

Curriculum Fair Sessions Descriptions

Scientific Method and Science Fair K-5:

How does the scientific method relate to the science fair? We will discuss different processes scientists use to investigate. We will also study the requirements for Science Fair and how parents can help support their children at home.

Hands-on Science 3-5:

What does hands-on science investigations have to do with TAKS performance? We will demonstrate how a science passage from the state assessment can be demonstrated through hands-on experiments. We will study how using hands-on investigations helps the concepts being assessed on TAKS to stick and how parents can support their children with reflection questions and simple experiments at home.

Hands-on Science K-2:

What does hands-on science investigations have to do with student performance? We will demonstrate how hands-on experiments can increase students' understanding of simple science concepts and make them stick. We will also study how parents can support their children with questions that lead to the application of science concepts and simple experiments at home.

Developing Number Concepts K-1:

How is Developing Number Concepts different from traditional math instruction? We will study how our current instructional practices in mathematics are the basis for truly understanding numbers and how they relate. We will explain what a "child's working number" means and how parents can support their child's number concept development at home with some simple activities.

Developing Number Concepts 2nd:

What does it mean to be fluent with sums of 10? We will discuss the importance of students quickly knowing their sums of 10, and how that knowledge will help them when working with numbers greater than 10. We will explain the importance of understanding the thinking students do while solving a math problem and how that thinking will help us know how to take it to the "next level". Parents will leave with ideas for how they can support number fluency at home.

Math Talk K-2:

What is "math talk?" We will explain the key elements of "math talk" and how this is used in our daily instruction, conferencing, and assessments. Parents will learn ways to question their children and probe for understanding that can lead to powerful discussions of math concepts.

Why Do We Need to Use Math Manipulatives? K-2:

Is playing with blocks and cubes really valuable to a child's math development? We will study how math manipulatives support number concepts and make them stick. We will study examples of how manipulatives can increase a child's understanding of abstract ideas and helps them visualize key mathematical concepts. Parents will leave with new ideas of how to create simple manipulatives to use at home to support their child's mathematical development.

Think Math 3-5:

How does using math manipulatives help to understand higher level math concepts? We will study new instructional practices that go from hands-on manipulatives to pictures, to abstract equation form. We will explain the theory behind our instruction and how it helps solidify mathematical concepts with students and better prepare them for the future. Parents will leave with new ideas of how to create simple manipulatives to use at home to support their child's mathematical development.

Understanding Mathematical Processes Vs. Memorization 3-5:

Is there only one way to get the right answer? What's the difference in math language versus "real world" language? We will study how students can verbalize their process and choose from more than one way to get the answer to help have a deeper understanding of math concepts. Parents will learn ways to help their students use mental math to support students' ability to find the answer in a variety of ways and other at-home activities that value the process rather than just getting the correct answer.

Writer's Workshop K-2:

Can young children really create powerful stories and actually write them down? We will study how our instructional practices support emergent writers and helps develop key strategies that writers use to generate ideas to live a writerly life. Parents will learn elements of writing conferences that help young writers develop these strategies and supports their continued growth as a writer.

Writer's Workshop 3-5:

How do we notice the brilliance in student writing? We will study how our instructional practices give our writers the support they need to take risks with words and story structure. We will explain how helping students draw pictures in their readers' minds and find the heart of the story can provide students with powerful strategies that improve their writing. Parents will leave with suggestions for how they can confer with growing writers to help them practice these strategies and be willing to take risks as writers.

Reading is Thinking K-2:

Is reading really active? We will study instructional practices that provide opportunities for learners to engage in text and think as they read. We will explain how Interactive Read Aloud, Guided Reading, and Shared Reading provide structures within the school day for students share their thinking as they read. Parents will learn how Shared Reading at home looks and strategies for book discussions that can help their young children to grow as readers.

Reading is Thinking 3-5:

Why do some students think reading is boring? We will study instructional practices that provide opportunities for learners to engage in text and think as they read. We will explain how Interactive Read Aloud, Guided Reading, Reading Partnerships, Book Clubs and Shared Reading provide structures within the school day for students share their thinking as they read. Parents will learn how Shared Reading at home looks for older children and strategies for book discussions that can help their children grow as readers.

Word Study/Buddy Study K-3:

How is word study different from traditional spelling instruction? We will study instructional practices that have students engaged in the study of patterns and strategies of how words work. We will also explain the word study format of assessment; Buddy Study. Parents will leave with ideas of how to support the study of words at home with some hands-on activities that make these concepts stick and are meaningful because they are linked to student writing.

Conventions of Writing 3-5:

Is grammar and spelling important to the development of a writer? We will study instructional practices that incorporate grammar and word study into the writing workshop. We will examine activities used in classrooms to develop a stronger control of the English language. Parents will leave with tools to support their children as they revise and edit their writing at home.

How to Read Nonfiction 3-5:

Do we use the same strategies as a reader when we read nonfiction as we do when we read fiction? We will study instructional practices that support reading nonfiction text. We will look at powerful materials at students' fingertips that encourage nonfiction reading and supports their comprehension of key concepts while reading nonfiction. Parents will learn the importance of exposing students to a variety of genre, especially nonfiction, to better prepare their children for the future.

Just Right Books & High Interest Books K-5:

What is a "just right book" and how do we help kids find them? We will study instructional practices that support students choosing a just right book (meets their interests and needs). We will examine new "hybrid genre" books that incorporate characteristics of both fiction and nonfiction. We will look at the latest, most popular forms of text and study how to find a book to place in the most reluctant of readers' hands. Parents will leave with a better understanding of how to find a just right book for their child and how to support reading at home through high interest books.

Taking Your Young Reader Out and Not Up (K-2):

Are reading levels really important to the development of young readers? We will examine the use of reading levels that guide instructional decisions in the classroom. We will help understand reading levels as a guide but not just a number. We will discuss ways teachers are growing readers who go deeper in their understanding rather than climb a reading ladder. Parents will learn tools to help them question their young readers at home that support higher level thinking rather than literal understanding of text.

Taking Your Young Reader Out and Not Up (3-5):

Are reading levels really important to the development of growing readers? We will examine the use of

reading levels that guide instructional decisions in the classroom. We will help understand reading levels as a guide but not just a number. We will discuss ways teachers are growing readers who go deeper in their understanding rather than climb a reading ladder. Parents will learn tools to help them question their young readers at home that support higher level thinking rather than literal understanding of text.

Read-Tac-Toe : Session A only

We will study CCISD's Read-Tac-Toe reading certificate program that encourages students to read a variety of genres. This is Ward's primary reading program this year. Students can earn their way to our end of the year surprise celebration by completing projects to make a black-out on their Read-Tac-Toe grid. Parents will receive ideas for completing projects, definitions for each genre and the grade level requirements for the program.

How to Hook Boys with Reading K-5: Session B only

What do boys really like to read? In an elementary school where most instruction is offered by females, how do we support the reading interests of males in our classrooms? We will delve into the subjects that motivate boys to read and discuss ways parents can support their growing boy readers at home. We will look at specific genres and series that hook boys and help them grow the internal motivation to read more and more.

On-line Resources K-5: Session C only

What on-line resources are beneficial to school age children? We will share websites and resources that students and parents can access from home that support all areas of study. Parents will leave with a list of on-line resources that will help their children practice basic skills and research topics for school projects and assignments.