

Teaching Reading in the Middle Grades

12:299:516 02

3 Credits

Instructor: Maureen Hall	maureenmchall@gmail.com
GSE Phone Number 732 932 7496	10 Seminary Pl
Office Hours: by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: none
Mode of Instruction: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Directions about where to get permission numbers: from the instructor

Learning goals

- At the end of the course, students will be able to
- articulate a philosophy of literacy instruction that emphasizes the interactive and integrative nature of language and build upon these connections when creating learning opportunities
- demonstrate knowledge and skills needed for creating and implementing a literacy curriculum using small and large group work, collaborative learning, conferencing, and individual work, based on professional standards
- identify, plan, and design literacy instruction based on students' needs, developmental progress, learning styles, and prior knowledge (differentiation)
- identify and understand the characteristics, uses, advantages, and limitations of different assessments that evaluate how students learn, what they know and are able to do, and recognize what kinds of experiences will support student growth and development
- critically reflect on his/her teaching and learning
- identify and use available resources and materials for instructional planning
- articulate how educational research can be used as a means for continuous learning and development

Course catalogue description

The course focuses on literacy skills for grades 3 – 8 (we'll adapt it for high school teachers!). The emphasis is on higher order comprehension skills, vocabulary development, content area reading, writing, and struggling readers. Upper elementary and adolescent literature is explored.

Class materials:

Required text: Tompkins, G. E. (2009). Literacy in the middle grades: Teaching reading and writing to fourth through eighth graders (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson. (ISBN: 978-0132348492)

Other required texts:

- one award winning children's or young adult novel published since approximately 2004
- one professional book from a list provided in class for your professional discussion group

Additional course materials:

- a variety of required readings in the form of PDF files, websites, online texts, etc. will be available through the Rutgers library system and/or from your course instructor
- Common Core English Language Arts Standards
- New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders

Class wiki site: <http://PerthAmboyLiteracyCourse.wikispaces.com>

Grading and Activities Your course final grade will be based on attendance, participation in the discussions, reflection on teaching, lesson plans, quizzes and exams that you will design, video analysis of your lesson, a research project, and teaching portfolio. Each assignment can be improved, as many corrections as needed are encouraged. Note that I will not assign you a course grade before you submit all required portfolio items (teaching philosophy, classroom management plan, lesson and unit plan, and parent-teacher reflection).

Activity	Total points
• weekly attendance, preparation and participation (both in class and on the wiki)	30%
• unit plan	20%
• literacy investigation (including round table discussion)	20%
• professional discussion group and workshop presentation	20%
• book talk	10%

grading scale

A = 90-100
 B+ = 87 – 89
 B = 80 – 86
 C+ = 77 – 79
 C = 70 – 76
 F = 69 and below

grading summary

outstanding work
 very good work
 good work
 satisfactory work
 satisfactory work
 failing work (or stopped attending without withdrawing)

Notes about assignments

- Any assignment that has not been given an approved extension and that is more than a week late can receive a failing grade. Unless arrangements are made in advance of the due date, late papers and weekly assignments must be handed in (in person, please) on time. Any lateness can result in a lowered grade. **It will be important to check the wiki daily.**
- Only work that meets professional standards will be accepted. We are teachers; we are expected to clearly communicate information to parents, administrators, and colleagues. You are expected to hand in proofread work.
- I am happy to give feedback and read drafts of assignments as long as you submit them AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE they are due. You will then be able to use the feedback to make revisions before the assignment is graded.
- In most cases, once a grade has been given, you may choose to revise the assignment. A revised assignment can receive a maximum of 95% of the assignment's total point value. In addition, revisions will only be accepted within a two-week period after you receive your initial grade.

Confidentiality

When discussing classroom situations during course sessions, do so carefully. Mask the name of a student on any written or visual work shared in class or used in an assignment. When discussing teaching practices you have observed at school, be mindful of maintaining a tone of professional courtesy. Under no circumstances should you relate stories from classrooms that may be embarrassing to teachers or students or that include sensitive information about a child or a family.

Assignments & Grading

More detailed information about each assignment will be available on the wiki.

Weekly attendance, preparation and active participation **30%**

Your participation and attendance are necessary for you and your classmates to get the most out of this course. You are expected to attend EVERY class session, having completed all required readings. I understand, however, that extenuating circumstances might result in an absence. If you must miss class, please email me before class begins to indicate the date and the reason for your absence.

A large part of your participation grade will be based upon our online discussion. The class wiki site will be used for this purpose. Each week, one person will assume the role of the discussant. That person will post comments/questions for the class in a post of not fewer than 250 words. **The discussant must post by Thursday at 6:00 p.m.** Each student in the class, including the discussant, is also responsible for posting at least twice each week, in response to classmates. **All posting must be completed by Monday at 6:00 p.m.**

Book Talk **10%**

You will read an award-winning text appropriate for use in your grade (or another, with prior approval) and present a book talk. The book should be new to you and published since 2004 (unless prior approval has been granted). You will sign up on the wiki to present this short (about 5 minutes) book talk to the class. Examples of awards include the Newbery Medal, Pura Belpre Award, and Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Medal (other book awards can also be considered.)

Literacy Investigation Paper and Discussion **20%**

As reflective teachers, you will actively connect your professional readings to what you see and do in your classroom. For this paper, you will write a detailed description of a literacy learning/teaching practice, describe/explain its benefits and challenges, and connect to research/professional texts to support your analysis. For example, you could link to articles that help you to more deeply understand the rationale for the practice or you could link to research that suggests how you might make changes to the practice. You will share what you learned with a small group during a roundtable discussion. N.B.: in addition to course readings, you will cite at least two peer-reviewed articles that are not required reading for this course.

Professional Discussion Group and Workshop Presentation **20%**

You will participate in a professional discussion group during the second half of the semester. This will include selecting a professional text to study (from titles introduced in class). Groups will be formed based on interest and/or grade level, and you will have the opportunity to engage in dialog and activities centered on the pedagogical and theoretical presentations of literacy instruction offered in the texts. Upon completion of the experience, your group will conduct a mini-workshop (no longer than 30 minutes).

Unit Plan**20%**

The Early Phase Unit Plan is a requirement for your portfolio and will be submitted to the sakai teacher portfolio. You will complete and upload a unit plan in your area of expertise.

Templates, directions, rubrics, etc. will be provided during the course of the semester and will be posted under “assignments” on our wikispace.

Due Dates, etc.

The value of the wiki is that it will be updated at least weekly by your instructor and more likely daily!

That is the place to check what you might have missed if you are absent from a class. It is also where I will share rubrics, due dates, and assignment details during the semester. **Try to check the wiki daily.**