

Literacy in the Elementary Classroom, Part I
EDUC 226
Fall, 2008

Dr. Connie Unger
322 Hurd Academic Building
Office: 610-625-7902 or 861-1558
Home: 610-262-4176
Office hours: Tues. , Thurs., Wed. 5:00-5:30
Or by appointment
E-mail: ungerc@moravian.edu

This course is designed to introduce the literacy process as it relates to children in the primary, intermediate and middle school grades. The theory, knowledge, and teaching skills pertaining to the nature of the process will be explored by lecture, active participation, and classroom experience. This course includes reviews of current theory and research in language acquisition, cognition, and literacy. Literacy incorporates reading, writing, speaking, listening, and visual representation. Responding to literature, reading comprehension, fluency, word identification strategies, phonics, and language systems along with phonemic development, and assessment forms will be a significant part of this course. This course also emphasizes the incorporation of technology and information management. Comprehensive literacy programs, including basal reading materials, will be surveyed. Inherent in the scope of the course is the nature of linguistic, learners' abilities, and cultural variations as these factors relate to literacy learning. This will include strategies that meet the needs of linguistic, cultural, academic, and cognitive diversity. One of the underpinning goals is to prepare you to think and respond like a teacher.

Course Goals and Objectives:

The student will:

1. Develop a personal and professional understanding of teaching and literacy.
2. Examine the most recent thinking about the nature of reading/writing and language development including English Language Learner and Learners with Special Needs.
3. Develop a critical awareness of available current trade books and library skills.
4. Establish a sound theoretical basis for the teaching of a comprehensive literacy program.
5. Understand the cognitive and affective processes involved in making meaning from text.
6. Incorporate technology into the information management of the teaching/learning process.
7. Understand the contexts in which literacy develops including parental involvement.
8. Learn a variety of instructional strategies and assessment procedures useful in the teaching of literacy.
9. Select, design, and use appropriate materials for a comprehensive literacy program.
10. Understand and use Pennsylvania Initiatives and Standards in the development of literacy.

Course Materials

Required:

1. Vacca, Vacca, Gove, Burkey, Lenhart, & McKeon. Reading and Learning to Read, 7th ed. NY: Pearson.
2. Internet connection because of use of **BlackBoard** program and **MyLabSchool** (code in textbook)
3. Reading Teacher and/or Reading Teacher online plus other online sites

Other Text in Library:

Cooper, J. D. (2000). *Literacy, helping children construct meaning*. NY: Houghton Mifflin.
Tompkins, G. (2006). *Literacy for the 21st century* (4th ed). Upper Sadder River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Children's literature: Available from a library. You should be starting a personal library.

Course Requirements:

1. **Major examination/** quizzes/ other assessments (self, your response to peer assessments) = **(45%)**
2. **Class discussion, mini presentations, daily preparedness, and participation: (10%)**
This could include Book Talks, journal article research, double journal entries, and special assignments.

Class readiness and preparation – This is a concern about others' interests and welfare; helpfulness/support to others; and becoming part of a community of learners. Preparation for class as reflected in your participation and discussion of the readings, small group projects, and individual written assignments is essential. Class participation is valued and will be based on the readings and applied course experiences especially in your field experience.

Videos/CD's/web pages - Some videos, webpages, and CD's will be watched in class, while others will be done at "choice" time.

Professional Development Experience – Two page write-up plus handouts is due one week after event. You can do more than one experience for extra credit.

Double journal entry sharing- Assigned during class.

3. Author Authority Lesson: (15%)

Author presentations will begin shortly after the course starts. Students will select a non-fiction author that is credited with at least three notable children's non-fiction books. You must select an author that has not been selected by any another student. Written materials due day of presentation. (Lottery sign-up for dates)

4. Mini Lesson Presentation: (10%)

Each person will be responsible for presenting a mini lesson that corresponds to assigned chapter.

5. Field Experience: (20%)

(September 22th to December 5th are your field experience dates. You will have a minimum of 40 hours in the field.)

- A detailed handout will follow.
- All field journals are due on December 4th. You will not write about your last week's experience.

Other Information:

Academic Honesty = I will follow the academic honesty policy as stated in the 2006-2008 Student Handbook on page 46. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in failing this course.

Attendance = Attendance in class is very important. Should a personal emergency arise it is important that you let me know this as soon as possible. This will assist me in the design of small group team projects. Please call when you are going to be absent for that day. Missing any class without a phone call or e-mail prior to class time will significantly lower your overall grade. Arriving late or leaving early will also be noted. If you do not have an acceptable reason, your final grade will reflect it. Attendance is of critical importance in order for you to participate actively in discussions, etc.

Food = Water is allowed, but we will be moving around too much to be eating.

Cell Phones = Turn them off. If there is an emergency, you can make arrangements with me before class. If your cell goes off, you will be asked to bring in a snack for everyone the next day we have class.

Expected Work Load – For this course, it is expected that you will work between 8-12 hours for preparation for each class outside of class.

References and formatting = Use the Publication of the American Psychological Association, fifth edition, (2001) for references and formatting of your papers. This reference system is used throughout the Ruddell text being used in this class.

Grading:

C= 74-76% (C- = 70-73%) (C+ = 77-79%) You meet all requirements adequately.

B= 84-86% (B- = 80-83%) (B+ = 87-89%) You go beyond the requirements enhancing your work by doing such things as adding additional resources, related areas or topics, etc.

A= 94-100% (A- = 90-93%) Your work is definitely outstanding. It goes beyond requirements and shows perception and insightfulness. Extraordinary!!! Everyone can earn an "A" if they care to, though not everyone will put forth the necessary extra effort and time.

Check your student handbook for more specific grade percentages. It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for all of your assignments and your final grade for this course.

Late work:

- A written explanation handed in on due date; the "Work" will be evaluated and lowered only a half grade if handed in by the end of due week; an additional late week with written explanation means one grade lower.

Written work requirements:

- All handed in written work needs to be done on a computer. Use your spell checker.
- It needs to be organized and identified.
- **Please do not hand in work in the plastic page holders.**

Class Time Arrangements:

We meet two times a week for classes for the day classes and once a week for the evening section. For part of our time together, I will lead a reading demonstration lesson. Some of the time, we will review our text. Other times, we will interact with mini lessons about authors. Some class time will be for group work or to view teaching videos. Weeks may vary, but I will normally give you an advanced weekly schedule.

Class Work Explanations:

Class Interactions: You will need to demonstrate readiness or preparation, concern about others' interests and welfare, helpfulness/support to others and become part of a **community of learners**.

Author Authority Tri-fold Presentation: As part of our general shared knowledge, each person will present a tri-fold about a non-fiction author. You will need to **give everyone** a biographical sketch of your author including a list of the author's major works. You will give me a more comprehensive written document which will include: life story, writing style, awards, published books with brief story sketch of book, and a detailed reflective essay on process of lesson designs.

The focus or intent of the tri-fold presentation should be to provide an analysis of the author's major works in terms of themes, plot, style, and character development.

There will be an interactive board with the activities to be done in smaller peer groups. The interactive board is a model of a workstation that could be used in a classroom. The activities must develop each one of literacy skills: phonics (phonemic awareness), word identification/ word study, and comprehension. You will explain each skill to the whole group before the small groups begin to work. Each group (at least three groups) will have a different literacy skill on which to work. The tasks do not need to be completed, but just experienced. Small groups will then share their results.

You will need to create an assessment tool for us to use to evaluate our learning from your entire lesson design. It can be a rap up game or any other form of assessment. Keep it engaging.

Each presenter, for the next class meeting, will need to submit a reflective essay of his/her thinking as he/she designed the tri-fold and experiences for us. The essay should include the **reason** for your chosen author, the **process** of creating your tri-fold and the **intent** behind the activities. It should also talk about things that went well and things you would change for the next presentation.

Time for entire lesson equals 20 minutes. See evaluation form.

Mini Lesson Experience: From chapters 3-8, each team of two will select a skill or strategy that they want to bring to life. You will use a topic from one of the chapters, but you will use a trade book as the bases for the lesson. Based on the trade book, you will develop a mini lesson for us to experience. A good method to use to develop a lesson would be to find your favorite recent publication (1998-2009) and then go to one of the websites that your text recommends. You should be able to find a lesson that will work for your book. You will share that lesson to us as pre-service educators. Your task is to teach us how to use the skill or strategy in our future classrooms. Time for entire lesson equals 15-20 minutes. See evaluation form.



Literacy in the Elementary Classroom, Part 1
Ed. 226 - Field Experience Requirements
Due Date for Field Journal Notebook = December 4, 2007

Your task during your field placement is three-fold.

- You are there to observe and to assist your cooperating teacher. You are not to be in charge of the entire class, although you may instruct a large or small group and/or work with individuals.
- You are expected to teach a literacy lesson with a large group. The written lesson plan should be included in your field journal notebook.
- You are to teach a guided reading lesson with a small group. Again a written lesson plan should be included in your field journal. If possible you should observe and try to do a running record.

The first step is to write a brief letter of introduction for your cooperating teacher. Have someone proofread it before you send it. It is the first impression. Send it as soon as possible with your phone number and e-mail address included.

When reporting to your assignment, remember that you are a professional. Dress accordingly. Check in at the office. Follow sign-in procedures. Introduce yourself to the principal and the secretary. If you have any school related questions, ask them. You also will be required to sign out when you leave the building.

For your Field Journal Notebook, you need to include complete copies of your literacy lesson plan and guided reading lesson plan that you have taught. This would be a good time to **ask your cooperating teacher to write an evaluation on your lessons along with your students**. Add their responses to your field journal.

At the end of your field experience, I would like you to take some time and reflect back on your entire experience. Give an overall impression of your experience (PMI) and discuss how you think it will impact on your career as a teacher. Consider the following questions: For example: What kind of instruction is going on in writing? How were you able to help? How did the children respond to your help? These are just a few of the suggested questions to ponder. You should also consider the classroom environment for learning. What was conducive to learning? What was distracting? How about the classroom management? What techniques did you observe? Did you see a guided reading lesson? How did the teacher handle incorrect answers? **How does your field experience relate to the ideas and philosophy in your text?** ETC.! This will be included in your field journal notebook. It should be at least two to three pages.

Do not be presumptuous enough to critique your cooperating teacher in any way. You are not there to judge, but to observe, learn, and assist. Do not write your journal notes while in the classroom.

Remember that this experience is part of your grade for this course. Your grade will be determined by your field journal notebook and an evaluation by your cooperating teacher. So have fun, look good, and take your "JOB" seriously!

There are five parts to your field journal notebook.

1. **Introduction:** A copy of your letter of introduction.
2. **Literacy Classroom and Weekly Engagements:** A description of placement which includes the name of your teacher, the grade level, the school, subject taught while there, and a floor plan with explanation of how this layout helped or hindered the literacy. In this section, also include a list of things or activities that you did each week in your field experience. You can identify the date of the week and then just bullet activities or experiences that you had for that week.
3. **Literacy Lesson Plan:** Literacy lesson plans co-operating teacher's evaluations. Add a few students' samples when ever possible. Add pictures if allowed. (Permission from principal)
4. **A Guided Reading Lesson Plan:** This lesson plan will include the materials used and what was done for each of the steps in a guided reading lesson. Add students' samples when ever possible. Add pictures if allowed. (Permission from principal)
5. **Experience Reflection:** Overall reflection of experience in at least two to three pages. Base your reflections on **content of course** and not just feelings.

Good Luck! Have Fun! Keep thinking that this is what you will be doing in your teaching career!