

Neuhaus News

TEACHING. READING. REACHING.

FOURTH QUARTER | 2023

Upstream: A Challenging and Honorable Journey



Message from the President & CEO
Dr. Tracy White Weeden, Ed.D.

Each of you plays a vital role in transforming lives and safeguarding futures every day when you engage with Neuhaus Education Center.

Being catalysts for change requires a profound level of determination, courage, and resilience, especially in the turbulent times we live in. Yet, the satisfaction we derive from hearing success stories is immeasurable. We hear from principals who have transformed their schools through our work and from parents whose children have transitioned from struggling and despondent students to successful and joyful learners.

If you haven't had the chance to visit one of our adult literacy classes, we invite you to do so. It's an opportunity to listen to inspiring stories and witness our dedicated instructors in action. Every member of the Neuhaus ecosystem holds a critical leadership role within their sphere of influence.

Much like salmon swimming upstream against formidable currents, we persevere in the face of teacher shortages, substitute shortages, funding challenges for schools, and the task of integrating the science of reading into education. Our mission is to provide a nurturing environment for the next generation to thrive by imparting the gift of literacy. Together, we ensure the survival and success of our offspring.

We are proud to be on this journey alongside the educators we deeply respect and honor. Together, we navigate the complex waters of illiteracy, ensuring that every child, regardless of their location, has the opportunity to become literate in this information age. Thanks to your support, teachers are empowering students with the most fundamental human right of the 21st century – the right to read.

Our team is a source of inspiration and admiration. Together, we are committed to bringing literacy success to every community, both locally and beyond, that we touch.



Neuhaus President and CEO Dr. Tracy White Weeden with adult literacy student Chau Hua and Debra Duncan on Great Day Houston discussing dyslexia awareness and adult literacy classes with Neuhaus

As we acknowledge National Dyslexia Month this October, we want to express our gratitude for your unwavering dedication to prevention and intervention. Your commitment is making a generational impact on the lives of many who would otherwise be left to struggle in an ocean of illiteracy.

With gratitude,

Tracy White Weeden

UNLOCKING LITERACY: Houston, We Have a Solution!

The literacy crisis is huge, but together we can solve it.



[RESERVE YOUR SEAT](#)

A DOUBLE FEATURE FILM VIEWING WITH PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON THE LITERACY CRISIS

What if Houston became the most literate city in the nation? What if children with dyslexia were identified before they experienced reading failure? What if systems were designed in every public, charter, and private school to ensure a literacy safety net was in place for educators to get reading right the first time?

These compelling questions underscore a problem that many may not be fully aware of: Houston, like our nation, is confronting a literacy crisis.

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) provides a nationally consistent measure of our literacy progress. Despite abundant scientific knowledge on effective reading

instruction, a staggering 68% of U.S. fourth graders are not proficient in reading. The challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022 have only worsened this decline, and the consequences are profound.

As we prepare our children for a knowledge-based economy and an information age, their decoding and fluency skills must be strong to enable them to build knowledge effectively. Beyond childhood, digital, health, and financial literacy are vital skills. Failing to equip our children with these competencies will leave them ill-prepared to navigate the complex web of literacy in a world that continually evolves. We must recognize that we are all in this together – we either collectively swim toward literacy excellence or sink as a society.

Join us Neuhaus Education Center at [Unlocking Literacy: Houston, We Have a Solution!](#) sponsored by [Gulf Coast Workforce Board – Workforce Solutions](#).

This event will include the screening of two impactful films that aims to raise awareness about the importance of literacy. Following each film, we have organized engaging panel discussions featuring educators and literacy advocates, and moderated by [Jenn White](#), host of 1A, a daily program from WAMU (public news/talk station) in Washington, D.C.

Reserve your seat today and join the conversation in transforming the lives of children and adults where literacy leads the way.

EVENT DETAILS

Tuesday, October 24, 2023

Jones Hall, St. Thomas University
3910 Yoakum Blvd., Houston, TX 77006

THE FILMS

The Truth About Reading

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (CST)

[View Trailer](#)

Aims to change the conversation around literacy by highlighting illiteracy, sub-literacy, and learning disabilities, including dyslexia.

The Right to Read

4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (CST)

[View Trailer](#)

Directed by Jenny Mackenzie. Executive produced by Levar Burton. The stories of an NAACP activist, a teacher, and two American families who fight to provide our youngest generation with the most foundational indicator of life-long success: the ability to read.

BOOK SIGNING WITH AMEER BARAKA

Following The Right to Read viewing and panel discussion

UNDIAGNOSED:

The Ugly Side of Dyslexia

Born to humble beginnings in New Orleans, Ameer Baraka's early life was as gloomy and as ill-fated as a young life could have been. In and out of the prison system as a kid for transgressions ranging from youthful indiscretions to major crimes, he was seemingly on a one-way trip to oblivion.

Almost illiterate when he went to prison, he was diagnosed with dyslexia and learned to read in his mid-twenties while behind bars. His book, [UNDIAGNOSED: The Ugly Side of Dyslexia](#) promotes early detection of the learning disability in schools and awareness and support for prison inmates in the United States.

Ameer Baraka is an Emmy® Award-nominated and daytime actor, author, and dyslexia advocate. He is currently working on Tyler Perry's number one tv show Zatima on BET-plus.

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EVENT PARTNERS

Houstonia.



UNIVERSITY OF
ST. THOMAS

GUEST PANEL SPEAKERS



Tracy White Weeden, Ed.D.
President & CEO
Neuhaus Education Center



Ameer Baraka
Emmy® Award-nominated
and daytime actor, author,
and dyslexia advocate



David Chalk
Entrepreneur &
Literacy Advocate



Dave DeJohn
Educator & Literacy
Advocate
Houston ISD



Debbie Landau
Chief Operating Officer
Lovescaping



Federico Salas-Isnardi
Director
City of Houston Mayor's
Office for Adult Literacy



Danielle Shokes-Knotts
Manager, Adult Education
& Literacy
Gulf Coast Workforce
Board- Workforce Solutions



Ruth N. López Turley, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of
Sociology
Kinder Institute for Urban
Research
Rice University



Jenn White
Host
1 A from WAMU/NPR



Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora
Superintendent of Schools
Tomball ISD

CELEBRATING DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH

Join us throughout the month as we spread awareness, share knowledge, and foster a deeper understanding of dyslexia.

Virtual Dyslexia 101

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

Noon - 1:00 p.m. (CST)

Virtual Event / [Register Now](#)

Gain insight into the challenges individuals face when learning to read, including identifying those who may have dyslexia, and explore the necessary components of reading instruction crucial to their learning process.

Virtual Dyslexia 201

Thursday, October 26, 2023

Noon - 1:00 p.m. (CST)

Virtual Event / [Register Now](#)

This session offers participants the opportunity to actively engage in structured literacy lessons for students with dyslexia and gain a better understanding of dyslexia therapy and their child's experience with it.

Virtual Dyslexia Simulation

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

3:00 - 4:30 p.m. (CST)

Virtual Event / [Register Now](#)

This simulation guides you through reading and handwriting activities in a way that allows you to experience a sense of the struggles and frustration that students with learning differences often face. Understanding the difficulties that students face can help us provide more effective support.

“*The Neuhaus simulation experience creates such important awareness. The fight, flight, freeze response was certainly experienced! When we know better, we can do better and treat other people better with heart energy.*”



Transforming the family tree through **literacy**

When a child struggles with reading, the search for answers and specialists trained in detecting learning differences can be difficult and intimidating. Neuhaus Education Center resources and referral services provide families with a welcome first step in unlocking a path to reading success.

Virtual Monthly Information Session

10:00 a.m. to noon (CST) / Virtual Event

This repeating virtual presentation includes information on reading challenges, including dyslexia, multisensory, research-based instruction, and the Texas dyslexia legislation. *Sessions are hosted in English.*

Upcoming Sessions

- [Wednesday, October 4, 2023](#)
- [Saturday, October 21, 2023](#)
- [Wednesday, November 8, 2023](#)
- [Saturday, November 11, 2023](#)
- [Saturday, December 9, 2023](#)
- [Wednesday, December 13, 2023](#)

* To register, please click the website link and register. You will receive an email confirmation of your registration.

College Panel

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

6:30 p.m. (CST) | Virtual Event

[Register Now](#)

For more than 20 years, [Neuhaus Education Center](#), [The Briarwood School](#), and the [Houston Branch of The International Dyslexia Association \(HBIDA\)](#) have hosted College Panel, an annual event where high school students have the opportunity to hear directly from current college students about how to successfully navigate college with learning differences. These students will share information about their colleges, programs available at their schools, and their strategies for success.

This panel is an inspiration for freshmen and sophomores and a necessity for juniors and seniors in high school who are planning to attend college.

Overcoming Challenges and Embracing Learning

My literacy journey with Neuhaus Education Center

By Tameka Blackshire

Overcoming personal struggles and difficulty with reading, Tameka Blackshire discovered the power of education and found the courage to seek help with support from Neuhaus in her pursuit of a brighter future.

I am delighted to share my transformative journey with Neuhaus, a journey that not only changed my life but also brought a positive shift to my son's life. It's a story of facing challenges, seeking help, and discovering the power of learning anew.

To be completely honest, there was a time when I found myself in a low place, struggling not only with my own understanding but also with my son's challenges. My son had been diagnosed with dyslexia, and the struggles he faced in school echoed deeply within me. I carried the weight of feeling like I had let him down.

The turning point came when I stumbled upon the Neuhaus Adult Literacy program. It was a moment of bravery when I thought, "What could possibly go wrong?" I reached out to the staff from the Family Support & Adult Literacy Office and that conversation marked the first time

I openly shared my struggles with reading comprehension. The reassuring words were like a lifeline, assuring me that I wasn't alone in this journey. Several months later, an appointment was scheduled and it was a pivotal step that filled me with excitement. The prospect of learning alongside my 11-year-old son was invigorating. Despite the hardships we were facing, the chance to make our lives better gave me the strength to persevere. As the program unfolded, I found myself surrounded by amazing classmates. The learning environment became a safe haven for growth. My newfound understanding led me to embrace a different approach to teaching my son. I invited him to help me with my studies, a role reversal that nurtured a deeper bond between us.

Among the many impactful aspects of the Neuhaus program, I can hold my head high now, confident in my reading abilities. Most importantly, I can support my son's reading journey and help him recognize his progress.

My advice to other adults unable to move forward in life because of a struggle with reading is this – if you find yourself doubting, unsure if seeking help is the right path, let my journey be a testament to the power of taking that leap. Neuhaus Education Center took a chance on me, and it changed my life.



Tameka Blackshire and her son, Landen.

Now, I stand proud, armed with newfound knowledge, ready to share it with my son, my grandkids, and anyone else who needs it. Remember that you're not alone in your struggles. There are paths to transformation waiting to be discovered, just as I found mine with Neuhaus Education Center.

Literacy has been described as the currency of the 21st century. Adults who learn to read make a life-changing deposit in the future of their family by overcoming social and economic limits due to functional illiteracy.

Visit www.neuhaus.org/adult-classes to learn more about our adult literacy programs.

New Dyslexia Law House Bill 3928

This law relates to dyslexia evaluations and services for Texas public school student, the provision of services for students with dyslexia and related disorders, and certain parental notice regarding the rights of parents of public-school students with disabilities.

[Learn More](#)



7 MYTHS ABOUT DYSLEXIA

MYTH

Dyslexia is rare.

FACT

The prevalence of dyslexia is estimated to be between 5-20%. Approximately 80% of students in Special Education have a reading-related learning disability.



MYTH

Dyslexia goes away once children learn to read.

FACT

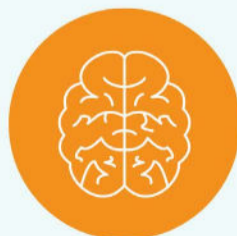
While appropriate intervention can greatly benefit students with dyslexia in obtaining the necessary skills for reading, dyslexia is a lifelong learning difference.

MYTH

Dyslexia is a vision issue.

FACT

Dyslexia is not a vision issue. fMRI studies of the brain have shown the differences between students with and without dyslexia exist in the pathways where reading develops in the brain. Intervention can help students with dyslexia to create new pathways that enable them to develop necessary reading skills.



MYTH

Reading or writing letters backward.



FACT

Reversing letters is part of a child's development. If your child is still reversing letters by the end of first grade or later, this could indicate the need for further investigation.

MYTH

Dyslexia cannot be identified until 3rd grade

FACT

Characteristics of dyslexia can be identified early. In fact, early identification is key so that students receive ample time for appropriate intervention. Many states have enacted legislation requiring all Kindergarten and Grade 1 students to be screened for dyslexia.

MYTH

Kids with dyslexia just need to work harder.

FACT

It is not the effort, but the type of intervention and instruction that moves the needle for students with dyslexia.



MYTH

Dyslexia only occurs in the English language.

FACT

Dyslexia has been studied in most languages and around the world. Given the structure of the language, dyslexia may look a little different; however, it is not identified in English alone.



FACT

Dyslexia does not discriminate.

It can be identified in people of all backgrounds, intellectual levels, and stages of life. People with dyslexia can be very intelligent and are often gifted in areas such as art, computer science, design, drama, electronics, math, mechanics, music, physics, sales, and sports.

FACT

Dyslexia can be hereditary.

Parents with dyslexia are likely to have children with dyslexia.

We're Here to Help!

Comfort, clarity, and fortified determination are just some of the benefits that come from building a community.

Families, Educators & Dyslexia Professionals

The Family Support Office provides resources and referral services to families as a welcomed first step in unlocking a path to reading success.

Dyslexia Specialists & Professionals

Neuhaus Education Center offers two Dyslexia Certification Pathways.

Contact Us

Connect with one of our Family Support Coordinators at the Family Support Office! Email us at NeuhausFSO@neuhaus.org or call (713) 664-7676.

You Can Help Your Child Booklet

Learn how families can help their child with dyslexia.

[ENGLISH VERSION](#)
[VERSIÓN EN ESPAÑOL](#)

Texas Dyslexia Handbook

Dyslexia guidelines for school identification and services.

[ENGLISH VERSION](#)
[VERSIÓN EN ESPAÑOL](#)

Neuhaus Education Center Research Guide

Provides guidance on practice-based professional development classes and curriculum components.

[VIEW GUIDE](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Find the answers to the most frequently asked questions for families with struggling readers.

[LEARN MORE](#)

A legacy of **service**

Neuhaus Education Center has built an exceptional reputation for sound stewardship of philanthropic resources. With 75 percent of its funding spent on programming, 15 percent on administration, and 10 percent on fundraising, Neuhaus has earned the confidence of funders as a gold-standard non-profit.

2023 Teaching. Reading. Reaching. Annual Fund



Make a donation to the 2023 *Teaching. Reading. Reaching.* Annual Fund today!

Neuhaus Education Center impacts thousands of educators, developing readers, and adult learners annually, and help them on their path to reading success.

Help us reach **\$150,000 by December 31, 2023** to continue the critical work towards closing reading achievement gaps through our Teacher Professional Development, community programs, and general operations.

[DONATE NOW](#)

Family Bingo Night



Get ready for a night of family fun and excitement! Join us for a late afternoon with games, food, and prizes at Family Bingo Night.

Sunday, November 5, 2023
3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
SPJST Lodge 88, Houston Heights
1435 Bell Street, Houston, TX 77008

Learn more and purchase your tickets [here](#). Sponsorship opportunities are available.

Questions?
Contact [Elizabeth Crockett](#),
Associate Director of Advancement.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

2023 Reading Circle



The Neuhaus Reading Circle event celebrates and appreciates our generous donors who have supported us with a donation of \$500+ in the past year.

Thursday, October 5, 2023
6:00 p.m.
Neuhaus Education Center
(4433 Bissonnet, Houston)

You still have time to join us for entertainment, light bites, and drinks by making a donation of \$500+ today!

[DONATE NOW](#)

Gift of **Literacy**

Gift of Literacy holiday cards are back!

Looking for the right holiday gift? Our Gift of Literacy cards support the critical work being done to further our mission to promote *Literacy for All*.

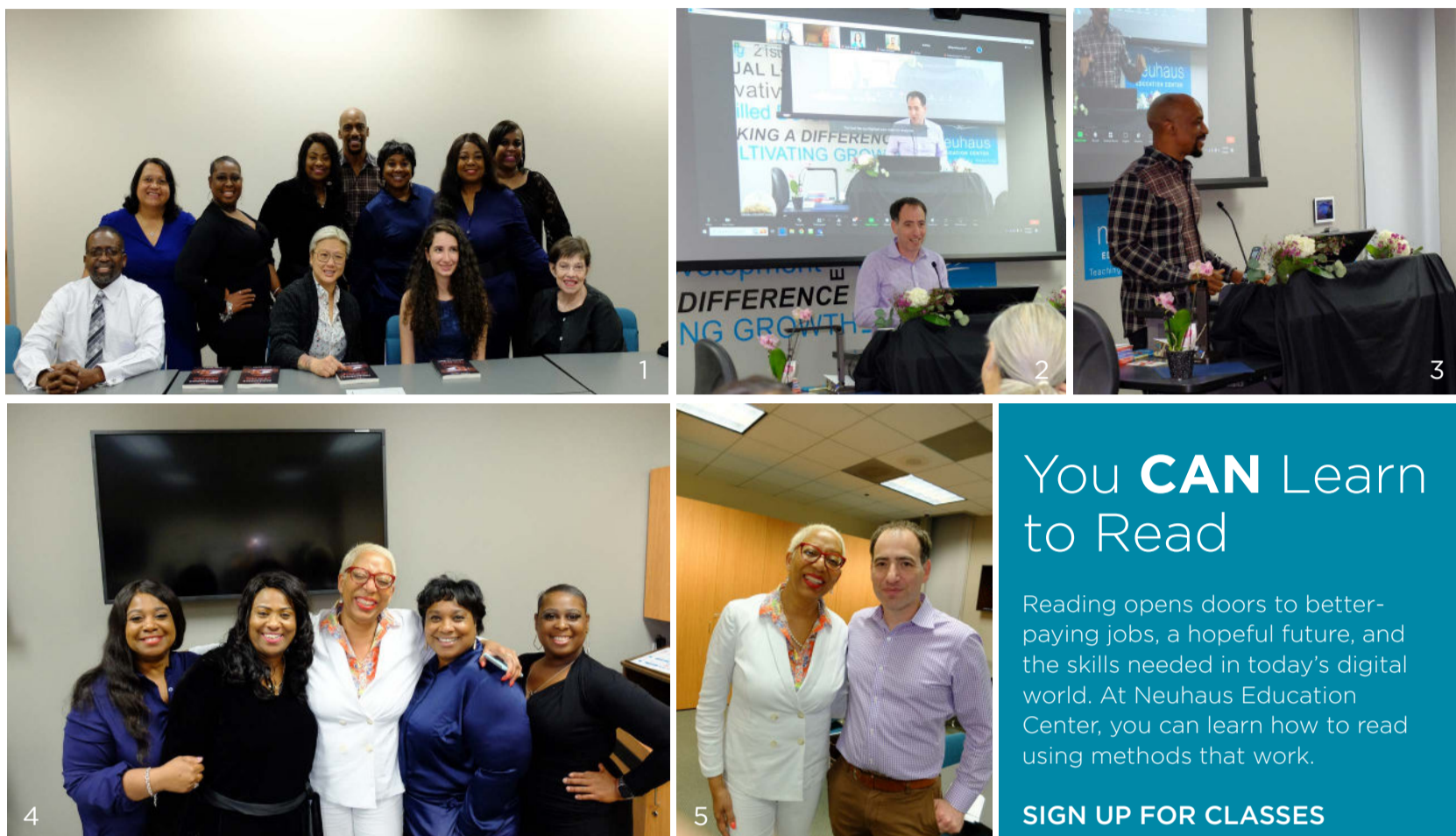
Let the people in your life know how much you care for them by making a donation to Neuhaus in their honor.

Your donation will help Neuhaus Education Center provide parents and loved ones of struggling readers with important resources to reach success.

Each card is \$20 with bundles of 6 cards for every \$100. [Learn More](#)



Adult Literacy **Graduation**



1: 2023 Margaret H. Ley Adult Literacy Program graduates with Ameer Baraka; **2:** Amir Bar, CEO of UCNLearn; **3:** Ameer Baraka speaks to the adult literacy program graduates; **4:** Dr. Tray White Weeden with adult literacy graduates Mary Gordon, Jacqueline Harvey, Tamy Perez, and Ashley Gordon; **5:** Dr. Tracy White Weeden, President & CEO of Neuhaus Education Center and Amir Bar, CEO of UCNLearn

Last spring, Neuhaus Education Center celebrated the graduation of ten students from the Margaret H. Ley Adult Literacy Program.

Highlights included students creating a poster outlining their experiences to share with attendees, guest speakers **Amir Bar**, CEO of [UCNLearn](#) and former adult literacy student, and **Ameer Baraka**, Emmy® Award-nominated and daytime actor, dyslexia advocate, and author of *Undiagnosed: The Ugly Side of Dyslexia*.

Many of the graduates opted to enroll in a pilot Alumni class that will focus on using technology to incorporate more complex reading and writing skills. The Margaret H. Ley Adult Literacy Program is free to participants and relies upon generous support from foundations and individuals.

To learn more about the program, please contact **Suz Hall**, Family Support Coordinator & Adult Literacy Instructor, at SHall@neuhaus.org.

You **CAN** Learn to Read

Reading opens doors to better-paying jobs, a hopeful future, and the skills needed in today's digital world. At Neuhaus Education Center, you can learn how to read using methods that work.

SIGN UP FOR CLASSES

Call us at (713) 664-7676 or email us at AdultLiteracy@neuhaus.org.

YOU CAN DO IT

There is a way that can work for you.

- FREE
- In-Person & Virtual Classes
- Evening Hours
- Taught by Certified Dyslexia Educators

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

You will learn with other students who also find it hard to read. Classes are small so that our teachers can give you the support you need to succeed.

[Learn More](#)



One **Houston**, One **Book**

This summer, Neuhaus adult literacy students joined the Houston Citywide Reading Initiative, [One Houston, One Book](#). The weekly book club, led by Linda McKnight, read [Reaching for the Stars](#) by José M. Hernandez about his journey to become a NASA astronaut. An event was held at the Houston Library on Thursday, August 31 to discuss with adults from across Houston.

Photo (left to right): Federico Salas-Isnardi, Director of the Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy (MOAL); Natalie Serrano, Neuhaus Education Center Adult Literacy Program Liaison; Lara Speights, Neuhaus Education Center Vice President of Family Support and Adult Literacy; John Lozano, Neuhaus Adult Literacy student



Teaching. Reading. Reaching.

Neuhaus Education Center gives teachers the knowledge to identify *why* students are struggling and *how* best to reach them.

We offer courses that describe the foundational reading skills necessary for reading instruction and how they support better reading outcomes for all students.

[VIEW CLASS SCHEDULE](#)



Neuhaus Structured Literacy Modules

The Neuhaus Structured Literacy Modules are a set of 15 modules that discuss the components of evidence-based, structured literacy instruction.

These modules are the only non-certification Neuhaus course that covers a variety of essential literacy topics in a single class. The modules are not attached to any curriculum.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Literacy solutions that **perform and transform**

Our customer service and research-based resources are tailored to a school system's needs for strengthening its inventory of learning tools, adding valuable knowledge for achieving literacy goals across each grade level.

UPCOMING CLASSES

LIVE VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION

Oral Language and Listening Comprehension

[Oct. 19, 2023](#)

Registration Deadline: Oct. 5, 2023

Live Virtual / 9:00 - 2:00 p.m. (CST)

Build foundational and higher-order thinking skills at the oral level guided by structured lesson plans.

Reading Readiness

[Oct. 26, 2023](#)

Registration Deadline: Oct. 12, 2023

Live Virtual / 9:00 - 2:00 p.m. (CST)

Build foundational decoding and comprehension skills.

Developing Metacognitive Strategies

[Oct. 31 & Nov. 1, 2023](#)

Registration Deadline: Oct. 17, 2023

Live Virtual / 9:00 - 2:00 p.m. (CST)

Provides teachers with lessons on how to build foundational and higher-level comprehension skills using lessons with a range of text.

Multisensory Grammar

[Nov. 2, 2023](#)

Registration Deadline: Oct. 19, 2023

Live Virtual / 9:00 - 2:00 p.m. (CST)

Focused on teaching the parts of speech in the English language and activities to use grammar with writing instruction.

Neuhaus Academy: Beyond the Page

[Nov. 9, 2023](#)

Registration Deadline: Nov. 9, 2023

Live Virtual / 9:00 - 2:00 p.m. (CST)

For adolescents and adults to teach decoding and vocabulary skills using words found in academic text, literature, and college-prep tests.

Language and Literacy for Young Learners: Kit 2

[Nov. 14 & 15, 2023](#)

Registration Deadline: Oct. 31, 2023

Live Virtual / 9:00 - 2:00 p.m. (CST)

Focused on teaching pre-school learners' foundational literacy skills.

Written Composition

[Nov. 16, 2023](#)

Registration Deadline: Nov. 2, 2023

Live Virtual / 9:00 - 2:00 p.m. (CST)

Focused on writing strategies to develop paragraphs.

ON-SITE AT NEUHAUS

Reading Readiness

[Oct. 26, 2023](#)

Registration Deadline: Oct. 12, 2023

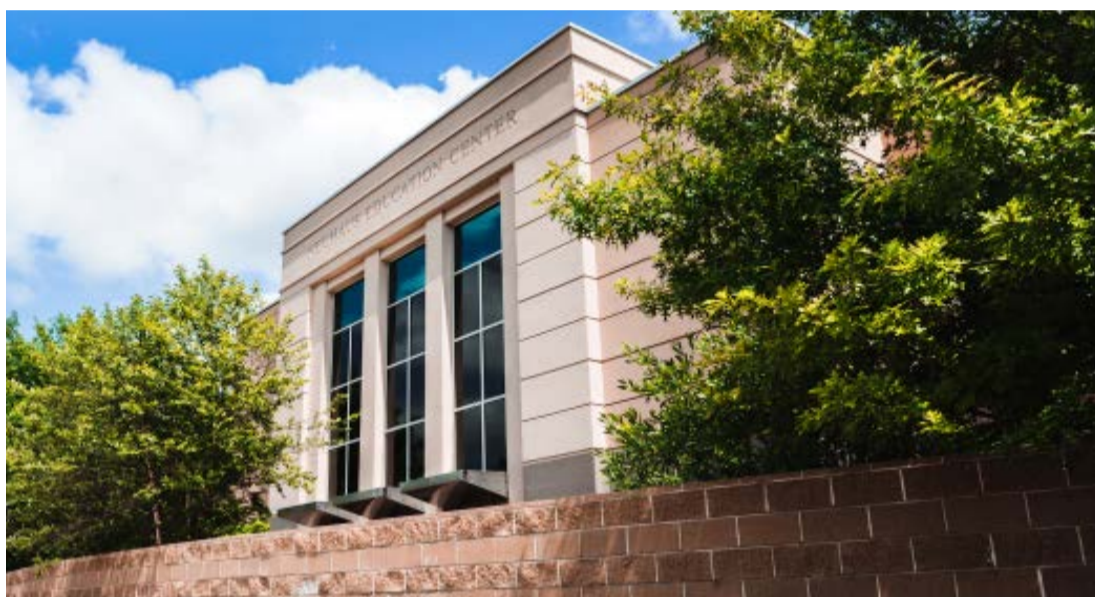
9:00 - 2:00 p.m. (CST)

Build foundational decoding and comprehension skills.

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is a nonprofit educational
organization dedicated to
promoting *Literacy for All*.

We provide evidence-based
training and support to teachers,
supplies information and resources
to families, and offers direct literacy
services to adult learners.