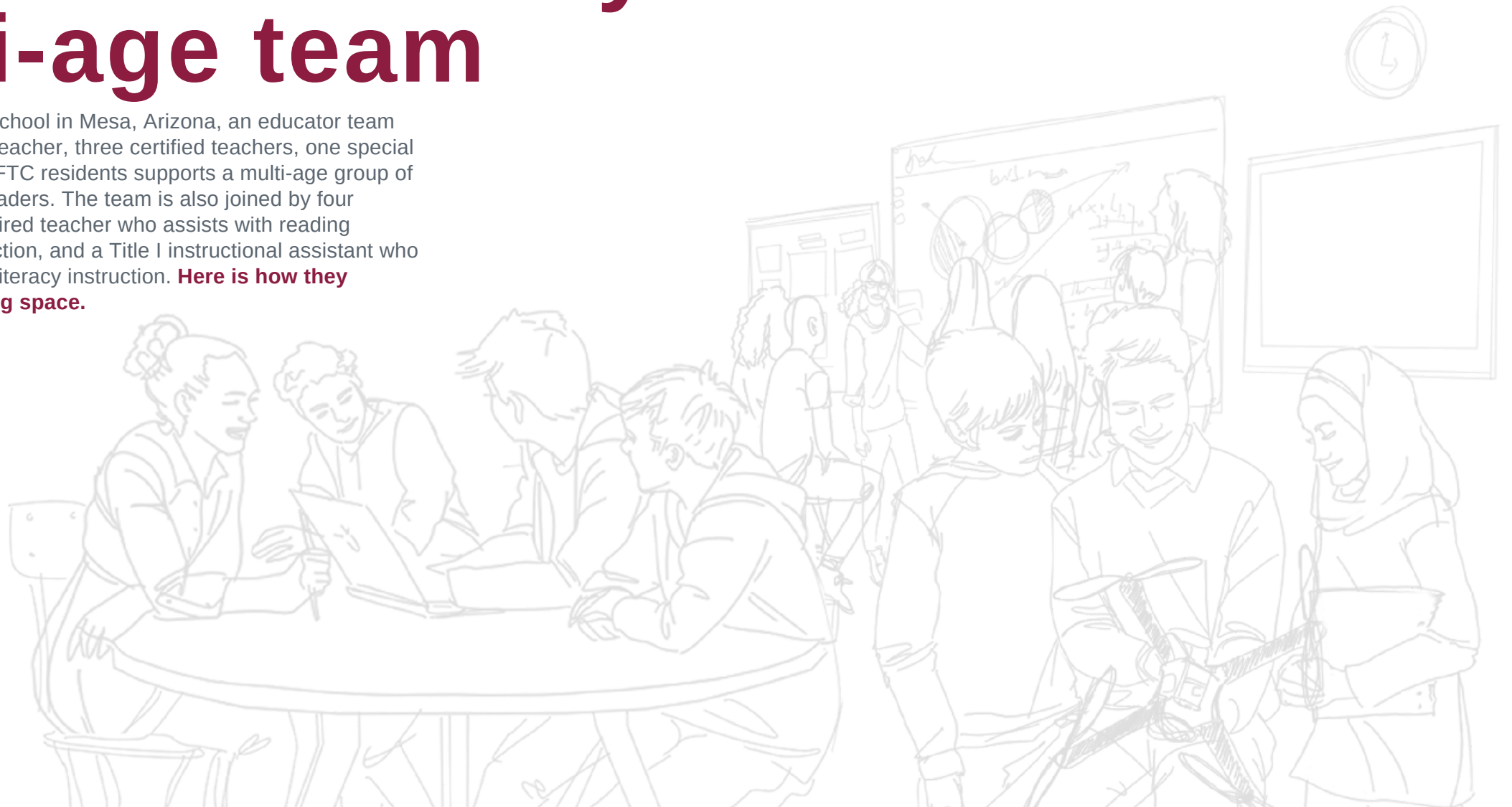


Learning space layout: Sousa Elementary School's Multi-age team

At Sousa Elementary School in Mesa, Arizona, an educator team consisting of one lead teacher, three certified teachers, one special educator and three MLFTC residents supports a multi-age group of 104 first and second graders. The team is also joined by four specials teachers, a retired teacher who assists with reading assessment and instruction, and a Title I instructional assistant who supports personalized literacy instruction. **Here is how they designed their learning space.**



Key elements of the learning space

Sousa's multi-age learning spaces include four connected classrooms and the Explore Factory, a larger room connected through an exterior breezeway.

▶ Explore Factory

During Explore Factory, students build agency in their own learning by brainstorming topics that interest them, asking a question about that topic, engaging in research and testing responses to their question, and presenting their findings to their peers. The team has set aside a space especially for this work.

▶ Variety of seating options

Students have a variety of seating options: larger tables, individual desks, low desks with floor seating, couches, chairs, stools, rugs and even a tent. Students typically select their own seats based upon the type of work they are doing (e.g., independent, small-group), and educators regularly reconfigure the space according to the requirements of specific learning activities.

