



KATHERINE DELMAR BURKE SCHOOL

Literature Appreciation

The Power and Pleasure of Print

INTRODUCTION

A Continuum of Experiences
Lower School Library Program

Print experiences are all-important for members of an increasingly complex, information-rich society. Literature, for example, contributes to moral, aesthetic, and intellectual development. Literature also adds a dimension of connection and pleasure to everyday life. The Lower School Library Program of Katherine Delmar Burke School takes seriously its responsibility to prepare students to fully draw on print for recreation, research, and reflection.

The term “literature appreciation” refers to the set of abilities and understandings needed to engage with, interpret, and enjoy print materials, both information sources and literature. The learning experiences needed to develop “literature appreciation” are intertwined but do fall into 3 categories: 1) concepts about reading 2) concepts about literature 3) concepts about how to read and respond to text.

There are many ways to define “literature appreciation.” The working definition above and the model with accompanying benchmarks below represent a synthesis particularly tailored to the overall philosophy of the Burke’s Lower School. It should be noted that the Burke’s model and its benchmarks draw on ideas from many sources, most importantly the California State Framework on Language Arts, especially the sections devoted to comprehension. Emphasis is on providing students with manifold and meaningful reading experiences.

The long-term goal of developing “literature appreciation” can be summed up as follows: To grow competent, confident, curious, and personally connected readers who are able to fully and enthusiastically enjoy literature and who have a life-long love of reading. Development of “literature appreciation” rests on continual and meaningful exposure to an expansive variety of print materials and auxiliary experiences in non-print media as well. It is also important to note that “literature appreciation” applies to academic, professional, and personal goals at present and for the future.

This model and its benchmarks suggest a continuum of learning experiences from kindergarten through the fourth grade. Those experiences are girded by important principles and supported by helpful teaching strategies aimed at attaining “literature appreciation” goals for students.

Principles

Learning experiences that promote “literature appreciation”

- are developmentally appropriate. child-centered)
- grounded in the overall grade-level curriculum. (in context)
- developed around units in the grade-level curriculum. (integrated)
- embedded in every subject area. (cross curricular)
- are designed to foster diverse literary experiences that draw on many times, places, cultures, and areas of inquiry. (mirrors of diversity)
- meaningful within the curriculum and with regard to life experiences. (authentic)
- designed with print in mind but mindful of non-print literary experiences (broadly applicable)
- seen as foundational in a society with open access to information and literature. (intellectual freedom)

Teaching Strategies

Learning experiences that promote “literature appreciation”

- are introduced with specific examples as to process and product. (modeling)
- allow for use of developing abilities and understandings in reading and responding to literature (application)
- provide support for developing abilities and understandings. (guided practice)
- recognize the value of supported but more challenging reading experiences. (comfortable challenge)
- emphasize discrete abilities and understandings and more challenging reading experiences. (incremental)
- are both linear and circular. (spiral)
- use meaningful, hands-on activities and appropriate materials. (active learning)
- use meaningful rubrics to assess development. (authentic assessment)
- build on, expand, and integrate previous knowledge with reading and literature. (connection)
- build on and expand abilities and understandings toward a broad appreciation of literature. (cumulative)
- provide opportunities to apply abilities and understandings for a broad appreciation of literature. (integration)

Literature Appreciation Goals for Students

Learning experiences that promote “literature appreciation”

- foster individual initiative in choosing books. (selection)
- are designed to encourage reading widely and deeply. (variety)
- encourage reading of books not easily discovered on one’s own. (exposure)
- encourage reading of important literary works. (quality)
- encourage continual reading. (quantity)
- encourage appreciation of authors, their art and craft. (writing)
- encourage appreciation of illustrators, their art and craft. (artistry)
- prepare students to read with goal and purpose. (strategy)
- nurture the spirit of adventure in reading. (curiosity)
- develop competence and confidence in reading experiences. (independence)
- develop evaluative skills. (creative and critical thinking)
- encourage alternate ways of thinking. (imagination)
- encourage reading in a full and meaningful way. (comprehension)
- encourage response in a full and meaningful way. (response)
- develop in students a preference for reading as an activity of choice. (pleasure)

CONTENT

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CONCEPTS ABOUT READING: WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, AND WHY

- AREA #1 READING CHOICES (select and enjoy)
- AREA #2 READING EXPERIENCES (maximize exposure)
- AREA #3 PRINT AND BOOKS (recognize importance)

CONCEPTS ABOUT LITERATURE

- AREA #1 THE ROLE OF LITERATURE (recognize importance)
- AREA #2 THE QUALITY OF LITERATURE (distinguish and evaluate)
- AREA #3 LITERARY STRUCTURES (recognize purpose)
- AREA #4 LITERARY GENRES/FORMS (recognize variety)
- AREA #5 LITERARY ELEMENTS IN NARRATIVE WRITING
(distinguish and consider together)
- AREA #6 STRUCTURAL PATTERNS IN EXPOSITORY WRITING (distinguish and
consider together)
- AREA #7 INTERPRETIVE CLUES (read between the lines)
- AREA #8 USE OF LANGUAGE (recognize purpose)

CONCEPTS ABOUT HOW TO READ AND RESPOND TO TEXT

- AREA #1 COMPREHENSION (extract full meaning)
- AREA #2 SUPPORT (apply research abilities and understandings)
- AREA #3 READING TEXT (prepare to read, read, and re-read)
- AREA #4 RESPONDING TO TEXT (interpret: organize, present, and
reflect)

SOURCES

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