveled books for all schools and we are currently working with a local publisher to produce an extensive series of leveled books in Inuktitut.

The *Balanced Literacy* initiative will begin with kindergarten to grade four in the 2014-2015 school year and move into grades five to eight and nine to twelve in successive years.