

**Teaching Reading in the Elementary School**  
**Spring 2014 15:299:516 (01)**  
**3 Credits**

Instructor: Katherine Barrood	Email: katherine.barrood@rutgers.edu
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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: contact 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. 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 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
- a copy of the Common Core English Language Arts Standards
- 3x3 post-it notes

## **Grading and Activities:**

Weekly attendance, preparation and participation (both in class and on the wiki)	<b>25%</b>
Unit Plan	<b>20%</b>
Literacy Investigation (including round table discussion)	<b>20%</b>
Professional Discussion Group and Workshop Presentation	<b>25%</b>
Book Talk	<b>10%</b>

### **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. Any lateness can result in a lowered grade. Unless arrangements are made in advance of the due date, papers and weekly assignments must be handed in/completed on time. It is your responsibility to keep up with assignments and due dates as posted on our syllabus and through our class wiki site.
- 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.
- 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 in class and on the wiki.

### **Weekly attendance, preparation, and active participation 25%**

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. Missing more than two classes, arriving late/leaving early regularly, or a lack of active participation will result in a lowered grade.

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, I will post a question for the class. Every student is required to respond to the question **by midnight on Friday** with a post of not fewer than 250 words, referencing course readings to support your response. Each student must also respond to 2 classmate's posts **by midnight on Sunday**.

### **Book Talk 10%**

You will read a text appropriate for use in grades 3 through 8 and present a book talk. The book should be new to you and published since 2004. You will sign up to present this short (about 5 minutes) book talk to the class. Sign-ups will be conducted through our class wiki. Presentations will begin Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup>. **Post the title, author, year, and other required information on our wiki site by midnight on the Sunday prior to your presentation.**

**Book Talk Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Literacy Investigation Paper and Discussion 20%**

The classrooms you will be visiting during the course of the semester will bring relevant practical learning opportunities to our course. As reflective teachers, you will actively connect your professional readings to what you see and do in the classroom. For this paper, you will write a detailed description of observed literacy learning/teaching, 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 have learned with a small group during a roundtable

discussion. **Note: In addition to course readings, you will cite at least two peer-reviewed articles selected and read for this assignment which is not required reading for this course.** Submit 6-8 pages, double spaced, using 12 point font and 1 inch margins.

**Due Date :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Professional Discussion Group and Workshop Presentation** **25%**

You will participate in a Professional Discussion Group (PDG) 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 you will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue 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) which will include a power point presentation and a hands-on activity. Recommended texts for your PDG will be posted on our wikispace and will be introduced in class.

**Workshop Date :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Unit Plan** **20%**

As teachers, you will need to think through how you might plan instruction for an extended period of time, such as one to two weeks. In addition, teachers in grades 3-8 often integrate literacy instruction and content area teaching. For this assignment, you will complete a Unit Plan with 5-10 lessons which integrates literacy instruction and content area teaching. A template, more detailed directions, and a rubric will be provided during the course of the semester and will be posted on our wikispace.

**Due Date :** \_\_\_\_\_