

# Orientation for *Basic Language Skills*



neuhaus  
EDUCATION CENTER

Teaching. Reading. Reaching.

Rai Thompson, M.Ed., LDT, CALT-QI  
Coordinator, *Basic Language Skills* Curriculum

[rthompson@neuhaus.org](mailto:rthompson@neuhaus.org)

Elisa Barnes, M. Ed., LDT, CALT-QI  
Coordinator, Preparation Programs

[ebarnes@neuhaus.org](mailto:ebarnes@neuhaus.org)

4433 Bissonnet  
Bellaire, TX 77401-3233  
713.664.7676  
[www.neuhaus.org](http://www.neuhaus.org)

## **Basic Language Skills**

*Explicit, systematic, intensive literacy instruction for students with dyslexia or related language learning differences*

### ***Basic Language Skills***

- Is a literacy instructional framework that is:
  - Systematic
  - Sequential
  - Intensive
  - Comprehensive
- Is for use by teachers and specialists working with students identified with special needs in learning to read and spell
- Is designed to be taught:
  - With the teacher’s full attention to the students with whom he or she is working
  - Preferably, to a group with only three to five students who are similar in age and reading ability. The maximum group size is eight.
  - With intensity and duration that ensures students’ progress and achievement
  - By a knowledgeable and skilled specialist
  - With a monitored and modulated pace that is adjusted to meet student needs
- Is distributed over three manuals. Each manual includes:
  - A concept manual with a scope and sequence that details a suggested order of presentation for reading and spelling, concept introductions, and practices
  - A notebook that includes suggested procedures, reproducible practice pages, and information for developing comprehension and writing skills
  - An outline for a lesson plan that provides instruction in reading, writing, and spelling as appropriate
- Meets the standards set by the
  - Texas Education Agency
  - International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council
  - International Dyslexia Association

## **Basic Language Skills - Introductory Class**

*Initial professional development for educators who provide explicit, systematic intensive literacy instruction*

*Basic Language Skills–Introductory Class* is the first part of the sequence of professional development connected to *Basic Language Skills*. Because this class is regarded as a first step, it is often referred to simply as “Basic”.

### **“Basic” meets:**

- Spring and summer semesters, 10 consecutive days
- Fall and winter semesters, one day per week for ten weeks
- Each class day, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., and includes lectures, video demonstrations, modeling of strategies, and opportunities to practice the strategies within small groups.

### **“Basic” participants learn:**

- the nature of literacy acquisition
- the facets of domains of language
- the characteristics of dyslexia
- diagnostic teaching practices
- the structure and patterns of English for reading and spelling
- strategies for developing oral language and comprehension

### **Throughout “Basic” participants:**

- participate in interactive lectures
- complete reading assignments
- demonstrate understanding in discussions, written exercises, and exams
- observe and practice multisensory lesson routines that promote accurate decoding,
- fluency, and text understanding

### **“Basic”:**

- Focuses on the introduction of initial reading, writing, and spelling Involves 71 hours of professional development including 60 hours distributed over
- 10 consecutive days or weeks and two follow-up classes, *Book 1A* and *Book 1B*
- Includes 2 reviews of demonstration lessons and consultation with a professional development staff member

*Basic Language Skills* concepts taught include:

- Word Recognition Skills
  - Phonemic Awareness
  - Sound/Symbol Correspondences
  - Syllable Types
  - Syllable Division
  - High Frequency Words
  - Contractions and Possessives
  - Morphemes – suffixes
  - Prosody
- Handwriting
  - Letter Strokes
  - Letter Connections
- Spelling Skills
  - Phonemic Awareness
  - Recurring Spelling Patterns
  - Spelling Rules
  - Irregular Word Learning
- *Basic Language Skills – Introductory Class* materials include:
  - *Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills* (Birsh, 2011)
  - *Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills Activity Book* (Carreker & Birsh, 2011)
  - *Basic Language Skills, Book 1*
  - *Scientific Spelling*
  - *The Colors and Shapes of Language*, with CD
  - *Initial Reading Deck*, with deck dividers and additional cards
  - Chart Sets
  - Decodable readers *Tracks* and *Wishes* (Multisensory Teaching Approach, MTA)
- Composition
  - Nouns, Verbs, Noun Markers
  - Sentence Structure
  - Descriptive Paragraph
  - Narrative Paragraph
  - Summary Writing
- Oral Language Skills
  - Naming
  - Describing
  - Story Retelling
  - Vocabulary
- Comprehension Skills
  - Text Structure
  - Activating World Knowledge
  - Inner Dialogue
  - Visualizing
  - Summarizing

## **Prerequisites:**

Basic Language Skills is an in-depth, college-level class comprised of lecture, demonstration, and practicum. There is daily homework and preparation. All class requirements must be completed successfully for a participant to receive a certificate of completion and to be provisionally accepted into a preparation program, during which practicum continues. In an effort to ensure that success, instructional faculty will be conducting personal interviews with all candidates.

The interview will consist of a reciprocal question/answer session to determine:

- the applicant's long-term goals for using the curriculum
- if the applicant's current schedule will allow attendance all 10 days
- if the applicant's current schedule will allow punctual and complete attendance
- if the applicant's current schedule will accommodate the time investment required to complete all assignments

The interview will also allow time to:

- assess facility with the production of the 44 English speech sounds through a Phoneme Inventory. Sound generation, fluency and stimulability will be assessed through the use of a Likert scale. An average score of 3 or better is required.
- assess facility with written language through the submission of a writing sample that will be evaluated according to a specific rubric. A score of 10 or better is required.

Attendance at Neuhaus Education Center for the personal interview will allow applicants to meet some of the faculty assigned to the Basic Language Skills class, and is highly recommended. Applicants who live outside the Houston area should contact Rai Thompson to discuss arrangements for a personal interview.

**Prior** to beginning "Basic", participants must:

- Attend *Reading Readiness*, a class designed for work with students who still need the preliminary reading skills of phonemic awareness, letter recognition, and oral language
- Participate in a personal interview with the class coordinator
  - Complete a phoneme inventory
  - Submit a writing sample

## Prerequisites (Continued):

- Register and pay a minimum of the nonrefundable \$50 deposit
- Submit a registration form via mail, fax, or email
- Sign a statement indicating that you understand the requirements of "Basic"
- At least **four weeks** prior to beginning SUMMER "Basic":
  - Submit a copy of your college transcript with degree posted or a copy of your diploma
  - Pay the remaining balance for the cost of "Basic"
- At least **two weeks** prior to beginning fall, winter or spring "Basic":
  - Submit a copy of your college transcript with degree posted or a copy of your diploma
  - Pay the remaining balance for the cost of "Basic"

## Class Requirements

**During** "Basic", participants must:

- Attend all **10** scheduled classes
  - 10 consecutive days, or
  - One day a week for 10 weeks
- Class time is 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
  - Plan to arrive by 8:15 a.m.
  - Lunch is from 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Participate in daily activities
  - Attend to lectures
  - Engage in supervised, small group practice activities
- Successfully teach a lesson to your practicum group
- Complete homework assignments
  - Reading assignments
  - Preparation for practicum activities
  - Practice activities from an activity manual
- Submit cursive handwriting samples
- Demonstrate proficiency producing the 44 speech sounds of English
- Successfully complete a final exam (open-book)

## Is this the right class for you?

- Will you be able to devote the time needed for the ten days of the *Basic Language Skills – Introductory Class*?
  - Attend class daily?
  - Complete daily homework assignments?
  - Prepare for practicum activities?
  - Organize the material you receive in class?
- Will you have the necessary time to devote to teaching students who need *Basic Language Skills*?
  - Devote adequate time to provide the intensity and duration that ensures students' progress and achievement? Typically, therapists teach four days a week for 50-60 minutes per session
  - Understand that the length of instruction will be based on your students' needs and that it will take a student a minimum of two years to complete the program?

## Yes?

If you have decided that *Basic Language Skills* is right for you and your students:

- Fill out and sign agreement letter at the end of this handout and send it to Neuhaus.
  - Mail: Neuhaus Education Center  
Attn: Registrar  
4433 Bissonnet  
Bellaire, TX 77401-3233
  - Fax: 713.664.4744
  - Email: [mjimenez@neuhaus.org](mailto:mjimenez@neuhaus.org) and include the text of the agreement letter in the body of your email.
- Register for your chosen class dates.

## **Don't Stop Learning! Continue Professional Development**

- Enroll in Neuhaus classes so that you can offer more in-depth help to your students, or
- Participate in the Neuhaus Dyslexia Specialist Preparation Program to comply with the Texas Dyslexia Law or apply for licensure

### ***Suggested Sequence for Professional Development after “Basic”***

- Year One
  - *Reading Readiness*
  - *Basic Language Skills – Introductory Class, Book 1A, Book 1B*
  - *Multisensory Grammar*
  - *Developing Metacognitive Skills*
- Year Two
  - *Basic Language Skills – Advanced, Book 2*
  - *Written Composition Fundamentals*
  - *Developing Vocabulary for Reading Success - Online*
  - *Spelling Development Webinar (CEUs on Demand)*
  - *Basic Language Skills – Book 3 (1 day class)*
- Outside and/or Neuhaus Education Center Related Classes
  - 30+ hours

## Neuhaus Tier III Preparation Programs:

- Provide extensive coursework and supervised practica leading to certification for teachers and therapists working with dyslexia and other related disorders.
- Have two levels encompassing three tracks. Both levels are accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council.

### **Preparation Program Prerequisites**

- Preparation Program, Level 1
  - Bachelor's degree
- Preparation Program, Level 2-A
  - Bachelor's degree
- Preparation Program, Level 2-B
  - Post-graduate degree
- All levels require successful completion of "Basic"

## Neuhaus Preparation Program, Level 1

### **Dyslexia Practitioner**

Successful completion of the 60-hour *Basic Language Skills-Introductory Class* allows individuals provisional acceptance into Neuhaus Education Center's Preparation Program, Level 1. Active participants in the Preparation Program may receive student referrals from the Family Support Office at Neuhaus.

Upon completion of Preparation Program, Level 1, an individual is eligible to sit for the Alliance Registration Exam at the teacher level. Passage of this exam qualifies the individual for membership in the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) at the Associate Teaching Level, and the individual is eligible to apply to the State of Texas for licensure as a Dyslexia Practitioner.

Dyslexia Practitioners must work under supervision.

## Requirements for the Neuhaus Preparation Program, Level 1:

<b>Professional Preparation Requirements.....</b>	<b>85 Hr</b>
<i>Reading Readiness</i> .....	5.5 Hr
<i>Basic Language Skills – Introductory Class, Book 1A, Book 1B...</i> .....	71 Hr
<i>Multisensory Grammar</i> .....	3.5 Hr
Current Neuhaus prices are available on the Neuhaus Education Center website or on printed class schedules	
Outside and/or Neuhaus Related Classes (costs will vary).....	5 Hr

**Curriculum Teaching Requirements ..... 85 Hr**

Teaching experience is accumulated in two situations. A teaching situation is defined as teaching an individual with a language learning difference and/or small group of individuals with such a difference. Each teaching situation is submitted to the coordinator of the Preparation Program, Level 1, for review and approval. Teaching through *Basic Language Skills Book 1* is required.

**Demonstration Requirements ..... Minimum of 5 Lessons**

- Demonstrations may be live and/or videoed and are distributed at or near the following concepts, which indicates coverage of the curriculum. They will be accepted only one demonstration at a time and teachers must receive feedback from instructors prior to any subsequent submission.
  - Concept 20
  - Concept 35
  - Concept 45
  - Concept 55
  - Concept 65.

Demonstration lessons are planned so that each of the following is presented at least once: auditory/visual discovery, the dictation procedure, extended reading with a reader, grammar, and naming and/or describing.

**Documentation Requirements**

- New Student/Class Report is submitted to describe each teaching situation.
- Progress Reports are submitted for each teaching situation after each Mastery Check is administered. Progress reports that reflect a minimum of 85 teaching hours are required.

**Professional Development Requirements ..... 2 Book Reports**

The practitioner-in-training reads and summarizes two books listed as teacher references in *Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills* (Birsh, 2011).

**A practitioner-in-training has two years after first enrollment in the program to complete all requirements.**

## **Neuhaus Preparation Program, Level 2**

The two tracks within Level 2 provide in-depth preparation for therapists working with individuals with dyslexia and other related disorders.

### ***Level 2-A, Reading Therapist***

#### **Bachelor's Degree Required**

Successful completion of the 60-hour *Basic Language Skills-Advanced Class* allows individuals with a bachelor's degree provisional acceptance into Neuhaus Education Center's Preparation Program, Level 2-A, Reading Therapist. Active participants in the Preparation Program may receive student referrals from the Family Support Office at Neuhaus.

Upon completion of Preparation Program, Level 2 A - Reading Therapist, an individual is eligible to sit for the Alliance Registration Exam at the therapy level.

Passage of this exam qualifies the individual as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT).

ALTA members at the CALT level who completed Preparation Program Level 2-A may apply for licensure in the State of Texas as Dyslexia Practitioners.

Dyslexia Practitioners must work under supervision. Neuhaus referrals for dyslexia therapy may be made to graduates of Level 2-A, provided these individuals will agree to work under the supervision of Neuhaus and will:

- Provide quarterly progress reports to the Family Support Office for any students they serve who were referred by Neuhaus.
- Pay an annual fee of \$100 per student to cover the review of quarterly reports and remain active on the Neuhaus referral list.

### ***Level 2-B. Dyslexia Therapist***

#### **Advanced Degree Required**

Successful completion of the 60-hour *Basic Language Skills-Advanced Class* allows individuals with a post-graduate degree provisional acceptance into Neuhaus Education Center's Preparation Program, Level 2-B, Dyslexia Therapist.

Upon completion of Preparation Program, Level 2 B - Dyslexia Therapist, an individual is eligible to sit for the Alliance Registration Exam at the therapy level.

Passage of this exam qualifies the individual as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT), and the individual is eligible to apply to the State of Texas for licensure as a Dyslexia Therapist.

Neuhaus Education Center will refer students to individuals pursuing, or those who have completed, the Level 2-B Preparation Program, to become a Dyslexia Therapist.

## Requirements for the Preparation Programs, Level 2-A and -B:

<b>Professional Preparation Requirements</b> .....	<b>200 Hr</b>
<i>Reading Readiness</i> .....	5.5 Hr
<i>Basic Language Skills – Introductory Class, Book 1A, Book 1B</i> ... ..	71 Hr
<i>Multisensory Grammar</i> .....	3.5 Hr
<i>Developing Metacognitive Skills</i> .....	10 Hr
<i>Basic Language Skills – Advanced. Book 2</i> .....	65.5 Hr
<i>Written Composition Fundamentals</i> .....	3.5 Hr
<i>Developing Vocabulary for Reading Success – Online</i> .....	3.5 Hr
<i>Spelling Development Webinar (CEUs on Demand)</i> .....	2 Hr
<i>Basic Language Skills - Book 3</i> .....	6 Hr

Current Neuhaus prices are available on the Neuhaus Education Center website or on printed class schedules

Outside and/or Neuhaus Related Classes (costs will vary)..... 30 Hr

### **Curriculum Teaching Requirements** ..... **700 Hr**

Teaching experience is accumulated in three situations. A teaching situation is defined as teaching an individual with a language learning difference and/or small group of individuals with such a difference. Your teaching situations must be approved by the coordinator of the Preparation Program, Level 2. Teaching experience includes beginning *Basic Language Skills* at the initial level (*Book 1*) and progressing through the advanced level (*Book 3*).

### **Demonstration Requirements**..... **Minimum of 10 Lessons**

- Demonstrations may be live and/or videoed and are distributed at or near the following concepts, which indicates coverage of the curriculum. They will be accepted only one demonstration at a time and teachers must receive feedback from instructors prior to any subsequent submission.
- *Book 1*:
  - Concept 20
  - Concept 35
  - Concept 45
  - Concept 55
  - Concept 65
- Demonstration lessons are planned so that each of the following is presented at least once: auditory/visual discovery, the dictation procedure, extended reading with a reader, grammar, and naming and/or describing.

- *Book 2:*
  - Concept 80
  - Concept 90
  - Concept 100
  - Concept 110
- *Book 3:* 1 Demonstration
- Demonstration lessons in Books 2 and 3 are planned so that each of the following is presented at least once: fluency practice with a passage, comprehension with a passage, paragraph writing, Developing Metacognitive Skills, and History of the Language.

***Documentation Requirements***

- New Student/Class Report is submitted to describe each teaching situation.
- Progress Reports are submitted for each teaching situation after each Mastery Check is administered. Progress reports that reflect a minimum of 700 teaching hours spanning the curriculum are required.
- 1 Case Study

***Professional Development Requirements ..... 4 Book Reports***

The therapist-in-training reads and summarizes four books listed as teacher references in *Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills* (Birsh, 2011).

**The requirements for Level 2, either A or B, must be completed within five years of enrollment in the Preparation Program.**

**Questions?**

For more information about *Basic Language Skills*, contact Rai Thompson at [rthompson@neuhaus.org](mailto:rthompson@neuhaus.org) or 713.664.7676.

For more information about the Preparation Programs, please contact Elisa Barnes at [ebarnes@neuhaus.org](mailto:ebarnes@neuhaus.org) or 713.664.7676.

