Services and Philosophy

The Reading Center at St. Bonaventure University was established for two purposes:

1. To provide our graduate students pursuing a master’s degree in reading with the opportunity to gain real life experience instructing children who may be experiencing reading or other literacy difficulties.
2. To serve the community by providing diagnostic and remedial services to students (grades K-5) whom may be experiencing reading or other literacy difficulties that are not being fully resolved in their school settings.

All of the teachers in the Reading Center have earned their bachelor’s degrees and are certified teachers in areas outside of reading. At this point, they have completed most of the requirements for their master’s degrees in childhood literacy education. When our teachers successfully complete their graduate programs, the University will recommend them for certification/licensure as Literacy teachers in New York state. That means that they will be licensed to teach literacy in New York schools in addition to being licensed to teach within their previous/current area(s) of certification.

Concurrent with this spring 2019 reading program, all Reading Center teachers are enrolled in two academically rigorous graduate courses: READ 540: Curriculum and Coaching and READ 580: Clinical Practicum in Literacy. These graduate courses require assignments and projects that are related to the diagnostic and instructional work that teachers will do with your child.

• Weekly Session Plans – Teachers construct detailed session plans for each child each week, which are submitted in advance. Our teachers do not follow a program; their plans grow out of their assessment findings. Since we have the luxury of working 1:1, teachers can tailor instruction to meet children’s individual needs.

• Video Reflections – Teachers write two detailed papers concerning what they learned about themselves and their student through viewing and reflecting recorded sessions they have engaged in with their clients (one per client). These reflections are submitted to Professor Voss, who provides feedback and works with each teacher to praise their best practice while giving constructive criticism as necessary in the best interests of both readers and teachers alike.

• Diagnostic Assessment Results Summaries – The first two sessions spent with each child will focus on establishing an instructional environment and fully assessing the child’s reading abilities, strengths, and areas of instructional need. After your child’s teacher has scored and analyzed the assessment data s/he has collected, s/he will create a summary of results to share with you during Parent/Teacher Assessment Results Meetings on Wednesday, February 27th.

• Educational Plans and Diagnostic Reading Kits – On the last day of the reading center, your child’s teacher will meet with you to share his/her Educational Plan for your child. The purpose of the Educational Plan is twofold: (1) to share with you information about the goals, objectives, methods and materials the teacher has used in his/her work with your child, and (2) to suggest approaches and materials that you might use with your child at home and/or school.
Policies and Procedures at SBURC

1. Parents are expected to bring their children on time for appointments, and they are also expected to pick their children up on time. Our Center is located on the top floor of Plassmann Hall. We do not have extra staff outside of our teachers, and cannot provide supervision for children who are brought early or left late at the Center. Also, we cannot incur the liability associated with having these children in our supervision beyond the purposes of their appointments (literacy instruction). Teachers have been instructed that your child is to never be out of their care until they personally exchange them with the adult in charge of their care. This includes bathroom use and meeting you at the end of the session. The only exception to this is when there are parent/teacher meetings, during which time your child will be in small group time with Professor Voss or an available teacher.

2. Parents may wait in our small waiting area, but it is not necessary for you to stay for the session. We do have a few dining options on campus and are just around the corner from a shopping area in town. Parents are not permitted to sit in or near the room where their child is in session. It is very important for the teachers to develop rapport with students without distractions. We appreciate your trust and the opportunity to work with your child to help him/her fall in love with reading.

3. St. Bonaventure University in accordance with its values and NYS regulations has a Smoke-Free workplace policy. Smoking is not permitted in Plassman Hall or within 30 feet of any University building entrances. Thank you for your cooperation.

Absence from a Session:

4. We value your commitment to attendance at the SBURC. Please contact Professor Sheri Voss at 716-697-4770 with all questions, praises, concerns, and/or if your child is ill and cannot attend a session. While your child’s health comes first, we ask that you keep your absences to only those absolutely necessary for illness as our teachers must meet 50 contact hours with their students in order to meet the requirements of their degree.

There are no refunds for missed hours. We encourage parents to make sure that children are on time for their appointments. This will ensure that they get maximum benefits from the program.
How to Help Us Help Your Child

(Advice taken from Dr. Joseph Zimmer, former Reading Center Director and current Provost of St. Bonaventure University)

♥ READ 20 MINUTES/DAY... EVERY DAY. (See the graph for further information on why this is critical to reading success and building reading skills.)

♥ The indirect things you do in your home are the best for your children’s literacy development. Here are a few suggestions:

a. Shut off the television/video games for 30 or more minutes every day, and use that time to read, play a game, or get exercise.

b. Know how to pick out a book written at your child’s ability level. Use the 5 Finger Rule as a guide in addition to interests.

c. Model reading for your child. If you haven’t taken up the habit, it’s a good time to start. Most children look to their parents for guidance in how to behave/act. Reading can be one activity your children emulate.

d. Create a word-rich environment in your home. Use “larger” vocabulary from those used in everyday conversation. Label drawers for organization. Have newspapers, books, and magazines available for kids and adults to read, and visit the local library often. If you have a device, download books or safe apps where children can read or be read to. Always monitor your child’s online activities.
♥ Have a family language. Replace “good” job with different fantastical words that you use frequently. Research suggests that parents who engage with words with their children develop their children’s vocabularies and their world knowledge, which in turn fosters literacy abilities.

♥ Provide your children with non-reading experiences to build their word and world knowledge. Take them grocery shopping, to the zoo, to museums, and the like. Kids don’t always know what they are interested in. Perhaps these real-life experiences could help. And you have to read everywhere you go, so adventure on and read along the way.

♥ Read books for pleasure with your children, even during the school year. It is important that parents and children read for fun together. Audio books with a book to follow along with the words are also a valuable resource.

♥ Encourage writing for real, meaningful purposes. Ask your child to help you by writing out grocery lists, reminder notes to family members, thank-you cards, to-do lists, and so on. Don’t worry if your child spells words correctly. Encourage him/her to write the sounds s/he hears (this is called “invented spelling”) and to read back what s/he has written frequently. Authentic writing experiences are a wonderful catalyst to building skilled communicators.

♥ Work as a team. The SBURC teacher, the parent/guardian, the school, and the child are all members of that team. Cooperation and coordination are often the keys to literacy development. If your child’s SBURC teacher asks him/her to read, do a word study, or write between sessions,’ please make sure that the child does so and is ready for the next meeting.

♥ Please keep track of any materials borrowed from the SBU Reading Center and kindly return them. There is a sign in/out log available. 😊

Thank you! We love helping your child fall in love with reading.

**Why Read 20 Minutes at Home?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student A Reads</th>
<th>Student B Reads</th>
<th>Student C Reads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 minutes per day.</td>
<td>5 minutes per day.</td>
<td>1 minute per day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,600 minutes per school year.</td>
<td>900 minutes per school year.</td>
<td>180 minutes per school year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,800,000 words per year.</td>
<td>282,000 words per year.</td>
<td>8,000 words per year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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- Scores in the 90th percentile on standardized tests.
- Scores in the 50th percentile on standardized tests.
- Scores in the 10th percentile on standardized tests.

If they start reading for 20 minutes per night in Kindergarten, by the end of 6th grade, Student A will have read for the equivalent of 60 school days, Student B will have read for 12 school days, and Student C will have read for 3.

*Chapin and Harriette (1972)*

WANT TO BE A BETTER READER? SIMPLY READ.