The Radnor Township School District's elementary schools are pleased to share that new language arts resources have been purchased for the 2011-2012 school year. Below is a snapshot of what you can expect to see and experience as the year unfolds.

District-wide: All general education classrooms K-5 across the district will be using resources from the Developmental Studies Center (DSC). Since 1980, DSC has conducted research and developed programs that help children achieve academically and develop socially. DSC programs strive to build children's capacity to think clearly and critically while simultaneously deepening their commitment to the values of kindness, helpfulness, and personal responsibility. The work of DSC is supported by more than 40 foundations and government agencies. www.devstu.org

Language Arts Program Components: The core resource for comprehension instruction will be the Making Meaning program. Written language instruction will be based on Being a Writer and vocabulary development will be directly addressed through the Making Meaning Vocabulary program. Grades K-5 will also continue direct instruction in the area of word study. Guided Reading (GR) at your child’s instructional level, Independent Daily Reading (IDR), and daily opportunities to write, will round out the language arts block. Additional resources will continue to be used at times to meet individual needs for re-teaching or acceleration. All of these program components are aligned to both the Pennsylvania State Standards and Common Core State Standards and all go beyond the minimum expectations of the standards to teach higher level thinking and allow for the authentic application of knowledge and skills.

Making Meaning (MM): This program uses nonfiction and fiction read-aloud books to teach students nine different comprehension strategies while also creating a supportive community of readers. In the classroom the teacher applies the gradual release of responsibility model to teach to mastery. Through this “I do”, “We do”, “You do” model, each student receives direct instruction through teacher modeling, time to practice, an opportunity to share and, most critically, an opportunity to apply at their instructional level what was learned. http://www.devstu.org/making-meaning

Making Meaning Vocabulary (MMV): This vocabulary supplement teaches high-utility words found in the MM read-aloud texts along with strategies students can use to unlock word meanings when they are reading independently. By using words from the books taught in the program, students learn words in context. Developers chose Tier II words; vivid verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; words with multiple meanings; words that use prefixes and suffixes to determine word meaning; and words that are compelling for students to learn and use. The goal of Tier II vocabulary instruction is to have students, without prompting, accurately using new vocabulary words in their everyday speaking and writing. http://www.devstu.org/making-meaning-whats-included-vocabulary

Being a Writer (BAW): BAW uses trade books for genre immersion and author studies that encourage young writers to consider author’s craft. It also integrates writing instruction with regular community-building elements and guided partner work to develop in students a sense of autonomy, belonging, and competence. BAW combines the use of explicit strategy instruction with student empowerment, cooperative learning and reflection to create a writer’s workshop that is engaging and powerful for the learner. http://www.devstu.org/being-a-writer

Word Study: Grades K – 5 will continue to use the research-based word study programs already in place.  
4/5: Spelling Connections word study program that they will continue in until grade 8. http://www.zaner-bloser.com/spellingconnections/

Handwriting: Even in the computer age, the ability to print as well as read and write cursive are important. Handwriting is part of the language arts block as follows:
K/1: Wilson Fundations includes an integrated handwriting component that allows teachers to use a multisensory approach to teach how a letter looks, sounds and is formed.
4/5: Issues with legibility are addressed on an as needed basis using differentiated instruction whole class, small group or one-on-one. Resources from the Zaner Bloser Handwriting program are available for this purpose. http://www.zaner-bloser.com/Zaner-Bloser-Handwriting.html