

Literacy Development in the Elementary and Middle School
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey – Graduate School of Education
Summer 2018
Course 15:299:516:C2

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Office Hours

Available by Appointment through Email or by Phone

Course Website

Canvas:

<http://canvas.rutgers.edu>

Required Texts

- 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)
- Morrow, L.M., Kunz, K., & Hall, M. (2018). *Breaking through the language arts block: Organizing and managing an exemplary literacy day*. New York: Guilford Press. (This book will be used for the Professional Discussion Group-PDG assignment.)
- One children's or young adult novel published since approximately 2013 (within the last 5 years or so, for the Multi-Media Book Talk assignment)
- Additional course materials, supplied in the form of pdf files and video will be available online via Canvas.

Philosophy Statement of Literacy Development & Learning

All students deserve quality literacy instruction and I have formed a number of core beliefs around this understanding. Literacy instruction should be differentiated to meet the various needs and abilities of all students. Research shows that differentiated instruction is a key component in helping children become better readers and writers, as today's schools serve children from a variety of families and backgrounds. Learning is also a very social process, as students learn from each other and from the teacher. Working cooperatively, students are motivated to participate in meaningful and engaging lessons. This is why Social Learning Perspective is a major theoretical trend in reading classrooms today, where cooperative learning has been proven

effective for all types of students. To support student learning, a classroom environment must be purposefully organized and structured. To motivate learners, tasks must be challenging in nature, relevant and authentic to students' lives and the world today, provide opportunities for choice, and integrate technology seamlessly. These core beliefs provide a strong foundation for a classroom that promotes literacy learning.

Course Overview

This course serves as an introduction to the teaching of literacy in the upper elementary and middle school. The major focus of the course will be literacy instruction in grades 3 through 8 with some discussion of literacy learning at other levels. We will focus on general classroom instruction, but always with an eye to how to support students who struggle with reading and writing tasks.

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.

Course Organization

This course is organized into seven sections:

Week 1 is designed to introduce you to the course and to the various technologies that will be used throughout the semester. You will have the opportunity to introduce yourself to your classmates and to begin to make connections with those who have similar interests and goals for the course.

Week 2 “sets the stage” for discussing literacy instruction in grades 4-8. You will learn about research, theory, and educational standards (both state and national) that guide teaching at this level.

Weeks 3-7 make up the majority of the course. Within this section of the course, you will take a close look at effective instruction in various literacy domains including comprehension, vocabulary, fluency and word study. You will also examine issues related to differentiation and critical literacy. It is here that you will also share with your classmates what you have learned about a particular aspect of literacy instruction. You will work with a group of classmates to create a “webinar” based on a common chapter of the PDG focal text, applying knowledge learned to literacy for adolescent learners.

<h3>Course Policies</h3>

Netiquette

Please remember that communicating online should not be any different from when you communicate in a face-to-face class. Although some of your writing assignments do allow for less “academic” and more informal conversations, please refrain from using Internet slang, abbreviations, and acronyms. We cannot assume that everybody understands them. All communications should be courteous and professional. There are a number of online resources that highlight good netiquette. Please become familiar with them. I’m sure that they will also be helpful with your own students.

[Tips for Online Netiquette](#)

Grading Policy & Turning in Assignments

Assignments are due as indicated on the course schedule. The syllabus, course schedule, and due dates can be found on Canvas. You are responsible for knowing what the due dates are. Unless arrangements are made in advance of the due date, late assignments will not be accepted. Please note that you will be responsible for any

weekly information that is posted online and communicated via email. If I need to communicate any urgent information and/or class changes to you, I will also follow these postings with an email.

Major assignments are to be uploaded or emailed directly to the instructor.

Participation Policy

Your active participation in this course is vital to the course and to your learning. Your colleagues and I depend on you to share your load of reading for meaning, participating in online discussions, giving feedback to your peers, sharing how you connect readings to classroom experiences, and so on. You are expected to participate in a variety of ways throughout the semester, and your various assignments and projects will incorporate participation as part of their grade. In summary, however, you will be expected to do the following:

Log into Canvas at least three times a week to keep updated on assignments, group activities, peer discussions, etc. Participate in online discussions on our website to illustrate your understanding of weekly readings and how they connect to your own lives. Meet deadlines for assignments so that you can keep on track, make steady progress throughout the course, and provide feedback to your peers in a timely manner.

Academic Integrity Policy

You can find the Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students at the following site: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>. 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.

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.

<h3>Assignments & Grading</h3>

Online Discussions/Chats (20%)

Multimedia Book Talk (15%)

Annotated Bibliography (15%)

Lesson Plan (20%)

Professional Development Group Presentation (30%)

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

Assignment Details (Additional information will be available as the assignment due date approaches)	
<p>Online Discussions</p> <p>Your participation and collaboration are necessary in the effectiveness of this course. In order to fully develop your understanding of the ideas and concepts reviewed in the modules, you will be participating in online discussions with the members in your small group on a regular basis (typically one discussion per module). In these discussions, you will construct responses to given topics and reply to the posts of the members in your group. These discussion topics will require you to not only demonstrate your understanding of the required readings, but to take that information and reflect on how it relates to your personal experiences with education, as well as the society around you. Although requirements for online discussions may differ per module, the following are the general criteria I will be looking for in your responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your initial discussion posts should be approximately 250-500 words; responses to the members in your small group 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.• All responses should clearly and adequately answer the entire discussion prompt.• It is not advisable to 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.• Remember to avoid Internet slang and overly informal language (see course policies).	20%

<p>Multi-Media Book Talk You will read a text appropriate for use in grades 4-8 and create a multi-media book talk based on the text. The book should be new to you and published within the past 5 years (unless special arrangements have been made). You will then create a multi-media book talk (using Animoto, Powtoons, MovieMaker, PowerPoint, iMovie, etc) of approx 5 – 10 minutes in length that could be used to encourage students in grades 3-8 to read the book themselves. You will post your multimedia book talk for your classmates to review. You will view the book talks of your classmates and will post feedback for at least three of them.</p>	<p>15%</p>

<p>Annotated Bibliography For this assignment, you will prepare an annotated bibliography of 6 to 8 recently published journal articles on a topic that you are passionate about. For our purposes, “recently published will refer to the past 10 years. For each study, you will write a paragraph or two that will highlight the purpose of the study, the research question, the design of the study (participants, setting, research methodology), the findings, and the conclusions. A sample annotated bibliography related to literacy coaching will be shared with you. Following the summaries of the articles, you should write 2 to 4 paragraphs that summarize what you learned about the topic. Your paper should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins and typed in a 12-point font.</p> <p>This is a great list of research journals to start with:</p> <p><i>The Journal of Literacy Research</i> <i>The Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy</i> <i>The Reading Teacher</i> (Not all articles in <i>The Reading Teacher</i> report research studies. Please use only articles that report an actual study.) <i>Reading Research Quarterly</i></p>	<p>15%</p>
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<p>Lesson Plan The Lesson Plan assignment requires you to develop a lesson that teaches some aspect of vocabulary, comprehension, or writing. Be sure to cite course readings to provide a rationale for the target of instruction and the method that you will use. I encourage you to consult with classmates and school colleagues, use course-related lesson plans and/or connect your lessons to your literacy investigation paper. You will review the lessons of at least three of your classmates’ and offer feedback.</p>	<p>20%</p>
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<p>Professional Development Group presentation</p> <p>You will participate in a literacy discussion group (PDG) throughout the semester. This work will require each of you to select a chapter within a professional text aimed at the organization and management of literacy instruction. Groups will be formed based on interest and you will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with classmates who are reading different topics that address the same aspects of comprehensive literacy instruction. Towards the end of the semester, you will collaborate with these classmates to create a multi-media webinar to share what you have learned with others. You will view/participate in at least two other trainings created by classmates and will provide critiques of the instruction.</p>	<p>30%</p>
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Anticipated Schedule for the Semester-5/29-7/20

Week	Topic & Guiding Questions	Readings	Due
<p>Week 1</p> <p>May 29th -June 2nd</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>What does it mean to have comprehensive literacy instruction?</p> <p>How have we moved beyond “balanced” literacy approaches?</p> <p>What unique challenges due literacy teachers (and students) face today?</p>	<p>Instructor/Student/Course Introductions</p> <p>Tompkins – Chapter 1</p> <p>ILA Brochure: New Literacies in the 21st Century</p>	<p>Email the course instructor your Animoto Video by Saturday, June 2nd</p> <p>Discussion Forum Post #1: Create a post related to your personalized literacy definition. Use the example on Canvas to guide your response.</p> <p>Respond to the Literacy Google Survey</p> <p>Obtain a copy of the required course texts</p>

<p>Week 2</p> <p>June 3rd – June 9th</p>	<p>Topic: Readers and Writers in Grades 4-8</p> <p>Organizing an Exemplary Literacy Day-what are the major components?</p> <p>How do these</p>	<p>Tompkins – Chapter 2 & 3</p> <p>Sign Up for Multi-Media Book Talk Dates</p> <p>Article Assignments: Dennis, D.V. (2009/2010). “I’m not stupid”: How assessment</p>	<p>Discussion Forum Post (Tompkins Chapters 2 & 3) by Wednesday, June 6th & read and respond to the ongoing discussion by Saturday, June 9th</p>
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	<p>components differ in the upper grades?</p> <p>Assessing for Literacy Instruction</p>	<p>drives (in)appropriate reading instruction. <i>Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy</i>, 53, 283-290</p>	
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<p>Week 3 June 10th- June 16th</p>	<p>Topic: Readers and Writers in Grades 4-8</p> <p>Differentiating Instruction: Exploring Opportunities for Small Group Instruction (Guided Reading, Strategy Grouping & Literature/Inquiry Circles)</p> <p>How do I meet the students of students who have not yet mastered the core literacy components?</p> <p>Effective Strategies for Increasing Reading Fluency</p>	<p>Tompkins Chapters 4 & 5</p> <p>Article Assignments: Ash, G., Kuhn, M., & Walpole, S. (2009). Analyzing "inconsistencies" in practice: Teachers' continued use of round robin reading. <i>Reading & Writing Quarterly</i>, 25, 87-103.</p> <p>Ivey, G., & Baker, M. I. (2004). Phonics instruction for older students? Just say no. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 61(6), 35-39.</p> <p>Additional Reading: Excerpts from <i>The Book Whisperer</i> (to be used to promote your Multi-Media Book Talk)</p>	<p>Discussion Forum Post (Tompkins Chapters 4 & 5) by Wednesday, June 13th & read and respond to the ongoing discussion by June 16th</p> <p>Multi-Media Book Talks Due by June 16th Provide Feedback to Students' Multi-Media Book Talks</p>
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<p>Week 4 June 17th- June 23rd</p>	<p>Topic: Readers and Writers in Grades 4-8</p> <p>Vocabulary Instruction</p> <p>What are engaging ways to promote students' vocabulary development?</p>	<p>Tompkins Ch. 6</p> <p>Article Discussion: Blachowicz, C. L. Z., Fisher, P. J. L., & Ogle, D. (2006). Vocabulary: Questions from the classroom. <i>Reading Research Quarterly</i>, 41(4), 524-539.</p> <p>Additional Reading: Excerpts from <i>Word Nerds & Vocabularians</i></p>	<p>Discussion Forum Post (Tompkins Chapter 6) by June 20th & read and respond to the ongoing discussion by June 23rd</p> <p>Choose Topics for Annotated Bibliographies & Form Professional Development Groups (PDGs) based on chapter titles/topic interest</p>
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<p>Week 5 June 24th- June 30th</p>	<p>Topic: Readers and Writers in Grades 4-8</p> <p>Comprehension</p> <p>What effective strategies can be used to assist students with monitoring comprehension?</p> <p>How can I design a high-quality mini-lesson?</p>	<p>Tompkins Ch. 7 & Ch. 8</p> <p>Group Member #3</p> <p>Pardo, L. S. (2004). What every teacher needs to know about comprehension. <i>Reading Teacher</i>, 58(3), 272-280.</p>	<p>Discussion Forum Post (Tompkins Chapter 7 & 8) by June 27th & read and respond to the ongoing discussion by June 30th (including feedback on students' lesson plans and materials/resources)</p> <p>Comprehension/Reading Workshop Lesson Plans Due by June 30th</p>
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<p>Week 6 July 1st - July 7th</p>	<p>Topic: Readers and Writers in Grades 4-8</p> <p>Writing Instruction</p> <p>What conditions must be present to promote the development of adolescent writers?</p> <p>Approaches to Teaching Reading</p>	<p>Tompkins Ch. 9; 10</p> <p>Additional Readings</p> <p>Excerpts from Lucy Calkins, Penny Kittle, & Kelly Gallagher (TBA and divided among groups)</p>	<p>Discussion Forum Post (Tompkins Chapter 9) by July 4th & read and respond to the ongoing discussion by July 7th</p> <p>Annotated Bibliography Due: July 7th</p>
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<p>Week 7 July 8th- July 20th</p>	<p>Topic: Readers and Writers in Grades 4-8</p> <p>Approaches to Teaching Reading</p> <p>How can one organize and manage an exemplary literacy day given school/district/standards-based constraints?</p> <p>Literacy in the Content Areas</p>	<p>Tompkins Ch. 11; 12</p>	<p>Discussion Forum Post (Tompkins Chapter 4) by July 11th & read and respond to the ongoing discussion through July 20th</p> <p>PDG Presentations Due by July 14th with discussion through July 20th</p>
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An Incomplete List of Additional Authors & Resources

Reading	Writing
Nancy Atwell	Nancy Atwell
Kylene Beers	Lucy Calkins
Harvey “Smokey” Daniels	Ralph Fletcher
Stephanie Harvey	Kelly Gallagher
Donalyn Miller	Penny Kittle
Bob Probst	Donald Murray
Kate and Maggie Roberts	Laura Robb

Are you a member of NJ Literacy Association?

Go to www.njliteracy.org and get involved!