

## Teaching Reading in the Elementary and Middle School

15:299:516 (90)

Spring 14 Online

3 credits

Instructor: Kristine Shurina	kshurina@gmail.com
Phone Number 973-885-1147	
Office Hours: Online or phone by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: None
Mode of Instruction: <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input checked="" 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

### Course Catalog Description:

Focus on literacy skills for grades 3-8. Emphasis on higher order comprehension skills, vocabulary development, content area reading, writing, and struggling readers. Upper elementary and adolescent literature is explored.

### Course Goals and Objectives

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:

- Articulate a philosophy of literacy instruction that emphasizes the interactive and integrative nature of language and builds upon these connections when creating learning opportunities.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills that are 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.
- Identify and understand the characteristics, uses, advantages, and limitations of different types of assessments for evaluating how students learn, what they know and are able to do, and what kinds of experiences will support students' 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.

## **Required Books:**

*Teaching Literacy in the Middle Grades* by G. Tompkins, 2nd Edition

*Writing a Life: Teaching Memoir* by Katherine Bomer

*The Reading Zone* by Nancy Atwell

*Literacy Breakthroughs* by Susan E. Israel

## **Recommended Reading:**

*Thinking Through Genre* by Heather Lattimer

*Kick-Start Your Class* by LouAnne Johnson

**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 in the field, be mindful of maintaining a tone of professional courtesy. Under no circumstances (whether in class or in casual conversation with friends) should you relate stories from classrooms or schools that may be embarrassing to teachers or students or that include sensitive information about a child or family.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** You can find the Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students at the following site: <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>. You are responsible for understanding and adhering to the policy. Please pay particular attention to the information provided on Cheating, Fabrication, and Plagiarism. Also, please become familiar with copyright laws and the Internet.

**Citing Sources:** In our online discussions and assignments please use APA format to document your sources.

## **Grading Scale**

A = 90% and above

B+ = 87 – 89.9%

B = 80–86.9%

C+=77–79.9%

C = 70 – 76.9%

D = 60 – 69.9%

F= below 60%

## **Grading Summary**

A = Outstanding work

B = Good work

C = Satisfactory work

D = Poor work

F = Failing work

## **Brief Overview of Assessment for Course:**

### **20% Online Discussion of Assigned Reading**

Your initial discussion posts should be approximately 250-500 words; responses to others should be approximately 100 words.

Discussion posts should be supported by your readings and properly cited using APA format.

All posts and responses to posts should be completed by the due dates that appear below in this syllabus. Posts made after we have moved on to the next unit will receive half credit at best.

It is advisable to not use postings such as “I agree,” “I don’t know either,” “ditto,” etc. These types of responses take up space and do not add anything substantial to the conversation. It is important to know that such responses will not be counted for assignment credit.

Respect each other’s ideas, feelings and experience when posting responses and keep confidentiality in mind when referencing experience.

### **20% Writing Unit of Study**

This project will be done in small groups of two to three. If possible, I will try to match you with other colleagues who work with similar grade levels of students.

For this assignment you will create a writing unit of study that includes immersion materials for students, at least one lesson for each stage of the writing process and an assessment instrument

for the final product. Also include a brief overview of the unit and refer to how it is supported by our course reading.

You can choose any genre for this project. Some ideas to consider are memoirs, blogs, novels, children's picture books, essays, photo essays, short stories, feature magazine articles, responding in online discussion forums. I've even seen a unit created out of obituaries.

Immersion materials should include at least two of the following: student samples, professional samples and/or a teacher created sample. Student samples do not have to be your own students' work. You can find samples online.

You will need a total of five lesson plans including one for each of the following: prewriting, drafting, editing, revising and publishing/sharing. Lesson plans should include objectives, link to core curriculum content standards, a list of materials needed, activities and assessment. Try to incorporate technology as well as cooperative learning in your plans.

In addition, you will need to include an assessment instrument for the final product. It can be a rubric, a chebrick, a scorecard or any other instrument you feel is appropriate.

Finally, include a brief, up to one page, explanation and rationale for your unit. Relate your work to our course reading on research-based best practices. Please use APA format for your citations within your text, and include a references section at the bottom. You can pull in outside sources, but it is not required.

### **10% Word Study or Vocabulary Lesson Plan**

Based on our course reading, design a vocabulary or word study lesson plan. Your lesson can be for a single student, small group or whole class. Your lesson plan should include objectives, link to core curriculum content standards, a list of materials needed, activities and assessment.

Include a brief, up to one page, explanation and rationale for your plan. Relate your work to our course reading on research-based best practices. Please use APA format for your citations within your text, and include a references section at the bottom. You can pull in outside sources, but it is not required.

### **20% Reading Instruction Philosophy**

Please articulate your philosophy of classroom reading instruction. Include at least three references linking to research and/or course reading. Please use APA format for your citations and include references at the end. Your philosophy should be one to two double-spaced pages. Think of this as a document you would post on your website for parents and students to read.

### **10% Classroom Reading Assessment and Reflection**

Design a reading assessment tool for classroom use. It can be a think-mark, a survey, an open-ended question in response to reading with a rubric, a journal entry page with a scorecard, a scale for assessing independent reading along with a class chart, etc....

Write a brief one page or less reflection linking your assessment tool to research and explaining how you will use it. If you are not currently a practicing teacher, explain how it could be used. Use citations in your text and include references.

## 10% Book Recommendations

You will complete this assignment in Module 5. Through the threaded discussions, you will share book recommendations for the following:

- Favorite From Childhood
- Favorite as a teacher
- Published in 2013 Book
- YA Novel
- Picture Book

In each recommendation please include the title, author and year of publication. Also include the grade level you feel it is appropriate for and explain why the book appealed to you.

Recommendations do not need to include text references and can be short compared to our previous weekly posts.

## 10% Literacy Breakthrough Story

Using the Israel book as a model, write a breakthrough story. Your story can be a student breakthrough you witnessed, your own experience or one you get by interviewing someone. It doesn't have to be something from this school year.

Include a narrative, and at the end link the story to research-based best practices we have read about and discussed this semester.

This piece should be three to five typed pages with citations and references at the end.

Units	Overview	Assignments and Due Dates
Course Overview and Introductions	The goals of this unit are to engage with the other students, familiarize with the course expectations, learn to navigate the online tools we will use this semester and to begin developing a foundation of best practices in elementary literacy instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the course syllabus</li> <li>• Become comfortable navigating our course</li> <li>• Introduce yourself</li> <li>• Read and share your thoughts on the first three Tompkins chapters</li> <li>• Respond to at least two colleagues' posts for each chapter</li> </ul> <p>Please complete all of the readings, posting and responding for this week by February 3rd.</p>

<p>Writing Instruction</p>	<p>For this unit, we will read about and discuss best practices in elementary writing instruction. Then you will work in a group to create an exemplary unit of study.</p>	<p>Read and respond to Chapter 9 of the Tompkins text and all of <i>Writing a Life</i> by Monday, February 10th. Also, please respond to at least two colleagues for each of the readings.</p> <p>By the 10th, I will have you matched with colleagues for the writing unit of project.</p> <p>The finished writing unit should be turned in by Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<p>Fluency and Vocabulary</p>	<p>This unit will focus on the important aspects of effective fluency and vocabulary instruction. Additional, optional online videos will be provided for you to view.</p>	<p>Please read chapters five and six of the Tompkins text, post your thoughts and respond to others by March 3rd.</p> <p>Your Word Study or Vocabulary Lesson Plan is due by March 10th.</p>
<p>Comprehension</p>	<p>For this unit we will delve into the essentials of instruction in reading comprehension.</p> <p><b>Spring Break will take place for a week in the middle of this unit.</b></p>	<p>For this unit there are two mandatory discussion forums including one for the Tompkins chapters and one for the book <i>The Reading Zone</i>. Please post and respond by March 14<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>There is also an <b>optional</b> discussion forum for you to post and get feedback on your reading assessment. You may want to post a draft, post ideas or questions about the assignment. Please consider responding to other students who post in this optional forum for the unit.</p> <p>The final copy of your classroom reading assessment is due on March 31st.</p>
<p>Tradebooks and Textbooks</p>	<p>For this unit, we will read about best practices in selecting</p>	<p>Read chapter 10 and 11 of the Tompkins text. We will not have a</p>

	<p>reading material for elementary school readers from grades 3-8. You will have the opportunity to reflect upon and share your favorite titles as both a reader and a teacher.</p>	<p>formal discussion of the reading.</p> <p>Post a recommendation under at least three categories. Please provide feedback to at least one person in each forum where you post a recommendation. Please see the description above for what to include in your book recommendations. Please post your recommendations and responses by April 14<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<p>Articulating a Philosophy</p>	<p>For this unit, you will articulate your philosophy of classroom reading instruction. Additional optional readings will be provided on our course page, but no reading will be assigned.</p>	<p>Review course reading as necessary to draft your philosophy.</p> <p>Post your draft by April 21st; respond to two classmates by April 26th, and submit your final copy by the 28th.</p>
<p>Reflection</p>	<p>For this unit we will reflect on both our teaching experience and course reading as we read about how students experience breakthroughs in their literacy lives.</p>	<p>Please read the text <i>Literacy Breakthroughs</i> and post your initial response by May 4th. Please respond to at least two classmates by May 8th.</p> <p>Your rough draft should be posted by May 8<sup>th</sup>. Please provide feedback to at least two classmates by May 10th, and your final copy is due May 11th.</p>