

# PreKindergarten Reading

We read for enjoyment, instruction, and information. Reading helps us to understand and clarify our ideas, feelings, thoughts, and opinions. Literature, in particular, offers us a means of understanding others and ourselves and has the power to influence and structure thinking.

Students need to be introduced to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts and have opportunities to read for their interest, pleasure, and information. Reading is gaining meaning from text. The process of reading is interactive and involves the reader's purpose, prior knowledge, experience, and the text itself.

Maumee Valley believes that language is at the heart of learning. It is fundamental to the curriculum as a basic tool of communication that crosses the boundaries of the traditional disciplines and provides access to literature. It is a means of assimilating our own culture and learning about the cultures of others. The Lower School places particular emphasis on language acquisition and development, which do more than promote cognitive growth. It is crucial for exploring and sustaining cultural identity, personal development, and intercultural understanding; such emphases are integral to the Maumee Valley mission, vision, and philosophy.

The specific reading expectations in PreKindergarten are based on a developmental continuum we created based on the Ohio Birth Through Kindergarten Entry Learning and Development Standards, Lucy Calkins' Readers Workshop, and Australia's First Steps developmental continuums. Our continuum identifies a series of stages through which children move in the development of reading skills and behaviors. Students progress through the developmental stages at individual rates, although some stages can be matched with specific grade levels. Each stage is associated with a set of processes and strategies used by



teachers during lessons to facilitate the continued development of each child's pre-reading abilities.

In PreKindergarten, the role that language plays is important in everyday life to communicate stories, ideas, and feelings. Language is explored through play, stories, songs, games, role play, and conversations. Children are also encouraged to explore how people communicate with each other through mark-making, drawings, and having the teacher scribe. Our speaking and language curriculum lays the foundation for the reading and writing skills children will develop as they progress through school. Having a solid foundation in speaking and listening skills will help students to become successful readers and strong communicators and build their confidence and overall sense of well-being.

## "Readers" in PreKindergarten will understand ...

- spoken words connect us with others.
- people listen and speak to share thoughts and feelings.
- people ask questions to learn from others.
- visual language is all around us.
- the pictures, images, and symbols in our environment have meaning.
- we can enjoy and learn from visual language and environmental print.
- illustrations convey meaning.
- print conveys meaning.
- people read for pleasure.
- stories can tell about imagined worlds.
- printed information can tell about the real world.
- there are established ways of organizing books.

## "Readers" in PreKindergarten will be able to ...

- participate in collaborative conversations about preschool topics with peers and adults in small groups.
- begin to follow rules for discussions (i.e. listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topic under discussion).
- continue a conversation through three or more exchanges.
- confirm understanding of information presented orally or through other media by answering simple (i.e. what, where, who) questions and asking questions if something is not understood.

- listen and respond to picture books read aloud, showing pleasure and demonstrating their understanding through gestures, expression and/or words.
- listen actively and join in with poems, rhymes, songs and repeated phrases in shared books.
- begin to retell familiar stories.
- talk about the stories, pictures, and models they have created.
- listen to others participate in discussions.
- begin to hear sounds in words.
- begin to carry out a sequence of instructions.
- begin to show appreciation of illustrations in picture books by selecting and rereading familiar books, focusing on favorite pages.
- show curiosity and ask questions about pictures or text.
- choose and read picture books for pleasure.
- choose to reread favorite books.
- understand a message in pictures or words.
- make connections to their own experience when listening to or "reading" texts.
- distinguish between pictures and written text.
- recognize their own name, or part of it, in print.
- indicate printed text where the teacher should start reading.
- know that print carries a message.
- begin to handle books, showing an understanding of how a book works.
- identify and talks about different characters or people from texts.

# PreKindergarten Writing

Writing helps us make sense of the world. It is a powerful means by which to remember, develop, organize, and communicate ideas, feelings, and information. The purpose and audience contribute to the form and substance of writing, as well as to its style and tone.

The writing process involves creating an environment where students can acquire the skills to accomplish written products for a variety of purposes. These written products can be formal, informal, personal, or reflective. They can be informative, persuasive, poetic, or in the form of a story or dialogue.

Learning to write is a developmental process, and students need to be able to focus at first on meaning rather than accuracy. Grammar, spelling, handwriting, punctuation, and paragraphing should be taught gradually through writing practice.

The specific writing expectations in PreKindergarten are based on a developmental continuum we created based on the Ohio Birth Through Kindergarten Entry Learning and Development Standards, Lucy Calkin's Writer's Workshop, Handwriting Without Tears, and Australia's First Steps developmental continuums. Teachers in PreKindergarten use our writing continuum to map each child's progress and achievement in writing. Our continuum identifies a series of stages through which children move in the development of writing skills and behaviors. Although students progress through



their muscles and coordination. In the early years, fine motor activities help children refine their pincer grasp (grasping an object with their thumb and pointer finger using their preferred hand) and are a precursor to handwriting. By practicing picking up, manipulating, and exercising the small muscles in the palm, children are working towards gaining control and strength while coloring, drawing, cutting, and forming letters or writing.

the developmental stages at individual rates, sets of stages can be matched with specific grade levels.

Each stage is associated with a set of processes and strategies used by teachers during lessons to facilitate the continued development of each child's writing abilities. In PreKindergarten, the role that language plays is important in everyday life to communicate stories, ideas, and feelings. This is explored through play, stories, songs, games, role play, and conversations. Children are also encouraged to explore how people communicate with each other through mark-making, drawings, and having the teacher scribe.

Fine motor skills involve the use of the small muscles that control the hand, fingers, and thumb. They help children perform important tasks like feeding themselves, grasping toys, buttoning and zipping clothes, writing, drawing, and more. Fine motor skills gradually build for children as they do activities to help strengthen

their muscles and coordination. In the early years, fine motor activities help children refine their pincer grasp (grasping an object with their thumb and pointer finger using their preferred hand) and are a precursor to handwriting. By practicing picking up, manipulating, and exercising the small muscles in the palm, children are working towards gaining control and strength while coloring, drawing, cutting, and forming letters or writing.

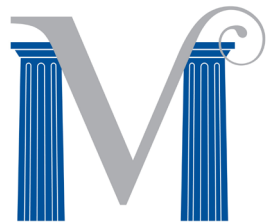
## "Writers" in PreKindergarten will understand...

- writing conveys meaning.
- people write to tell about their experiences, ideas, and feelings.
- everyone can express themselves in writing.
- talking about our stories and pictures helps other people to understand and enjoy them.

## "Writers" in PreKindergarten will be able to...

- know that writing and drawing are different.
- write their own first name.
- begin to demonstrate an awareness of directionality.
- use shapes, letter-like symbols, and letters to represent words or ideas.
- with modeling and support, show awareness that one letter or a cluster of letters represents one word.
- use a combination of drawing, dictation, and emergent writing for a variety of purposes (letters, greeting cards, menus, lists, books).
- use a combination of drawing, dictating, and emergent writing to tell a story, to express ideas, and to share information about an experience or topic of interest.
- rely upon personal experiences as a stimulus for writing.

- "read" what they have written.
- discuss and respond to questions from others about writing/drawing.
- Begin to use an appropriately modified tripod (4 or 5 fingers) or 3 finger tripod grasp of the dominant hand.
- share and celebrate your own drawing and mark-making with others.
- show curiosity and ask questions about written language.
- experiment with writing using different writing implements and media.
- make marks and some letters.
- draw to tell about experiences, ideas, and feelings.
- understand that drawings and written marks can represent ideas.
- know that writing and drawing are different.
- be aware that print carries a message.
- assign a message to own mark-making.
- participate in gross motor activities with malleable materials.
- participate in fine motor activities such as hand and finger play, making and modeling (playdough), messy play, using one-handed tools and equipment, hand responses to music.
- investigate making dots, straight lines and crosses, circles, curves, loops, spirals, and waves.



## PreKindergarten

MAUMEE VALLEY COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

## PreKindergarten At A Glance

### Faculty & Staff

#### Classroom faculty & staff

Amy Dankert (adankert@mvcds.org)

Alex Kania (akania@mvcds.org)

Christine Marker (cmarker@mvcds.org)

Maggie Reed (mreed@mvcds.org)

#### Specials faculty

**Art:** Crystal Borchert (cborchert@mvcds.org)

**Library:** Renee Moebius (rmoebius@mvcds.org)

**Music:** Jenica Fox (jfox@mvcds.org)

**Physical education:** Heather Rakosik

(hrakosik@mvcds.org)

**Spanish:** Kathleen Mick (kmick@mvcds.org)

### Leadership & Staff

Head of Lower School

Michelle Savickas (msavickas@mvcds.org)

Lower School/Middle School administrative assistant

Megan Gray (mgray@mvcds.org)

## Daily PreK Schedule

**8-8:15 a.m.:** Arrival, check in, morning jobs

**8:20-9 a.m.:** Learning centers and small-group learning

**9 a.m.:** Morning meeting

**9:30 a.m.:** Snack

**10 a.m.:** Forest School

**11:45 a.m.:** Dismissal for half-day students

**12-12:30 p.m.:** Lunch, story time

**12:30-1:45 p.m.:** Rest, quiet activities

**1:45-2:15 p.m.:** Afternoon snack

**2:15-2:40 p.m.:** Indoor learning centers or playground

**2:40 p.m.:** Closing circle

**2:50 p.m.:** Dismissal

(One afternoon each week, students have Forest School. Family volunteers are welcome.)

## Tips to support your child's learning inside your home

- Read to your child at least 15 minutes every night. Reading and discussing books makes a significant difference in a child's literacy development.
- Make math a part of everyday life. Count stairs, search for shapes, make up math story problems, etc.
- Explore and observe nature.
- Set up routines that encourage independence.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Promote a positive attitude toward others. Model Kindness.
- Talk with your child daily about their learning in your first language.
- Model a love of reading. Let your child see you enjoy reading.
- Arrange play dates for your child to play with classmates after school and on the weekends. As well as plenty of time for family activities and playing outside.

## PreKindergarten events

### Field Trips

- Sept. 9: Gust Brothers' Pumpkin Farm
- Nov. 9: W.W. Knight Nature Preserve
- March 13: Botanical Gardens
- April 17: Toledo Grows
- May 22: Glass City Metropark

### Performances

- Nov. 21: Fall harvest family celebration (morning)
- May 17: K/1 concert and art show

### Special Events

- Oct. 5: Picnic dinner and s'mores campfire. 5-7 p.m. Anning Lawn
- Oct. 31: Halloween Party
- Nov. 21: Get Back, Give Back Day. 2:15 p.m.
- Feb. 14: Valentine's Day Party
- April 8: Solar eclipse viewing party (early dismissal at 1 p.m.)
- April 27: MV Annual Gala
- May 31: Lower School Field Day and family picnic

**Late Start Dates:** April 25, May 13

**Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Oct. 26-27 and April 11-12

**2023 Lower School Back to School Night**



# PreK Curricula & Programs

## UNITS OF INQUIRY

**Maumee Valley believes that students learn best through inquiry, where they are actively involved in their own learning and take responsibility for that learning.**

All learning, be that in the homeroom or single-subject sessions, is approached with a spirit of inquiry. Inquiry nurtures curiosity and promotes enthusiasm for lifelong learning; it encourages students to think, challenge, and extend their ideas, and it prompts students to reflect and take action. The inquiry process builds capacity through student agency where voice, choice, and ownership are featured strongly. Students also develop and demonstrate the approaches to learning skills and the attributes of a lifelong learner as they become knowledgeable inquirers. Drawing from the interdisciplinary themes and students' interests, inquiry is an authentic way for students to relate to, explore, and understand the world around them. By situating inquiry in meaningful contexts, connections are made between personal experiences and local and global opportunities and challenges. Play, problem-based learning, collaboration, experimentation, and explicit teaching all have a place within an inquiry-based classroom.

- **Let's Be Friends.** Central ideas: Mindful choices help me make and keep friends.
- **Communication Through Art.** Central ideas: Artwork can be used to communicate and express ourselves.
- **I Wonder.** Central ideas: We can explore and wonder about the outdoor world around us through our play.
- **Make Sense.** Central ideas: Senses help us explore the world in different ways.

## Passion Projects

PK/JK Passion Projects are student driven with teacher and family support. Following the interests and ideas of the children, PK/JK families, teachers, and students work together on an end-of-year project that gives back to the greater community in some way. The purpose of the PK/JK Passion Project is to introduce collaborative inquiry and research skills, which students will continue to develop further in the primary years. Projects are hands-on, and children play an active role in helping them come to life. With the community as the central focus of the project, children develop empathy for others and begin to understand that they have the power to make the world a better place.

## Student Support

The Lower School Student Support Team is made up of the school nurse Sherrie Watkins; school psychologist Sara Dowling; Lower School counselor Betsey van de Heijning; and intervention specialist Jill Augustyniak. The team meets with the teachers and division head monthly to discuss challenges and brainstorm solutions that faculty, students, and families are facing in our

community. We develop proactive academic intervention and social-emotional support. The goal is to advocate for students in a positive way; focus on strengths to help overcome challenges; educate on neurodiversity, learning styles, learning theory, and psychology within and through the lens of diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging; and approach all students with the understanding that no one wants to fail or be unsuccessful. From the support meetings, we determine next steps that may include observations, additional meetings, outside services, and evaluations. If the team determines accommodations, remediation, enrichment, intervention, or specifically designed instruction is needed, then classroom accommodations, an education plan, or a service plan is written.

## Social-Emotional

SEL concepts provide an extra dimension to education, focusing on improving cooperation, communication and decision making. In a world where emotional intelligence is critical for lifelong happiness, successful careers, and healthier relationships, SEL gives students a framework for developing these skills.

Maumee Valley's PreKindergarten program emphasizes process, decision-making, personal responsibility, and communication. At this age, students are making the transition from parallel play to cooperative play. They learn what it means to be part of a group and how we can all help and learn from each other. Meeting time becomes an integral part of the curriculum as students learn to listen to each other, identify and express their feelings, and to solve a problem working together to retain and restore the community.

## Specials in the Lower School Library

Library time is all about helping our little bookworms grow and thrive! On a weekly basis, the librarian visits the classroom where children have the opportunity to listen to stories and participate in fun-filled age-appropriate activities. The program features books, puppets, music, movement, science activities, videos, and/or crafts to encourage early literacy skills in young children. In addition, our library welcomes mystery readers throughout the year. If you'd like to read, we'd love to hear from you! Save these dates for library events:

- Visiting author TBA: Week of Oct. 24.
- Book Fair: Oct. 24- 28.
- Lower School book Swap: January 2024.
- Book Fair: April 8-12.

## Spanish

The Spanish program focuses on making the language a rewarding conversational and cultural tool that students carry into their lives and into the world. Movement, singing, storytelling, role-playing, chants, and games are all a substantial part of learning at the early levels. Highlights in PreKindergarten include Spanish during Forest School and weekly Spanish centers. Parent communication is conducted through email and Storypark.

# PreKindergarten Math



## Discovering math through exploration and play

The purpose of learning mathematics is to help children construct meaning and make connections to understand their ever-changing world. All students will have the opportunity and support necessary to learn significant mathematics with depth and understanding, thereby developing confidence and an enduring interest in mathematics. Students will become fluent users of the language of mathematics as they learn to understand its meaning, symbols, and conventions. A rich mathematical curriculum progresses through the essential cognitive stages of:

- **Constructing meaning:** Learning experiences are planned through which students construct meaning from direct experiences by using manipulatives and conversation.
- **Transferring meaning into symbols:** Students begin to understand that numerals represent a collection of objects.
- **Understanding and applying:** Teachers plan authentic learning experiences in which students independently apply

the knowledge they've learned in whole and small group instruction.

The math curriculum is divided into five subject areas: Number, Measurement, Data handling, Space and shape, and Pattern and function. **(The chart on the right defines each, outlines the conceptual understandings, and skills to be acquired.)**

Students in PreKindergarten are introduced to the world of mathematics in the environment through exploration and play, such as shapes, patterns, and numbers in everyday life. Children start to develop an understanding that numbers can be ordered and this helps them to learn about early counting principles. Singing a variety of number songs and playing many games that involve early mathematical concepts develops an awareness of how numbers can be used. The picture schedule is an important part of PreKindergarten, and this helps the children understand each school day.

## Definition

**Number:** Our number system is a language for describing quantities and relationships between quantities. The value attributed to a digit depends on its place within a base system. The operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division are related to one another and are used to process information to solve problems.

## Conceptual understandings

- Number words can be used to signify an amount of a collection.
- We count to find out how many are in a collection.
- Whole numbers are in a particular order.
- Numerals are different from other written symbols.
- We can often see how many are in a collection just by looking and thinking of it in parts.

## Skills

- Show number words can be used to signify an amount of a collection
- Participate in number songs and rhymes
- Count in sequence from 1-10 (rote)
- Choose counting to find out how many
- Demonstrate understanding that whole numbers are in a particular order
- Accurately count small collections to find out how many (at least up to 5)
- Select at least three objects from a collection (count out)
- Tell how many are in a collection by looking and thinking in parts
- Subitize a collection of objects up to three
- Identify the difference between numerals and other written symbols
- Recognize written numerals 1-3

**Measurement:** To measure is to attach a number quantity using a chosen unit. However, since the attributes being measured are continuous, ways must be found to deal with quantities that fall between numbers. It is important to know how accurate a measure needs to be or can ever be.

- Objects are identified and can be compared, by their attributes
- There are special words and phrases that help us to describe and compare attributes.

- Explore quantity and size with measuring equipment
- Order a series of 5 objects by size
- Use opposite terms for size (large-small, short-long)
- Associate social and personal events with time
- Ask questions that can be researched in action
- Compare objects by attributes that are different
- Use terms small, medium, and large to define objects in comparison to each other
- Compare attributes of objects using non-standard measurements
- Make judgments about order and size without actually measuring

## Data Handling

**Statistics:** Data can be recorded, organized, displayed, and made sense of in a variety of ways to highlight similarities, differences, and trends. It is important to remember that the chosen format should illustrate the information without bias.

**Probability:** This idea is very difficult for very young students because they view the world as a place of all possibilities. Appropriate qualitative vocabulary may be introduced such as "unlikely," "certain," and "impossible," as suggested by the exploration and experiences of the students.

Objects are sorted according to specific and constant attributes (e.g.: by size or color).

- Use words and phrases that describe and compare attributes (size, shape, color)
- Sort objects according to specific and constant attributes (color, size, or shape)
- Match and sort a collection of objects according to one attribute (color, size or shape)
- Make object collections based on one attribute

**Shape and Space:** The regions, paths, and boundaries of natural space can be described by space. Students need to understand the interrelationships of shapes and the effects of changes to shape in order to understand, appreciate, interpret, and modify the two-dimensional world.

- We describe where things are in relation to other things.
- There are special words, phrases, and symbols that help us do this.

- Describe where things are in relation to other things (in, on top, under, behind, beside, etc.)
- Distinguish shape from other attributes (color, shape, size)
- Match familiar shapes
- Recognize and draw some basic 2D shapes (circle, triangle, square)
- Complete a 12 piece puzzle
- Understand that a whole can be divided into parts and that the parts can be brought back together to make up the whole

## Pattern and Function:

To identify a pattern is to understand how mathematics applies to the world in which we live. The repetitive features of patterns can be identified and described as generalized rules called functions. This builds the foundation for the later study of algebra.

A pattern is repetitive, rhythmic, and sequential (AB, ABC).

- Copy and continue 2-part patterns
- Draw repetitive lines and shapes (e.g...draw a row of circles)
- Identify patterns in nature
- Interpret daily schedule picture cards