

Whiz Kids Class Descriptions

Specialized classes can be formed upon request (e.g., higher grade levels,, etc.)

Zoo-phonics Junior

(Students must turn 3 by December 2, 2018)

Zoo-phonics Junior is intended for students who don't meet our age cut-off for Zoo-phonics Workshop but who are ready to work with letters and sounds in a classroom environment. Students meet our 26 Zoo-phonics animals and participate in lots of fun hands-on activities that immerse them in the letters and sounds of the alphabet. Students get low-stress practice participating in an academic setting while building a foundation in letter sounds and motor skills. Alphabet puppet shows, Gordo Gorilla's Banana Party, air writing, and Letter Detective are just a few of the many kinesthetic ways we begin to build the foundations of literacy and show kids how much fun it is to work with the alphabet!

Zoo-phonics Workshop

(Students must turn 4 by December 2, 2018)

Our Zoo-phonics Workshop has been our signature class since the inception of Whiz Kids in 2001. Students get to know the 26 Zoo-phonics animals and work closely with them to gain mastery of the letter sounds and begin to blend these sounds into words. Children are gently guided in developing their fine motor and printing skills in a stress-free environment. Our small class sizes ensure that instruction is individualized to meet the needs of every student. The beloved Whiz Kids puppets are incorporated into the curriculum, as well as many other fun and motivational experiences that reinforce the letter sounds, book and print knowledge, and sound blending. Zoo-phonics Workshops provide a fun, active way for children to solidify their foundation in phonics, strengthen literacy skills, and get excited about reading!

Junior Kindergarten Workshop

(Students must turn 5 by December 2, 2018 and be enrolled in a pre-K or Jr. Kindergarten program)

Our Junior Kindergarten Workshop is designed for 5 year olds who are enrolled in a pre-K or Junior Kindergarten program. These students may have already completed a year of Zoo-phonics and/or have a base of letter and sound knowledge. This class serves as a bridge between our Zoo-phonics and Kindergarten Workshops. In this class, we build on letter and sound knowledge before moving on to blending sounds into words as the students individually become ready for this next step in the reading process. In the Junior Kindergarten Workshop, we review all letters and sounds in every class meeting, and practice printing and fine-motor activities without stress. The kids fine-tune their skills through various engaging activities and games, music, and our beloved Whiz Kids puppets and puppet theatre. Some knowledge of the alphabet letters and sounds is recommended for enrollment in our Junior Kindergarten Workshop.

Kindergarten Workshop

(Students must be enrolled in kindergarten)

Designed for students currently enrolled in kindergarten, our Kindergarten Workshop focuses on blending the letter sounds and extending children's learning as they develop into emergent readers and writers. A prior year of Zoo-phonics is not required for this class. Activities include building words and sentences with captivating hands-on materials, creative writing, music, kinesthetic activities, phonics and reading games, and creative drama and puppetry. We focus on all emergent literacy skills, including printing and other small motor activities. Our goal is to find fun active ways for children to reach the next step in their journey toward literacy and learn to love reading and writing. Each week, students in our Kindergarten Workshops take home books at their own instructional level from the Whiz Kids library. Mastery, or near mastery, of the alphabet letters and sounds is recommended for enrollment in our Kindergarten Workshop.

First and Second Grade Workshops

Our First and Second Grade Workshops strike a fine balance between specific instruction and fun, literature-based activities that inspire a love of reading and writing. The goal is to build on literacy and learning while convincing the students how much fun it is to read and write. Students get to explore various genres, make connections between their reading and the real world, and become authors as they publish their very own writing pieces and share in the Author's Chair. Students conference weekly with their teacher to review their work and set new learning goals. Each week, children check out books at their own reading level from the Whiz Kids library. Instruction is individualized to precisely meet each student's learning needs.