



# Expedition Literacy<sup>SM</sup>

OVERVIEW

A research-based intervention designed for adolescents reading two or more years below grade level.



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## OVERVIEW



## About Boys Town and Expedition Literacy

**F**ather Flanagan's Boys' Home (Boys Town) changes the way the World cares for children, families, and communities. For over 100 years, this organization has provided life-changing support to youth, while giving families and professionals the tools needed to address academic problems, and issues related to abuse and neglect, juvenile delinquency, parenting, and medical/mental health disorders. Through programs and products grounded in experience, and supported by years of research, Boys Town's youth care, health care, behavioral health, and educational programs have helped countless children and families improve their chances of success.

Boys Town's campus, near Omaha, is home to three nationally accredited educational programs including an elementary/middle school, high school, and day school. These programs serve children and young adults ages 7-18, who due to varying circumstances have suffered significant cognitive, social, emotional, and learning setbacks. Similar to other at-risk populations, who have had limited access to language-rich environments and high-quality learning experiences, it is not uncommon for Boys Town students to experience reading difficulties. Emulating a national trend, data has shown more than one-third of these young people to be at or below the basic levels of literacy proficiency.

In response to this need, Boys Town, along with researchers from Harvard University's Reading Lab, commissioned a reading center to develop and disseminate literacy-based solutions for middle and high schools nationwide. One outcome of this collaboration has been Expedition Literacy<sup>SM</sup>, formerly known, as Reading is FAME<sup>®</sup>.

Expedition Literacy is a research-based intervention developed specifically for adolescents reading two or more years below grade level. This program, comprised of four semester-length courses, is based upon Jeanne Chall's Model for Reading Development, which suggests that an individual's ability to read evolves through the acquisition of core reading skills, in a number of distinct stages between birth and adulthood. Expedition Literacy courses are sequenced to advance students through this developmental continuum, while improving their decoding and word recognition skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Results from more than twenty years of formative and summative assessment have shown most Expedition Literacy students to achieve accelerated reading improvement.

### Instructional Components

Expedition Literacy incorporates the five pillars of literacy deemed critical by the National Reading Panel (2000) as well as several best practices for reading instruction and remediation. While each of its courses has different goals and objectives, all utilize direct instruction and the gradual release of responsibility as means for helping students become better, more confident readers. The Expedition Literacy curricula, has been developed for replication in a variety of academic environments, and has proven efficacy with regular education, special education, and English language learners. Students participating in Expedition Literacy courses are homogeneously grouped by reading levels, enabling them to receive targeted, small group instruction with challenging and age appropriate materials. Any certified teacher can be trained to facilitate an Expedition Literacy course, but professional development provided by experts from the Boys Town National Training department is required prior to implementation.

### Pedagogy

## Course Offerings

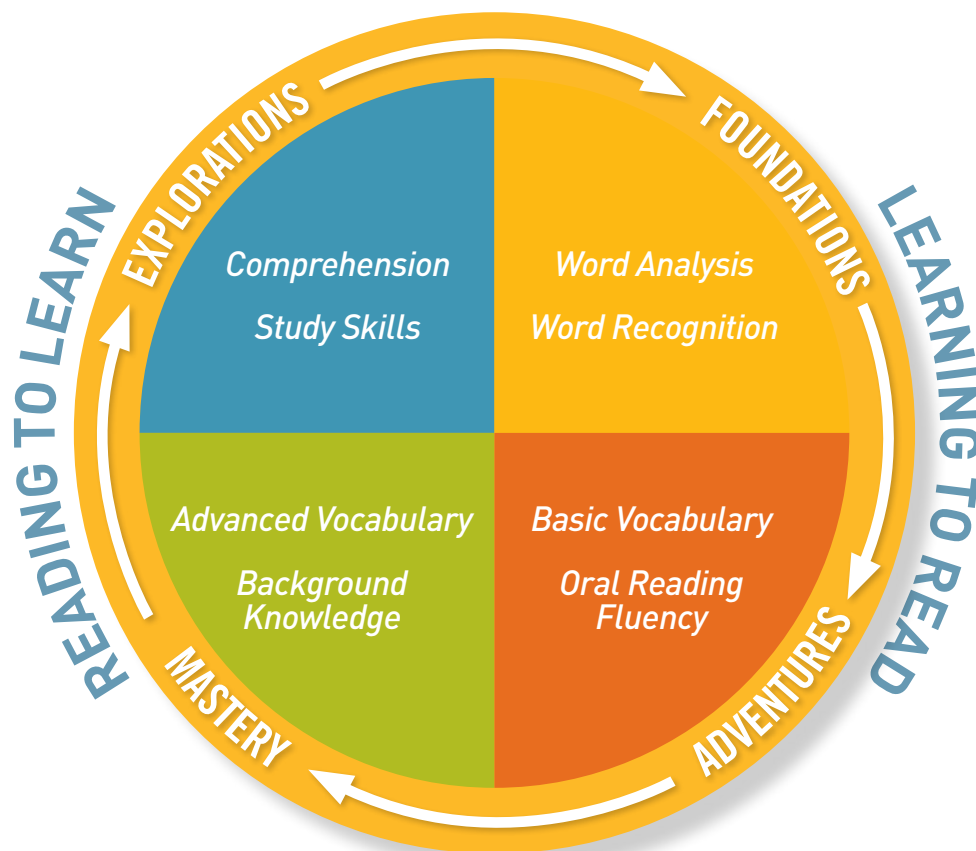
The Expedition Literacy<sup>SM</sup> program is made up of four semester-length courses. The following provides a brief explanation of each course:

**F***oundations of Reading* is designed for students in grades 7 through 12 reading at the 3rd- or 4th-grade levels. This course teaches common letter sound correspondences in order to improve students' understanding and application of the alphabetic principle. It also emphasizes word analysis skills to promote accuracy in word recognition. Foundations classes are kept small, with an adult-to-student ratio of 2:10-12.

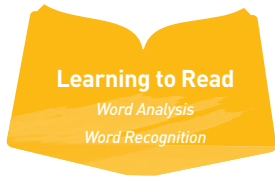
**A***dventures in Reading* helps students in grades 7 through 12 reading at the 4th- to 6th-grade levels. This course builds on students' word analysis competencies to improve their ability to recognize and define high-frequency words. It also focuses on developing their oral reading fluency. Like Foundations, Adventures classes are kept small, with an adult-to-student ratio of 2:10-12.

**M***astery of Meaning* benefits students in grades 8 through 12 reading at the 6th- to 8th-grade levels. Building on student's fluency and understanding of basic language concepts, this course utilizes reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities to broaden their vocabulary and expand their background knowledge. Mastery classes are slightly larger than Foundations and Adventures classes, with an adult-to-student ratio of 1:15.

**E***xplorations* is for students in grades 9 through 12 reading at the 8th-grade level or beyond. This course builds on students' fundamental reading skills, and provides instruction in research, study, and problem-solving strategies to improve their comprehension of expository text. It also enables them to gather, analyze, and integrate information. Like Mastery, Explorations classes have an adult-to-student ratio of 1:15.







## Expedition Literacy

# Foundations of Reading

**OVERVIEW** Foundations of Reading is the first of four Expedition Literacy<sup>SM</sup> courses. This semester-length course is designed to provide reading intervention for 7th- through 12th-grade students who struggle with the most basic of reading skills. Students placed in the Foundations course are reading at the 3rd- or 4th-grade levels. Foundations classes are kept small, with an adult-to-student ratio of 2:10-12.

### Goals and Objectives

The goal of Foundations is to teach students the relationships between the most common letter and sound combinations in order to promote their understanding of the alphabetic principle. The alphabetic principle is the idea that letters and letter patterns represent the sounds of spoken language. Learning that there are predictable relationships between letters and sounds helps students recognize familiar and unfamiliar words and increases their reading accuracy, fluency, and, eventually, comprehension. Students' development of higher-level reading skills is founded on this understanding.

### Instructional Methods

Foundations builds on students' phonemic awareness and improves their ability to analyze, recognize, and accurately pronounce words. This is done through the direct and explicit instruction of decoding and word division strategies, along with a number of high-frequency, age-appropriate words that pertain to each. Over the period of a semester, students are taught word analysis skills based on six different kinds of syllables. They learn more than 160 new words and concepts, and are provided multiple opportunities to apply their knowledge in daily word games, and computer, oral reading, and independent practice activities.

### Outcomes

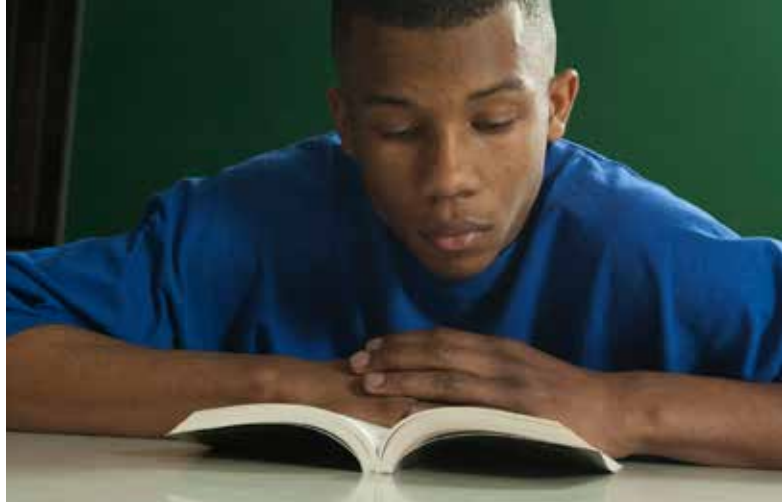
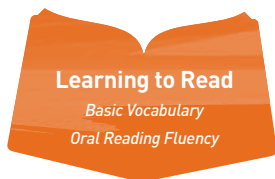
Through their participation in Foundations, students improve their ability to:

- Spell high-frequency words
- Decode difficult and challenging words
- Recognize words automatically
- Read orally

### Results

Students who complete Foundations generally achieve:

- A one-year G.E. gain in decoding
- A one-year G.E. gain in word recognition
- A 20-30% improvement in spelling
- A 20- to 25-word-per-minute increase in reading speed



## Expedition Literacy

# Adventures in Reading

**OVERVIEW** Adventures in Reading is the second of four Expedition Literacy<sup>SM</sup> courses. This semester-length course is designed to provide reading intervention for 7th- through 12th-grade students who struggle with oral reading fluency and have a limited vocabulary. Students placed in the Adventures course are reading at the 4th- to 6th-grade levels. Adventures classes are kept small, with an adult-to-student ratio of 2:10-12.

### Goals and Objectives

The goal of Adventures is to improve students' reading fluency by teaching them to automatically recognize words and their meanings. By developing these skills, students become less dependent on the process of sounding out every word and begin to read with greater ease. Reading smoothly and without hesitation allows students to acquire an understanding of vocabulary via context, and improves their reading comprehension.

### Instructional Methods

Adventures builds on students' ability to recognize words, increases their vocabulary knowledge, and improves their oral reading fluency through the direct and explicit instruction of high-frequency words and their meanings. Over the period of a semester, students learn a total of 180 vocabulary words, and are given multiple opportunities to apply their knowledge in daily word exercises, as well as computer, oral reading, and independent practice activities.

### Outcomes

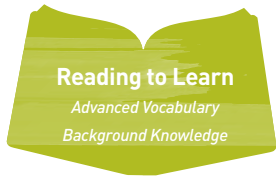
Through participation in Adventures, students improve their ability to:

- Pronounce words accurately and automatically
- Understand vocabulary words and their meanings
- Read fluently
- Use context effectively

### Results

Students who complete Adventures generally achieve:

- A one-year G.E. gain in word recognition
- A one-year G.E. gain in vocabulary
- A 20-30% improvement in course vocabulary
- A 20- to 25-word-per-minute increase in reading speed



## Expedition Literacy

# Mastery of Meaning

**OVERVIEW** Mastery of Meaning is the third of four Expedition Literacy<sup>SM</sup> courses. This semester-length course is designed to provide reading intervention for 8th- through 12th-grade students who struggle with the acquisition and understanding of vocabulary, and whose background knowledge is limited. Students placed in the Mastery course are reading at the 6th- to 8th-grade levels. Mastery classes are kept to a moderate size, with an adult-to-student ratio of 1:15.

### Goals and Objectives

The goal of Mastery is to increase the depth and breadth of students' vocabularies while exposing them to informational and expository text. When students are challenged to use vocabulary in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, their background knowledge increases and their ability to understand what they read noticeably improves.

### Instructional Methods

Mastery builds on students' basic vocabulary knowledge and provides them with direct and explicit instruction in advanced, age-appropriate words and their meanings. Over the period of a semester, students learn to define more than 160 words, and are exposed to hundreds of additional concepts. They are given ample opportunities to apply their newly acquired vocabulary knowledge in a variety of contexts through word games, and a number of reading, writing, and speaking activities.

### Outcomes

Through their participation in Mastery, students improve their ability to:

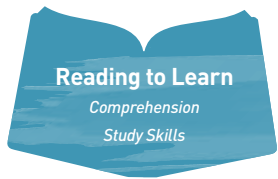
- Understand advanced vocabulary
- Use words correctly in reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- Read silently and comprehend informational text

### Results

Students who complete Mastery generally achieve:

- A one-year G.E. gain in vocabulary
- A one-year G.E. gain in comprehension
- A 25-30% increase in sentence production
- A 25-30% improvement in course vocabulary





## Expedition Literacy Explorations

**OVERVIEW** Explorations is the fourth of four Expedition Literacy<sup>SM</sup> courses. This semester-length course is designed to provide reading intervention for 9th- through 12th-grade students who struggle with the skills needed to read, comprehend, and effectively use information. Most students placed in the Explorations course are able to read at the 8th-grade level or higher, but are still reading two or more years below their grade level. Explorations classes are kept to a moderate size, with an adult-to-student ratio of 1:15.

### Goals and Objectives

The goal of Explorations is to teach students methods for reading, comprehending, analyzing, synthesizing, and integrating information. These strategies help students to read proficiently, write skillfully, and solve problems efficiently.

### Instructional Methods

Explorations builds on students' reading fluency, vocabulary, and background knowledge, and improves their ability to understand and apply what they read. This is accomplished through the direct and explicit instruction of study skills, as well as exposure to high-quality literature and reference materials in the areas of science, history, government, geography, and the humanities. Over the period of a semester, students learn a minimum of 30 comprehension-based strategies and apply them in a variety of independent research and writing activities.

### Outcomes

Through their participation in Explorations, students improve their ability to:

- Read and understand informational text
- Use print-based and online reference materials
- Identify, define, locate, describe, explain, summarize, compare, contrast, and analyze information
- Take notes and use information in writing

### Results

Students who complete Explorations generally achieve:

- A one-year G.E. gain in vocabulary
- A one-year G.E. gain in comprehension
- A 10-15% increase in note taking
- A 10-15% improvement in summarizing



# Professional Development and Curriculum Services

**E**xpedition Literacy<sup>SM</sup> is an effective and affordable method for reversing reading failure among at-risk youth. Once you've determined your students' necessity for reading intervention, educational professionals from Boys Town can help you diagnose their specific reading deficits and recommend the best Expedition Literacy course (or courses) to meet their needs. A commitment to providing trained instructional staff, administrative support, flexible scheduling options, and financial resources for the purchase of needed curriculum, software, and reading materials is required.

## Professional Development

The quality of any educational program is dependent upon the dedication, preparation, and development of its teachers and administrators. For this reason, Boys Town requires one full day of training for each Expedition Literacy course implemented. Training services are provided bi-annually at Boys Town's site near Omaha; or can be delivered on a contractual basis, at a location of your choosing. On-going support is supplied via program consultation.

## Program Consultation

Consultation services provided by Boys Town offer direction and assistance to Expedition Literacy programs to help ensure implementation fidelity and positive outcomes. Consultation is included with every training registration, and most services are delivered via telephone or email, with initial

contact taking place within the first six weeks of implementation. Whenever possible, consultation contact is pre-arranged and structured to provide participants with an opportunity to review program concepts, address implementation questions, and interact with experienced instructional coaches.

## Expedition Literacy Curriculum

The Expedition Literacy program was first published under the title Reading is FAME<sup>®</sup>. The original curricula was developed in 1992 and is now available in an updated and reformatted 21st century edition. A curriculum kit has been developed for each of the four Expedition Literacy courses, and each kit includes the instructions and materials needed to set up and facilitate a successful classroom. In addition, award-winning, web-based software has been developed to accompany the Foundations and Adventures courses. The cost for the program is minimal, but the curricula, software, and other materials are only available to persons or programs that have completed Expedition Literacy training.

## Contracting for Services / Purchasing Curriculum

For more information about the Expedition Literacy program and our various training options, visit [boystown.training.org](http://boystown.training.org), or call the Boys Town National Training Department at 1-800-545-5771. To order Expedition Literacy materials following the completion of training, contact the Boys Town Press at 1-800-282-6657.





**Boys Town National Training**

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