LOWER SCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS

Using an integrated approach, Newman’s Language Arts curriculum enables all students to gain proficiency and experience success in reading, writing, phonics, grammar, and communication. This balanced approach allows for differentiation and academic choice as students self-select reading materials and writing topics. It continually demonstrates that reading and writing are connected, as teachers instruct through mini-lessons in both subjects that use shared common language and reciprocal strategies. Furthermore, each grade level builds a solid foundation of phonics, grammar, and mechanics knowledge.

**Reader’s Workshop** includes a daily mini-lesson, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading. Using these methods, students are taught a variety of strategies and skills to tackle text and develop a love of reading. Through formal and informal assessments, teachers gain insight into each students’ needs and strengths as a reader and plan targeted individual and small group lessons. Instruction in decoding, fluency, and comprehension ensure all children become confident, motivated, and enthusiastic readers.

**Phonics, Word Study, and Grammar** includes phonemic awareness, phonics knowledge, word structure and patterns, vocabulary and word usage, and grade-level appropriate grammatical conventions. Teachers use formal assessments and student writing samples to plan need-based instruction, and they follow a systematic scope and sequence.

**Communication** is an essential life skill. We strive to foster good listening and speaking skills in every grade at Newman, encouraging our students to feel comfortable sharing their ideas and actively listening to others’ ideas.

**Handwriting** focuses on correct letter formation and pencil grip. Newman uses the *Handwriting Without Tears* program to help all of our students become fluent writers who can easily get their ideas on paper accurately and efficiently.