

Syllabus

Course Overview

Literacy is not a luxury, it is a right and a responsibility. If our world is to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century we must harness the energy and creativity of all our citizens.

— **President William Jefferson Clinton, speaking at the 1994 National Literacy Day festivities**

This course provides you with a comprehensive review of strategies and practices to teach reading and promote literacy in children from birth to eight years of age. It is built around the best practices from research and theory as well as the standards of leading organizations including the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). During this course you will be expected to interact with young children to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with excellence in reading and literacy instruction, curriculum development, and assessment. Coursework will focus on the entire scope of children's literacy development from the classroom environment, to family and community connections, to best practices in faculty development.

You will need to have access to at least one child in the early childhood age range and either a webcam or a video camera, as you will be recording yourself teaching a lesson and then uploading that to the course.

Important Message About External Exam Requirement

The Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam (MTLE) is an important program requirement for Capella learners who enrolled in the MS Reading and Literacy or Early Childhood Education programs, July 2012 and beyond. The MTLE serves as an external validation assessment, and learners must successfully pass the exam to ensure that they have gained the necessary knowledge prior to entering clinical practice.

It is ideal that you take the MTLE immediately following your last specialization course so that the information is fresh in your mind and you have the opportunity to re-take the exam, if needed. Your official passing score report will be a component of the graduation audit and will be needed as part of program completion.

Please read the MTLE document, [Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam – FAQs](#).

Kaltura Activities

This course requires learners to participate in synchronous online meetings or deliver asynchronous presentations Kaltura or similar software. Refer to [Using Kaltura](#) for more information about this courseroom tool.

Note: If you require the use of assistive technology or alternative communication methods to participate in these activities, please contact DisabilityServices@Capella.edu to request accommodations.

You will use Kaltura to participate in a sharable lesson planning and teaching project. As a teacher, you are expected to utilize many kinds of new technology to enhance the classroom experience and expand your interactions with other professionals. In order to experience this challenge in this course, you will use Kaltura to record individual presentations and to collaborate with your fellow learners.

Learner Technical Support

Capella University is committed to your mastery of the technology required to succeed in our online programs. Should you encounter any technical concerns with your computer related to performing coursework, please do not hesitate to contact Capella's Learner Technical Support for assistance. Representatives are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays, via phone, live chat, and other online services.

Course Competencies

(Read Only)

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

- 1 Incorporate foundational knowledge of reading processes, development, and instruction into teaching practices.
- 2 Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support reading instruction for all children.
- 3 Use a variety of assessment tools and practices to evaluate effective reading instruction for continuous improvement.
- 4 Create a literate and motivating environment that fosters reading.

- 5 View professional development as a career-long effort and responsibility.
- 6 Collaborate effectively with families for their children's reading and language development.
- 7 Use informal and formal assessment and evaluation strategies to plan individualized curriculum and teaching practices to meet the needs of each child.

Course Prerequisites

This course requires access to educational settings, programs, and/or practitioners with a focus on children from birth to age 8. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer except by coursework from Minnesota schools with approved licensure programs.

Syllabus >> Course Materials**Required**

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

Integrated Materials

Many of your required books are available via the VitalSource Bookshelf link in the courseroom, located in your Course Tools. Registered learners in a Resource Kit program can access these materials using the courseroom link on the Friday before the course start date. Some materials are available only in hard-copy format or by using an access code. For these materials, you will receive an email with further instructions for access. Visit the [Course Materials](#) page on Campus for more information.

Book

Bear, D. R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. R. (2016). *Words their way: Word study for phonics, vocabulary and spelling instruction* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education. ISBN: 9780133996333.

Fox, M., & Staub, L. (2006). *Whoever you are*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. ISBN: 9780152060305.

McGee, L. M., & Richgels, D. J. (2012). *Literacy's beginnings: Supporting young readers and writers* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education. ISBN: 9780132617659.

Library

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use [Journal and Book Locator](#). Refer to the [Journal and Book Locator library guide](#) to learn how to use this tool.

- Akhondi, M., Malayeri, F., & Samad, A. A. (2011). [How to teach expository text structure to facilitate reading comprehension](#). *The Reading Teacher*, 64(5), 368–372.
- Cobb, C. (2007). [Training paraprofessionals to effectively work with all students](#). *The Reading Teacher*, 60(7), 686–689.
- Cummins, S., & Stallmeyer-Gerard, C. (2011). [Teaching for synthesis of informational texts with read-alouds](#). *The Reading Teacher*, 64(6), 394–405.
- Donovan, C. A., & Smolkin, L. B. (2011). [Supporting informational writing in the elementary grades](#). *The Reading Teacher*, 64(6), 406–416.
- Gregory, A. E., & Cahill, M. A. (2010). [Kindergartners can do it, too! Comprehension strategies for early readers](#). *The Reading Teacher*, 63(6), 515–520.
- Hauser, C. (2019, July 2). [Want kids to learn the joy of reading? Barbershops and laundromats can help](#). *The New York Times*.
- Holmes, K. P., Rutledge, S., & Gauthier, L. R. (2009). [Understanding the cultural-linguistic divide in American classrooms: Language learning strategies for a diverse student population](#). *Reading Horizons*, 49(4), 285–300.
- Johnston, F. R., Invernizzi, M., Juel, C., & Lewis-Wagner, D. (2009). *Book buddies: A tutoring framework for struggling readers* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Krashen, S. (2009). [Does intensive decoding instruction contribute to reading comprehension?](#) *Knowledge Quest*, 37(4), 72–74.
- Liebfreund, M. D., & Amend, S. J. (2017). [Teachers' experiences providing one-on-one instruction to struggling readers](#). *Reading Horizons*, 56(4), 1–42.
- Lo, Y.-Y., Cooke, N. L., & Starling, A. L. P. (2011). [Using a repeated reading program to improve generalization of oral reading fluency](#). *Education & Treatment of Children*, 34(1), 115–140.
- Marzano, R. J. (2009). [Six steps to better vocabulary instruction](#). *Educational Leadership*, 67(1), 83–84.
- Nelson, J. L. (2016). [Steps to advance literacy](#). *Literacy Today*, 33(4), 36–37.
- Palmer, B. C., El-Ashry, F., Leclere, J. T., & Chang, S. (2007). [Learning from Abdallah: A case study of an Arabic-speaking child in a U.S. school](#). *The Reading Teacher*, 61(1), 8–17.
- Paratore, J. R., & McCormack, R. L. (Eds.). (2007). *Classroom literacy assessment: Making sense of what students know and do*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Rieg, S. A., & Paquette, K. R. (2009). [Using drama and movement to enhance English language learners' literacy development](#). *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 36(2), 148–154.
- Risko, V. J., Walker-Dalhouse, D., Bridges, E. S., & Wilson, A. (2011). [Drawing on text features for reading comprehension and composing](#). *The Reading Teacher*, 64(5), 376–378.
- Wallace, C. (2008). [Vocabulary: The key to teaching English language learners to read](#). *The Education Digest*, 73(9), 36–39.
- Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- Erudition. (2008). [Sight word list](#). Retrieved from <http://www.sightwordsgame.com/sight-words-list/>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Childhood Program Standards. (n.d.). [Standard 2: NAEYC accreditation criteria for curriculum](#). Retrieved from <https://oldweb.naeyc.org/academy/standards/standard2/>
- Orcutt, K. (n.d.). [20 strategies to teach text structure](#). Retrieved from <https://education.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/casei/3-01-04-handout%20TextStructureResources%201.pdf>
- Pinnell, G. S., & Fountas, I. C. (2006). [Matching books to readers in a balanced literacy program](#). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Retrieved from <http://www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/E00818/chapter1.pdf>

Suggested

The following materials are recommended to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course, but they are aligned to course activities and assessments and are highly recommended for your use.

Optional

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html) <https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (n.d.). [Summary of the HIPAA privacy rule](https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html) <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html>

Projects

Project >> Review and Comparison of Teaching Videos

Project Overview

View [Developing a Scholarly Voice](#), a resource for improving your writing.

In this project, you will utilize existing theories and texts from the course to develop and apply an original and individualized lesson in reading or literacy with a child between the ages of 4 and 7. You will then review your lesson and evaluate your teaching practice, as well as provide feedback on the lessons conducted by two other learners. To complete this project you will need to incorporate assessments, technology resources, appropriate communication skills, and an overall knowledge of literacy teaching theory.

See the first assignment in Unit 7 for the detailed assignment criteria for the primary project component.

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current edition [APA style and format](#).

There are specific technology requirements for completing this project. Please review the following resources and see the syllabus for details.

- [Create a Meeting Room](#).
- [Host a Meeting](#).
- [Using Kaltura](#).

Project Components

Unit 1 >> Understanding Children's Literacy Development: The Earliest Years

Introduction

What are your earliest memories of reading or being read to? Can you remember how you felt or the way the story pulled you in and mesmerized you? If so, you were probably at least four or five years old, or perhaps even older, as our earliest memories are not easily retrieved. Piaget (1955) believed that we are born knowing how to acquire knowledge but must fill in the blanks and create schemas (maps of knowledge) in order to understand the world. Until these schemas are created we have trouble remembering because the world was not an orderly pattern. However, this does not mean that our

earliest experiences are meaningless. On the contrary, from conception onwards, the brain is rapidly developing and learning and every experience helps shape it.

Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.

— **Emilie Buchwald**

This is why reading to the youngest child is so vital. Some caretakers or parents may want to wait until a child is more actively responsive to books; six months or even into the second year of life because they believe children are not interested. However, it is imperative we start reading to infants as soon as possible. Newborns enjoy the sound of adult voices and react to the cadence and tone of the caregiver reading to them. They are soothed by reading and absorb the experience in ways we are only beginning to understand. Research supports the importance of reading to infants as young as 0–3 months of age. In fact, the earlier parents started reading with their child, the higher the child's emergent reading level was found to be after kindergarten (Allison & Watson, 1994).

It is vital that caregivers also promote literacy with their youngest students. Usually at this age reading is a one-to-one experience and it can provide a quiet interlude that helps build trust and intimacy, both of which are necessary for healthy infant development. Caregivers who understand the importance of early literacy can also share this with parents and help promote the development of reading at home. As you begin this course, think about your own experiences as a child and now your role in emphasizing literacy.



References

Allison, D. T., & Watson, J. A. (1994). The significance of adult storybook reading styles on the development of young children's emergent reading. *Reading Research and Instruction, 34*(1), 57–72.

Barclay, K., Benelli, C., & Curtis, A. (1995). Literacy begins at birth: What caregivers can learn from parents of children who read early. *Young Children, 50*(4), 24–28.

Piaget, J. (1955). *The language and thought of the child*. Cleveland, OH: World.

Learning Activities

u01s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*:

- Read Chapter 1, "Understanding Children's Literacy Development," pages 1–28.
- Read Chapter 2, "Birth to Two Years: Novice Readers and Writers in the Phase of Awareness and Exploration," pages 31–53.

u01s2 - Kaltura Web Conferencing

Using Kaltura

In preparation for using Kaltura to conduct synchronous (live) or asynchronous (recorded) meetings in this course, complete the following:

- If you have not already done so, install your headset (and webcam, if required) on your computer, using the installation instructions included in the package.
- Practice using the headset and webcam to ensure the audio and visual quality is sufficient.
- Refer to [Using Kaltura](#) for directions on recording and uploading your presentations in the courseroom.

Note: If you require the use of assistive technology or alternative communication methods to participate in this activity, please contact DisabilityServices@Capella.edu to request accommodations.

u01s3 - Your Online ePortfolio

Online ePortfolios serve two key purposes: 1) to support learning and reflection, and 2) to be used as a showcase tool. Your learning journey can be documented, and ePortfolios contribute to lifelong learning and growth through reflection and sharing. Online ePortfolios can also be shared with employers and peers to present artifacts that demonstrate your accomplishments at Capella.

Using ePortfolio to Prepare for Your Capstone

Your program may culminate in a capstone course. At that time you may be required to show evidence of your learning throughout the program by referring to multiple assessments that you have created. You will be telling a story about your learning throughout the program using artifacts you have collected during many of these courses.

Using ePortfolio to Build Your Career

As you are preparing to tell your story in the professional world, leverage your ePortfolio artifacts to demonstrate the knowledge and competencies you have gained through your program in professional conversations, performance reviews, and interviews.

To do that, reflect on the knowledge and skills you have gained from your courses and the elements you have put in your portfolio, along with how you have already applied these things to your professional life or how you might apply them in the future.

Next, create your story or talking points to tell your professional story.

Saving Your Documents to ePortfolio

You will need a place to store your documents in an organized fashion so that you can access them at a later date. Do not rely on the courseroom to store your assignments for you as you will lose access to the courseroom after you've completed the course. Capella uses a cloud-based portfolio platform to facilitate your organization of the artifacts you create throughout your program.

To make an online portfolio useful, it is essential that it is organized clearly and that important files of any format are accessible. Read the [Online ePortfolio Guidelines \[PDF\]](#) to ensure you set up your online portfolio correctly.

Privacy Statement

Capella complies with privacy laws designed to protect the privacy of personal information. While you may voluntarily share your own information publicly, you are obligated to protect the personal information of others that may be associated with your academic or professional development. Before sharing information and material in any ePortfolio that is set up to be shared externally to your program at Capella, please consider privacy obligations in relation to protected populations who may be included or referenced in your academic or clinical work. Refer to the [Family Education Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) and/or the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\)](#) if you have specific questions or concerns about your choices.

u01s4 - Discussion Preparation

In several course discussions, you will need access to a preschool setting. This week, you should find a preschool that will allow you access to see the classrooms (with or without children present) and work with a small group of children individually. You will need access to the preschool in Units 3 and 4.

If you are unable to get access to a preschool to teach a small group lesson, you can work with a small group of preschool age children instead; however, you will need access to preschool classrooms in Unit 3 (children do not need to be present).

u01d1 - Understanding Children's Literacy Development

Read the Discussion Participation Scoring Guide, linked in Resources, to learn how the instructor will evaluate your discussion participation throughout this course.

As seen in the initial readings, the journey towards becoming an accomplished reader and writer is a long one and quite complex. Our own early experiences in learning to read and write have helped to shape us as educators. It is critical for educators to develop an awareness of the forces and practices that worked for them, while at the same time recognizing that these strategies may not work for all children they will teach. Reflect back on your earliest memories of learning to read and write. Share some of the experiences you remember from your own journey. This narrative will also serve as an introduction to your fellow learners. Be sure to reflect on how this unit's readings resonate with your own experiences.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner whose post interests you. Comment on the similarities and differences between your posts. What was it about these posts that drew your interest?

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u01d2 - Literacy and Representational Drawing

In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*, pages 51–52, is a small case study and a child's drawing (Figure 2.10). After reading this answer the following questions: What does Soowon's language and drawing say about her literacy development? Are she and her caregiver working at a developmentally appropriate level regarding literacy? Is she a representational drawer? Write your response as if you were creating an anecdotal note for her class portfolio or file. What would you share with Soowon's parents about her development?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner and discuss strategies for assessing and documenting these types of literacy moments.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 2 >> Reading and Writing Begin

Introduction

Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers.

— **President Harry Truman**

Led by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association, the Common Core State Standards for English and Language Arts (ELA) represents an effort to provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so that teachers and parents know

what they need to do to help them. The Common Core State Standards attempts to build upon the work of the standards that have been independently crafted by the states as well as drawing from research on effective models of education in use by other countries.

With input solicited from teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders, the Common Core State Standards attempts to reflect the knowledge and skills that children will eventually need in order to succeed in higher education and careers. A driving force behind these standards is the notion that we must prepare our children for participation in an ever-changing, competitive global economy.

The Common Core State Standards for ELA have focused on reading, writing, listening, and speaking as integrated strands of ELA instruction. There is an emphasis on reading and demonstrating understanding of non-fiction or informational texts. Reading and writing are utilized across content areas as tools for gaining information and analyzing data.

The Common Core State Standards have been adopted by most states and work is ongoing to adjust each state's curricula and testing regimens to align with the new standards. See [Common Core State Standards Initiative](http://www.corestandards.org/).

Reference

Common core state standards initiative. (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/>

Learning Activities

u02s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

- In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*:
 - Read Chapter 3, "Three to Five Years," pages 56–85.
 - Read Chapter 4, "From Five to Seven Years," pages 88–114.
- In *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction*, read Chapter 2, "Getting Started: The Assessment of Orthographic Development," pages 46–71.

u02d1 - The Alphabetic Principle

The alphabetic principle is the process by which we create meaning out of symbols. Describe how children go through this process and how children whose primary language is not English may struggle with this. Suggest ways to help so that all can be successful.

Response Guidelines

After reading the responses of your peers, respond to at least one other person who made suggestions for children's success, which you may not have thought of initially. When responding to others seek clarification, share your personal experiences that relate to their experiences, and provide feedback on their posts.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u02d2 - Supplemental Activities for Phonics and Reading

With the current emphasis on standardized testing and the increased push-down and pressure to have all children scoring high on tests, there can be a tendency to rely solely on provided curriculum packets and focus on teaching out of the book. Sometimes, we know that no matter how good a curriculum is, there are some children who may need a different approach.

Describe a developmentally appropriate activity or brief lesson you would create to help children in grades 1–3 who are struggling with phonics and reading.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner to comment on their activity and compare and contrast it to your own idea. Support your response with sound reasoning and additional resources as necessary.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u02d3 - Phonological System

Use the Internet or the index at the back of *Words their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction* and conduct a research on the phonological system. Explain how the etymology and morphology of words relate to orthographic patterns in English and how they impact the early emergent reader.

Response Guidelines

Compare your response to that of another learner who used the impact on the early emergent readers differently.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 3 >> Literacy-Rich Environments to Promote Language Learning

Introduction

A trip to the local mega bookstore is resplendent with colorful and creative books for young children. But what really makes a book outstanding and worthy of being read many times? How do we choose books that not only engage children but also help shape their values and beliefs in positive ways? And how do we find books that are respectful of the values that outstanding teachers believe in; promoting the well-being of all and engaging in practices aimed to reduce discrimination based on race, gender, disability or exceptionality, and sexual orientation? (NCATE, 2007)

Finding books that offer good multicultural visions can open up the world for children and allow them to see similarities across all cultures. It lets children discover new and different places and faces while finding commonalities in experience.

This early exposure to differences, with a safety net of similarity, helps to lessen worries and fears as they grow. Now, we must find stories about a variety of cultures and varying family dynamics as our world consists of so many different family compositions. Extended families, Gay and Lesbian families, single-parent families, and grandparent and foster families must all be included in our libraries. The Reading is Fundamental (RIF) Web site states that books with minority characters should be independent thinkers facing challenges and solving problems. They warn us that we should avoid books in which the minority characters have stereotypical roles and behaviors and that characters do not have to be the best or outstanding at something in order to be accepted by the majority culture (RIF, 2010).

RIF offers the following guidelines to keep in mind when choosing multicultural books:

- Choose books with strong plots and well-developed characters.
- Look for accuracy in stories about modern day experiences, historical fiction, and all non-fiction.
- Look for books with culturally-based themes and books about realistic, everyday events, and activities that include characters from diverse groups.
- Consider your own views about the author's culture and experiences (RIF, 2010).

References

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. (2007). *NCATE issues call for action: Defines professional dispositions as used in teacher education*.

Reading is Fundamental (RIF). (2010). *Guidelines for choosing multicultural books*.

Learning Activities

u03s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*, read:

- Chapter 5, "From Six to Eight Years," pages 117–147.
- Chapter 6, "Literacy-Rich Classrooms," pages 149–178.

Use the Capella University Library to complete the following:

- Cummins and Stallmeyer-Gerard's 2011 article, "[Teaching for Synthesis of Informational Texts with Read-Alouds](#)," from *The Reading Teacher*, volume 64, issue 6, pages 394–405.
- Donovan and Smolkin's 2011 article, "[Supporting Information Writing in the Elementary Grades](#)," from *The Reading Teacher*, volume 64, issue 6, pages 406–416.

The two articles listed above are from the March 2011 issue of *The Reading Teacher* published by the International Reading Association. They provide many instructional and assessment strategies for teaching informational texts. A wide variety of text structures for differentiated comprehension instruction are provided. The headline in the Cummins & Stallmeyer-Gerard (2011) article reads: "Science, social science, math, and other subject-area texts are sometimes complex, but assessment-driven instructional approaches can help young readers connect with the content and deepen their comprehension of new information."

- Nelson's 2016 article, "[Steps to Advance Literacy](#)," in *Literacy Today*, volume 33, issue 4, pages 36–37.
 - Think about ways that your knowledge of literacy and learning could be used in your community.

Use the Internet to read Orcutt's article "[20 Strategies to Teach Text Structure](#)" from the Valley Center Public Schools website.

u03a1 - Presentation to Parents' Night

In this assignment you will create a PowerPoint presentation as if you were giving a talk to new parents at your school. In the presentation you will describe your school and then your particular classroom approach to teaching and assessing reading and literacy. Give a brief background information such as the overview and theory behind your program choices, explain the process and practices the children will experience, and describe how the program is or can be adapted to meet the needs of all families and constituents in the district. Conclude the presentation with an explanation of how you will communicate their child's progress to the families and how you would like them to collaborate with you to ensure their child's success.

Research the Newberry, Caldecott, or Coretta Scott King awards lists for children's literature. Then create a reading list for your classroom based on your findings. Share the list with parents at Parent's Night and secure copies from the library for parents to check out. Select one book you will share in a read aloud at Parent's Night and write a short annotation for the discussion.

Incorporate proper grammar and citations and be sure that the writing style and tone do not detract from the meaning of your presentation. Be sure to proofread your slides and include APA citations on the last slide for any references you use.

Your presentation should include 10–15 slides and have at least three cited references.

Course Resources

[APA Style and Format](#)

u03d1 - Creating a Literacy-Rich Environment

In a literacy-rich classroom, reading and writing materials are infused across the entire room and the environment supports literacy development in a multitude of ways. For this discussion, you will need to visit 2–3 preschool classrooms and evaluate the environment on how each supports literacy development. Describe what you find in the preschool classrooms you visit and how you would modify the environment to keep the early childhood education (ECE) class supportive of this literacy-rich approach. What are some ways you can promote reading and writing across the entire curriculum?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner who has described a class at a similar grade level as your own. Discuss additional ways to add this literacy richness. Support your analysis with sound reasoning and additional references as necessary.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u03d2 - Evaluating Reading Material

In creating a classroom that promotes literacy we must take into account the children and families in our programs. How would we ensure that our available reading material is developmentally and culturally appropriate and also engages new readers?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner as if you are colleagues working in a school. Share some ways you think would be helpful in choosing or developing appropriate materials.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u03d3 - Text Structure Strategies

After reading the article "20 Strategies to Teach Text Structure," choose an informational text and outline a brief mini lesson in which you would introduce at least two strategies to help a third grade class improve their ability to respond to a range of literature and analyze text structures. Strategies include graphic organizers, think-aloud strategies, skim and scan to predict, and so forth. Present your ideas to other learners.

Response Guidelines

Evaluate at least one learner's activity as if you were an administrator assessing their knowledge of how to respond to a range of literature. Also comment on how the learner is facilitating learning using different text structures.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u03d4 - Reading and Writing Based on Informational Texts

Based on the two articles you have read from *The Reading Teacher*, teach a mini-lesson based on an informational text. Many suggestions are provided that may be in your classroom or school library. Ask the students to complete a drawing based on a text structure such as sequence steps in cake baking in Figure 1 of "Teaching for Synthesis of Informational Texts with Read-Alouds" or a fact list on bats in Figure 1 of "Supporting Informational Writing in the Elementary Grades."

Please scan one of these drawings and submit it in this discussion area and answer the following questions:

- Describe the structures and features of expository texts.
- How did your mini-lesson allow you to demonstrate you can use informational texts in your teaching practice?
- What specific teaching practice did you use to support reading comprehension strategies?
- Describe how the student work you are sharing reflects the learning you wanted them to engage in and how your teaching engaged and motivated them.

Response Guidelines

No response is required for this discussion.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 4 >> Literacy and Language: Starting Out in Preschool

Introduction

In this unit you are tasked to create a unit of study in early December that integrates various holiday celebrations into your learning centers. Should we put up pictures of Santa Claus or a menorah and feel this is enough? If we read a book about making latkes in addition to Christmas cookies, have we really explored the full range of diversity in our world?

The Miller Early Childhood project of the Anti-Defamation League offers the following guidelines for creating inclusive holiday celebrations that may be helpful to you as you create your lesson plans for the discussion and second assignment.

Most people love a celebration! Adults flutter around busily preparing for the festivities. Children are abuzz with excitement. Special foods are eaten, special heirlooms brought down from the shelf. Traditions are passed down from generation to generation.

The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.

— Dr. Seuss

While children should have an opportunity to learn about and share information about the important holidays and celebrations in their lives, celebrating specific holidays in a school or childcare environment may exclude someone. Some people, based on religious or personal beliefs, do not celebrate holidays or birthdays. That does not mean that holidays have to be forbidden. Make sure that whether children are learning about how Chinese people celebrate Lunar New Year or how Muslims celebrate Eid-al-Adha, they also have opportunities to learn about the everyday lives and culture of these people.

Here are some other things to keep in mind as you include young children in holidays and celebrations:

Be Accurate and Sensitive

- Avoid asking children to be the experts on their religion or holiday celebrations. Children may be embarrassed to share information about their own religious practices or family traditions and may not have accurate information to share.
- Provide children with expert information by providing books and other media on the topic or asking a member from the community to come and visit.
- Also, make sure that whatever the celebration, children have the option to not participate and have a reasonable or suitable alternative.

Avoid Stereotyping

- Keep in mind that everyone celebrates holidays differently, even members of the same group.
- Be aware that some holiday customs contain stereotypes. Point out these stereotypes to children and work together to come up with ideas for sensitively counteracting these stereotypes.
- Avoid treating certain holidays as *regular* ones and others as *special* ones. Some cultures have been reduced to being *brought out* only on holidays, which presents a one-sided and *exotic* view of the culture.

Look for Themes

- By connecting holiday themes, show children that holidays are an expression of cultural and religious pride and help them understand the commonality of certain human feelings, celebrations, and so forth.
- You might look at the way lights are used in the holidays of Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, Santa Lucia Day, and Diwali.
- Liberation is the theme of holidays such as the Fourth of July, Passover, Cinco de Mayo, Juneteenth, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- You can find many ways to celebrate that do not have to focus on particular holidays. The seasons have changed! We have been together for 100 days! It is Name Day and we are going to learn about everyone's name! It is Family Day and we are all going to share something about our families!

Be Constitutionally Appropriate

- Keep in mind that religious holiday observances, if held under public school auspices, violate the First Amendment's separation of church and state mandate. Bringing religious leaders into a public setting is not appropriate.
- While recognizing a diverse group of holidays validates children and their families, schools must be careful not to favor one religion over another or religion over non-religion.
- The use of religious symbols such as a cross, menorah, crescent, Star of David, crèche, symbols of Native American religions, the Buddha, among others that are part of a religious tradition is permitted as a teaching aid, provided such symbols are displayed only as an educational example of the culture and religious heritage of the holiday and are temporary in nature. They may not be used as decorations.

For more information, please read [*The December Dilemma*](#) and [*Religion in Public School*](#).

References

Anti-Defamation League. (1999). *How can I plan inclusive holiday celebrations?*

Anti-Defamation League. (2011). *The December dilemma*.

Anti-Defamation League. (2011). *Religion in public school*.

Learning Activities

u04s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

- In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*, read Chapter 7, "Supporting Language and Literacy Learning in Preschools," pages 183–216.
- In [*Understanding By Design*](#):
 - Read Chapter 11, "The Design Process," pages 254–274.
 - Read "Appendix," pages 327–332

Use the Capella University Library to complete the following:

- Read Akhondi, Malayeri and Samad's 2011 article, "[How to Teach Expository Text Structures to Facilitate Reading Comprehension](#)," from *The Reading Teacher*, volume 64, issue 5, pages 368–372.
- Read Gregory and Cahill's 2010 article, "[Kindergartners Can Do It, Too! Comprehension Strategies for Early Readers](#)," from *The Reading Teacher*, volume 63, issue 6, pages 515–520.
- Read Risko, Walker-Dalhouse, Bridges and Wilson's 2011 article, "[Drawing on Text Features for Reading Comprehension and Composing](#)," from *The Reading Teacher*, volume 64, issue 5, pages 376–378.

Use the Internet to read Chapter 1 of Fountas & Pinnell's (2006) "[Matching Books to Readers in a Balanced Literacy Program](#)," from the Heinemann Web site. This book talks about how to select and use a range of texts, activities, and strategies before, during, and after reading.

Looking Ahead

Identify a holiday related text to discuss in the third discussion in this unit.

u04d1 - Informational Texts and Text Structures

Review expository text structures as described and illustrated in the article "How to Teach Expository Text Structures to Facilitate Reading Comprehension." Describe how you would teach an expository text or a narrative with an expository text based on a winter season focus. Remember that winter is neither the same in every geographical location nor are holidays the same for every season in every culture. For your discussion posting, select a narrative and/or expository text from the list provided or from your own classroom or school library. Use a combination of narrative and expository texts to teach text structures. For example, the narrative, *The Mitten* by Jan Brett presents a series of events (sequence) in which a lost mitten is found by animals who find the mitten useful. How does the sequence of events in this narrative create and motivate a curiosity to find out what a mitten is, what snow is, or what a meadow mouse is? Supplemental expository readings on a cultural responsiveness to snow, mittens and/or the various animals introduced in the narrative offer a rich opportunity to explore many text structures such as sequence, cause or effect, or comparison or contrast.

In your posting, be sure to identify the children's book(s) you have selected and the text structures that will demonstrate comprehension of text structures. Also, indicate how the narrative and/or expository text motivate students to seek additional information that supports text structures.

Teach this lesson in a preschool classroom or to a small group of preschool age children. Did the lesson go as planned? What would you change?

Recommended Books

- *The Mitten* by Jan Brett.
- *On Christmas Eve* by Peter Collinton (Wordless).
- *Carl's Christmas* by Alexandra Day (Wordless).
- *Children Just Like Me: Celebrations!* by Kindersley.
- *The Shortest Day: Celebrating the Winter Solstice* by Pfeffer.
- *Lights of Winter: Celebrations Around the World* by Conrad.
- *Around the World Through Holidays* by Conrad.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner's posting. Comment on each learner's demonstrations of instructional and assessment strategies for reading in the content area. Base your responsive postings on guidelines provided in the readings.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u04d2 - Reading in the Content Area

As you prepare for the lesson you will present in the first assignment in Unit 5, post for this discussion a portion of your lesson that demonstrates your understanding of reading in the content area. The readings provide many resources, especially the article "Kindergartners Can Do It, Too! Comprehension Strategies for Early Readers."

Present in your posting a content-area book that can be used to explore such emergent text structures as schema, questioning, visualization, inference, and meaning making. What content-area book will you use? How will you engage or motivate students to comprehend using specific text structures as identified in the readings? How will you assess comprehension of reading in the content areas in such authentic assessments as drawings, compositions, or storytelling as illustrated in the readings?

See an assessment sample, visualizations for sunflakes in Figure 2 of "Kindergartners Can Do It, Too! Comprehension Strategies for Early Readers," page 517.

Recommended Books

- *The Icky Bug Counting Book* by Pallota.
- *Splash!* by Ann Jones.
- *One Hundred Hungry Ants* by Pinszes.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner's posting with supportive or suggestive comments based on the unit readings. Demonstrate in your response, posting your understanding of comprehension and assessment of content-area reading.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u04d3 - Holiday Reading and Interactive Discussions

Imagine you are developing a small unit of study in your class during early December. Knowing there are various holidays during this period, come up with a way to use these in at least one of your learning centers in the class to promote literacy. Find and share the texts you would introduce to the class for this unit and state how you would integrate these texts into the curriculum. Describe how the texts would be used in an interactive discussion to promote learning about this unit.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner about their chosen texts. Have you used any of these books in your own class and if so how popular were they with the children?

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 5 >> Moving into Elementary School: Kindergarten and First Grade Literacy

Introduction



Over the past few decades much discussion has revolved around the debate of teaching reading and whether phonics-based programs or whole-language practices are superior. The debate continues with new strategies based upon scientifically-based reading research and emergent literacy. Thankfully, we have moved forward from the idea of one being wrong and the other being right and now we tend to examine how we can use both perspectives to individualize instruction for each child. Instead of using the term phonics instruction, the International Reading Association (IRA) now encourages the use of *phonemic awareness* and posits that this is not simply old fashioned phonics but rather, an understanding of spoken language

(IRA, 1998). Phonemic awareness has been researched in longitudinal studies and found to be highly predictive of success in learning to read. Good phonemic awareness abilities in kindergarten are the best predictor of future successful reading acquisition. But, while the IRA is supportive of phonemic awareness instruction, they also caution against the use of training programs or curriculum that is not reflective of individual children's needs and learning styles. Teachers must be free to make decisions as to how to individualize their student's learning. The IRA offers the following suggestions for teaching reading:

1. Offer students a print-rich environment within which to interact.
2. Engage students with surrounding print as both readers and writers.
3. Engage children in language activities that focus on both the form and the content of spoken and written language.
4. Provide explicit explanations in support of students' discovery of the alphabetic principle.
5. Provide opportunities for students to practice reading and writing for real reasons in a variety of contexts to promote fluency and independence (IRA, 1998).

Reference

International Reading Association. (1998). *Phonemic awareness and the teaching of reading. A position statement from the board of directors of the International Reading Association*. Retrieved from <http://www.reading.org/General/AboutIRA/PositionStatements/PhonemicAwarenessPosition.aspx>

Learning Activities

u05s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

- In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*
 - Read Chapter 8, "Supporting Literacy Learning in Kindergarten," pages 217–245.
 - Read Chapter 9, "Supporting Literacy Learning in First Grade," pages 247–276.
- In *Understanding By Design*, read Chapter 9, "Planning for Learning," pages 191–226.
- In *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction*, read pages 144–165.

Use the Capella University Library to complete the following:

- Read Krashen's 2009 article, "[Does Intensive Decoding Instruction Contribute to Reading Comprehension?](#)" from *Knowledge Quest*, volume 37, issue 4, pages 72–74.
- Read Lo, Cooke and Starling's 2011 article, "[Using a Repeated Reading Program to Improve Generalization of Oral Reading Fluency](#)," from *Education & Treatment of Children*, volume 34, issue 1, pages 115–140.

Use the Internet to review Erudition's [Sight Word List](#) and refer to the Dolch and Fry Sight Word Lists.

Looking Ahead

Please look ahead to Unit 6, the second study in Unit 6, and prepare to apply your selected literacy assessment to a child.

u05a1 - Lesson Plan Design

In this assignment, you are expected to use the Understanding By Design Template, linked in Resources, to create a lesson plan in which you will teach a short lesson in reading or literacy to children 4–7 years of age. Please use the texts and theories you are reading about to develop a solid lesson plan that is individualized to the children you are working with. Be sure to include full descriptions in each section of the template to describe which method, curriculum, and assessment tool you will be utilizing. In addition, you will need to research your own state P–12 standards of reading and articulate how your lesson plan addresses appropriate standards. Or research NAEYC's curriculum standards for literacy and base your work on that (linked in the Resources).

Plan to include in the lesson multi-sensory learning techniques. Be sure to include full descriptions in each section of the template to describe which method, curriculum, and multiple assessment tools, you must use formal and informal assessments to measure your learning goals, you will be utilizing.

To demonstrate your understanding of the instructional progression of phonological awareness, design a lesson using phonological and phonemic awareness strategies such as generating rhyming words, identify beginning phonemes, isolate beginning sounds, blend, segmentation, phonemic deletion, phoneme counting, or generate words when provided onsets or rhymes. Be sure to demonstrate how children will make a connection between reading and writing. You should also include in the lesson fluency and vocabulary development strategies.

Incorporate at least two of the following comprehension strategies into your plan that meet the comprehension levels in your classroom; activating background knowledge, using connections, that is text-to-self, text-to-world, text-to-text, predicting, questioning, visualizing, and setting a reading purpose.

Be sure to include your rationale for using implicit and/or explicit teaching strategies. In addition, include how you would differentiate this lesson to a variety of children including struggling, English Language Learner (ELL), and gifted students. Identify specific media tools or Web sites to help you teach the connection between reading, writing, and oral language. Be sure to scaffold students through guided work and provide time for students to work independently so as to assess if you chose effective teaching strategies.

The plan should be free of grammatical errors and be in APA style with proper citations. You will be expected to implement this plan to either one child or a small group of children for assignment three; therefore, please keep that in mind as you create the lesson as you will need access to the child or children you are creating it for.

Course Resources

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Capella University Library](#)

[Standard 2: NAEYCAccreditation Criteria for Curriculum](#)

[Understanding by Design](#)

u05d1 - Guided Reading

In Chapter 9 of *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers* read about the "Guided Reading Approach." Briefly describe the three critical components and then outline how you might use this approach and the described literacy centers in your own class or the one you hope for in the future. How would you use this to help support children who might otherwise be at risk for literacy failure?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner, sharing possible ways to expand learning in this topic.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

u05d2 - Reading Fluency

After reading the article "Using a Repeated Reading Program to Improve Generalization of Oral Reading Fluency," describe the steps used when a teacher employs the repeated reading technique to improve oral reading rates. What were some other strategies that the authors employed to improve fluency? Why is fluency important to children learning to read?

Also, refer back to the article "Does Intensive Decoding Instruction Contribute to Reading Comprehension?" How does fluency aid in the development of comprehension? Compare your strategies to that of another learner, sharing possible ways to expand learning regarding the development of reading fluency.

You will be using a critique sheet during your teaching video review. With this sheet you will be looking for evidence of specific teaching strategies related to fluency; for example, repeated reading, modeling fluent reading, choral reading, or readers' theater.

Response Guidelines

Compare your strategies to that of another learner, sharing possible ways to expand learning in this topic.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u05d3 - Letter Recognition

Choose a letter recognition activity from pages 144–165 in *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction* to demonstrate how children learn to decipher upper and lowercase letters in a game venue. Create one of these games and utilize it with at least one child and discuss how you might scaffold this game for the level learner or challenge the higher level learner.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner who chose a different game and share ways in which both of you can scaffold the learning to different levels.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u05d4 - Sight Words

Review the Dolch and Fry sight word lists when developing an effective, independent learning activity for use at home and at school that facilitates the learning and recognition of these sight words. Choose a student to complete and model this learning activity with. Discuss how successful this activity was with your chosen student. What would you revise and do differently upon reflection?

Response Guidelines

Give feedback to at least one other learner. Be sure to give substantive feedback and point out ways to improve the activity as well as any potential problems you note.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 6 >> Growing Up: Literacy Learning in Later Elementary Years

Introduction

New teachers will now enter U.S. schools in which 25 percent of their students may live in abject poverty, 40 percent may be members of ethnic minority groups, 15 percent may primarily speak a non-English language at home, and up to 20 percent may be classified as having learning differences (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The reading of all good books is like a conversation with the finest minds of past centuries.

— Descartes

Future student demographics do not show a drop in these levels of diversity and are in fact projected to increase (U.S Census, 2008). Therefore, it is imperative that teachers become skilled in assisting all children in achieving high levels of literacy. Some ideas that teachers can use to assist English Language Learners (ELLs) include:

- **Provide a Secure Environment:** Acquire basic information about the newcomer. Seat the student close to you so that you can provide more guidance. Assign a buddy, preferably one who speaks the same language. Introduce and integrate the new student.
- **Build Language:** Help students to build language by understanding the stages of building language (1. Continue use of native language; 2. Non-verbal period; 3. Use of increasingly complex English) and the coping strategies students use (1. Join a group and act as though they know what is going on; 2. Connect what they see with what people are saying; 3. Learn some words and expressions and use them; 4. Find and use sources of help; 5. Use a copying strategy).
- **Provide Comprehensible Input:** Modify the language to make it more accessible and utilize techniques that help students learn English: modeling, running commentary, expansions, and redirects.
- **Build Academic Language:** Help students learn academic language through the following techniques; using cued elicitation questions, co-shaping, using a hierarchy of questions, collaboration and negotiation of meaning, sentence starters and word walls, checking understanding, empowering students, recasting, correcting errors, using the student's language, and fostering output.
- **Use Appropriate Strategies:** Help ELLs improve their language skills by using cooperative learning, peer tutoring, print, and intentional and systematic instruction (Gunning, 2010).

References

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Constructing 21st-century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57(3), 300–321.

Gunning, T. G. (2009). *Creating instruction literacy for all students* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Allyn & Bacon.

ThinkExist. (2010). *Rene Descartes quotes*. Retrieved from http://en.thinkexist.com/quotes/rene_descartes/

U.S. Census Bureau (2008). *An older and more diverse nation by midcentury*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb08-123.html>

Learning Activities

u06s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

- In *Classroom Literacy Assessment: Making Sense of What Students Know and Do*, read Chapter 9, "Assessing Vocabulary: Examining Knowledge About Words and About Word Learning," pages 141–151. This chapter provides strategies for effective vocabulary instruction and assessment activities by providing specific examples and models of assessment activities.
- In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*, read Chapter 10, "Supporting Literacy Learning in Second through Fourth Grades," pages 279–319.
- In *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction*, read Chapter 8, "Word Study for Advanced Readers and Writers: The Derivational Relations Stage," pages 300–323.
- Read the children's book, *Whoever You Are*, on multicultural diversity.

Use the Capella University Library to complete the following:

- Read Wallace's 2008 article, "[Vocabulary: The Key to Teaching English Language Learners to Read](#)," from *The Education Digest*, volume 73, issue 9, pages 36–39.
- Read Marzano's 2009 article, "[Six Steps to Better Vocabulary Instruction](#)," from *Educational Leadership*, volume 67, issue 1, pages 83–84.

Looking Ahead

To complete Unit 7 you will be required to record a video of yourself. Please take some time this week to ensure that you have the proper technology set up to complete this portion of the course. Refer to [Using Kaltura](#) for directions on recording and uploading your video in the courseroom.

Note: If you require the use of assistive technology or alternative communication methods to participate in this activity, please contact DisabilityServices@Capella.edu to request accommodations.

Learner Technical Support

Capella University is committed to your mastery of the technology required to succeed in our online programs. Should you encounter any technical concerns with your computer related to performing coursework, please do not hesitate to contact Capella's Learner Technical Support for assistance. Representatives are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays, via phone, live chat, and other online services.

u06s2 - Literacy Assessments

Choose one of the small literacy assessments in *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers* or find another one from a different source that corresponds to a child you know in the ECE age range. Give this assessment to them and document the responses in the appropriate format. Observe the family dynamics and relationships and consider how you would share this information with the child's family and what suggestions you would make in regards to their educational choices based on the assessment. Pay attention to:

1. How to share the assessment information in a sensitive and cultural manner.
2. How to be supportive of family choices and decision making in their child's learning journey.
3. How to make suggestions for future learning that is respectful of that particular family's goals and values in education.

This activity will be required for the successful completion of the first discussion in Unit 7.

u06d1 - Vocabulary: Instruction and Assessment

Research consistently shows learning deficits and lower achievement scores for children of color, low socioeconomic status (SES), and ELLs. This gap starts at an early age with many children entering kindergarten knowing thousands of fewer words than their higher SES counterparts. In addition, reflect back to Units 2 & 3 where you examined topics such as reading processes, development, instructional practices, and topics related to creating an environment that fosters reading.

Using the children's book, *Whoever You Are*, prepare a lesson with assessment activities based on Figure 9.1 in Chapter 9 of *Classroom Literacy Assessment: Making Sense of What Students Know and Do*. Notice vocabulary words such as "laughing, crying, playing, learning, eating, and sleeping" that are common to all cultures. New vocabulary words used in the story include "different, world, and language". Your lesson will demonstrate how the words can be taught for common understanding with assessment activities for demonstrated practice and daily use.

Each learner in this course will prepare a lesson with vocabulary instruction assessment activities based on the same children's book. This will offer an extensive exploration of many instructional and assessment activities that can be used for one specific children's book.

Response Guidelines

Review the vocabulary lesson prepared by other learners. Based on this unit's readings, does the lesson present vocabulary instruction to determine the meaning and accurate use of familiar and unfamiliar cultural words? Does the lesson provide multisensory strategies including listening and reading.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

[Classroom Literacy Assessment: Making Sense of What Students Know and Do](#)

u06d2 - Explicit Vocabulary Instruction

Research consistently shows learning deficits and lower achievement scores for children of color, low SES, and ELLs. This gap starts at an early age with many children entering kindergarten knowing thousands of fewer words than their higher SES counterparts.

As you read the article "Vocabulary: The Key to Teaching English Language Learners to Read," you see that Direct Vocabulary Instruction is one method that has been shown to help close this gap.

Find two research articles that discuss other ways to explicitly provide instruction in vocabulary development to demonstrate your breadth of knowledge regarding vocabulary development. With the knowledge that, "a large vocabulary is one of the best general indicators of intelligence" (Marzano, 2009, p. 51), discuss ways in which you can use these approaches in your own ECE class. Where and how do successful students learn the vocabulary that they know? What types of direct and indirect strategies would you employ to encourage and enhance the acquisition of vocabulary in young children?

Focus on how to develop children's ability to comprehend and use academic language both orally and in writing.

You will be using a critique sheet during your teaching video review—Assignment Four. With this sheet, you will be looking for explicit demonstration of vocabulary development using several instructional strategies from your readings.

Reference

Marzano, R. J. (2009). Six steps to better vocabulary instruction. *Educational Leadership*, 67(1), 83–84.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. Compare and contrast your own ideas with theirs.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u06d3 - Transcript of Proficient Readers

Review a teacher teaching a reading lesson to students who are on-grade level, proficient readers—analyze the video and develop a list of four examples of student behaviors that demonstrate proficiency in listening comprehension and reading. Outline one of the examples in a transcript that highlights the student behaviors that demonstrate proficiency and post it in this discussion.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u06d4 - Encouraging Literacy in the Home

Research consistently shows the importance of parents reading to children. How as a teacher can you promote this activity at home and encourage all parents, even non-English speaking parents, to read aloud with their children?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner who has suggested read-at-home strategies that you did not initially think of. Share your own ideas and brainstorm on how to expand this important goal.

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u06d5 - Research Based Approaches

In *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction*, pages 199–217, use one research-based approaches in developing vocabulary such as semantic maps, word maps, word study notebooks, various vocabulary enhancing games to elicit student's broadening vocabulary growth. Share your findings from this with your peers.

Response Guidelines

Compare and contrast your findings with at least one other learner.

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 7 >> Using Assessment to Guide Instruction

Introduction



In this unit, we discuss the importance of using assessment to guide instruction. Assessment is not a separate, elusive entity that lies outside the instructional process. Rather, assessment is most effective when it is planned and utilized within the scope of the entire teaching and learning experience. Importantly, it is later used to double back and inform teaching and learning. This cyclic process helps us to individualize instruction and provide an individualized plan for each child in our classrooms.

Another element of this unit is the need to video record yourself teaching the lesson plan. Hopefully, you are now familiar with the equipment and process necessary to do this so that you can concentrate on the actual teaching during the recording. Practicing with technology before we attempt to use it in the classroom with children is vital because there can be a lot of interruptions and things can go wrong if we have not planned appropriately. Every time we master a new piece of hardware or software, we become better and our able to share this with our students. This helps us reach out to them and helps to guide them in skills that will be critical for their continued development. We may have a harder time learning technology skills, but our children and students are growing up in a world that has never known the absence of computers or other digital media. Prensky (2001) refers to everyone under the age of 30 as digital natives and those of us who are over that age as digital immigrants. This separation is highlighted by the fact that the majority of teachers are immigrants and their students' natives. Immigrants, according to Prensky, never lose their accent or foot in the past and therefore using technology remains similar to learning a new language rather than being fully ingrained. Prensky (2001) states that if Digital Immigrant educators really want to teach Digital Natives then they will have to change, stop complaining about technology, and "just do it!" (Prensky, 2001, p. 6). Let us keep this in mind as we complete this week's assignment!

Reference

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. *On the Horizon*, 9(5).

Learning Activities

u07s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

- In *Classroom Literacy Assessment: Making Sense of What Students Know and Do*:
 - Read Chapter 1, "Inquiry-Oriented Assessment," pages 3–20.
 - Read Chapter 15, "Formative Uses of Assessment," pages 246–26.
- In *Book Buddies: A Tutoring Framework for Struggling Readers*, read Chapter 2, "Book Buddies Assessment," pages 30–60.

Use the Capella University Library to complete the following:

- Read Rieg and Paquette's 2009 article, "[Using Drama and Movement to Enhance English Language Learners' Literacy Development](#)," from *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, volume 36, issue 2, pages 148–154.
- Read Hauser's 2019 news story "[Want Kids to Learn the Joy of Reading? Barbershops and Laundromats Can Help](#)" from the *The New York Times*.
 - Think about ways that your knowledge of literacy and learning could be used in your community.

u07a1 - Teaching Application of Lesson Plan

In this assignment you will use the lesson plan you designed in the Unit 5 assignment. Work with either one child or a small group of children to implement the lesson. Use explicit or implicit strategies from the readings to motivate your teaching strategy. Remember the children should be 4–7 years of age.

Record yourself teaching the lesson using either your webcam or a video recorder, follow the steps described in Using Kaltura for further instruction. You need to capture your own voice and image. If possible, include the child or children's voices, but it is not necessary to show them in the video. If you do capture the children on the recording please make sure you have written parental approval to do so.

After performing the lesson, review the recording of yourself. Use the assessment guidelines given in the course to self-reflect on your teaching practice. Write a 3–5 page paper in which you provide a formal assessment of your work. Describe how the lesson met the needs of that particular child and then evaluate how you would adapt the next lesson, based on informal and formal assessment of the child's progress.

Be sure to describe what assessments you would use with the child in order to create the next steps in learning. Please include your rationale for choosing implicit or explicit motivational strategies. Include as an appendix a letter that you would send home to describe the child's progress to their parents.

To successfully complete this assignment you will be expected to:

1. Conduct a pre-planned reading or literacy lesson with a child.
2. Evaluate personal performance referencing texts and theories.
3. Describe the child's specific needs and how the lesson addressed those needs.
4. Identify assessments to use to plan and create subsequent lessons.
5. Explain next steps and adaptations for future lessons, including technology resource recommendations.
6. Communicate progress to parent with respect to family goals and decisions.

Remember to use APA style and edit closely for grammar, mechanics, and professional tone.

Note: If you require the use of assistive technology or alternative communication methods to participate in this activity, please contact Disability Services to request accommodations.

Submit the link for your recorded lesson with your paper in the assignment area.

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Capella University Library](#)

[Using Kaltura](#)

DisabilityServices@Capella.edu

u07d1 - Literacy Assessments

Share the results of the assessment you gave to a child in the second study in Unit 6. Provide the assessment you used, age of the child, and the general findings. Also, describe how you responded to these issues:

1. How to share the assessment information in a sensitive and cultural manner as appropriate.
2. How to be supportive of family choices and decision making in their child's learning journey.
3. How to make suggestions for future learning that is respectful of that particular family's goals and values in education.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner who gave an assessment to a child in an age group different than your own. Compare how information shared with families is similar or dissimilar to your own.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

u07d2 - Making the Connection Between Reading and Writing

After reading the article, "Using Drama and Movement to Enhance English Language Learners' Literacy Development," choose one of the following:

1. Search the internet for one or two articles or Web pages that explore the similarities and differences between language structures used in spoken and written language. Post the bibliographic information using APA citation and provide a summary of the article or Web pages.
2. Identify an article that investigates classroom practices, for example drama or storytelling in the classroom that help young learners develop reading and writing skills. Write a substantive post on how the practice scaffolds literacy skill development. Post bibliographic information using APA citation and provide a summary of the article or Web pages.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner who found an article or Web site that gave you additional ideas about the reading-writing connection. Compare the approaches in the two texts and comment on how they relate to each other.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

u07d3 - Post Lesson for Peer Review

Use Kaltura to set up and get comfortable with your hardware. You can also use the Breeze Meeting Resources available from Macromedia. After you have recorded your lesson using Kaltura, post the URL of your recorded lesson to this discussion.

Additionally, you can use this discussion to share any technical issues you encountered and solutions you found.

Response Guidelines

Responses to this discussion are optional.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

DisabilityServices@Capella.edu

[Using Kaltura](#)

u07d4 - Flexible Reading Groups

Imagine you are developing flexible reading groups in your classroom. How will you determine their reading levels? How will you determine independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels? Also, it is quite possible to have students reading below, at, and above grade level all in one classroom.

To assist you in developing and demonstrating the ability to determine reading levels, you will be assigned a small group and a case study to analyze. Each group will be given a different scenario. These will include an audio of a child reading a passage that you need to record errors from. Then, you will complete a miscue analysis. This can be done individually. You will then come back to your group and discuss your miscue analysis.

Collectively with your group, and using your data, determine a reading level for this child. Support your group's analysis with evidence and examples from the audio sample.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other group. How do their findings compare to yours? How did they come to their decision regarding the child's reading level? Do you agree? Why or why not? Provide examples and evidence to support your thinking.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 8 >> Diversity in Our Classes and Teaching Practice

Introduction

It is a fact of life now in most of the U.S. that our classes are becoming increasingly more diverse and we have students entering from a multitude of cultures. It is vital we understand that much of our waking behavior is guided by our cultural scripts and this is true for teachers and for their students. *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers* describes Hawaiian children as being comfortable with more than one speaker at a time and Native Americans as being more comfortable in small group interactions than whole group. Other cultural differences can and do emerge as well. How close we stand to others also differs. Europeans tend to be more comfortable in closer proximity than do North Americans. French children have been found to stay in closer range to their parents than did American children (Okun, Fried & Okun, 1999). Even the way we present our emotions can differ by culture. Smiling when delivering sad or unhappy news may not be acceptable in one culture but is the norm in another. Eye contact can differ and the expectations of gender and emotion are all impacted by our culture. Even the simple act of pointing can change. For Malaysians, pointing with the index finger is very rude and reserved for animals. When dealing with humans, the thumb is the only acceptable pointer.

If we do not try to understand these deep-seated differences and learn to ask, research, and be interested in learning how to work together to create an inclusive, balanced communication process, then we run the risk of alienating many of the children and families that we serve. As we attend to our own cultural scripts and learn about those of others, we have the opportunity to develop an expansive world view that will benefit our work with children and their families.

Reference

Okun, B., Fried, J., & Okun, M. (1999). *Understanding diversity. A learning as practice primer*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Learning Activities

u08s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

- In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*, read Chapter 11, "Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners," pages 323–354.

Use the Capella University Library to complete the following:

- Read Holmes, Rutledge and Gauthier's 2009 article, "Understanding the Cultural- Linguistic Divide in American Classrooms: Language Learning Strategies for a Diverse Student Population," from *Reading Horizons*, volume 49, issue 4, pages 285–300.
- Read Liebfreund and Amendum's 2017 article, "Teachers' Experiences Providing One-on-One Instruction to Struggling Readers," from *Reading Horizons*, volume 56, issue 4, pages 1–42.
 - Think about ways that your knowledge of literacy and learning could be used in your community.

Looking Ahead

Please look ahead at Units 9 and 10 and plan accordingly for the upcoming studies and assignments.

u08d1 - Adapting Lessons to Engage All Students

In *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers*, page 363, is a list of names for either a kindergarten or third grade classroom. Pick either grade and describe how you as a teacher would manage these issues. If you were to teach a unit about science, what materials or adaptations would you want to include in order to help the ELL children be successful as well as any who are gifted learners (English speaking or ELL)? What modifications in instruction would you make to engage all students in the class in regards to literacy integration within the science unit?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner as if you are an administrator. Provide expanded suggestions as to how you would modify and accommodate all students in the class.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u08d2 - Working With Support Staff

Within your school there may be supporting staff such as reading specialists, special education teachers, and/or gifted and talented leads. When and how should you work with these specialists in order to create intervention or enrichment programs? What role should they play in your classroom?

Use your knowledge from the previous readings about choosing appropriate texts and your information from assignment one where you described how you would prompt parents to choose quality literature. Describe how you will analyze literary text structures and elements and provide your rationale for choosing these pieces of literature.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner and compare and contrast your own ideas on this topic.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u08d3 - Gifted and Talented Teacher Interview

Interview a gifted and talented teacher from kindergarten to third grade. Describe how their teachings differ from general education practices and how they design and implement appropriate enrichment programs. Share your interview in your response and highlight the primary finding that really stood out for you.

Response Guidelines

Compare and contrast your interview with at least one other learner.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 9 >> Responding in a Professional Manner

Introduction

In this unit you are tasked with reviewing and giving feedback for two of your peer's teaching videos. At Capella University we use the 2+2 method in which we provide 2 positive statements and 2 areas of improvement. The notion of describing the positive aspects of other people's work is important as it helps to validate their input and also to lessen any negative feelings.

Your first discussion also asks you to provide feedback and constructive advice to a paraprofessional in your classroom. As an educator with a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education, there is a good chance you will be in a position that requires supervising or overseeing other staff; therefore, it is important to learn these leadership skills. Offering feedback to those around with us may not be an easy process but is a skill that is easily learned. Here are some tips that may help:

- **Ask Permission to Give Feedback:** You will not believe the difference in the level of conversation when you ask permission. Asking permission to give feedback sets a positive framework on a situation that could be perceived as negative. "May I offer you some feedback?" "I have a couple of ideas...can I share them with you?" "Do you mind if I give you a suggestion on how to...?" These are just a few examples.
- **Set a Tone of Energy and Optimism:** Consciously assume an attitude that embraces both candor and sensitivity. If it is going to be a difficult conversation, plan for it by gathering all the necessary information and rehearsing what you want to communicate. If you go into a feedback session ready to yell at someone, they are just going to get defensive. Keep the energy in the room positive and you will see a much better response.
- **Focus on Specifics:** When sharing feedback, focus on specific situations and behavior, rather than delving into psychoanalysis. Talk to your paraprofessional or co-worker about how their decisions affect other people and how their actions affect business results.
- **Show Appreciation and Say Thank You:** Yes, your colleagues and employees are adults who get paid to do their job, but to believe that expressing praise is not important is to vastly underestimate the human craving for appreciation. Let them know you value their time as well as their willingness to listen to your feedback.
- **Confront Non-Performance:** Do not wait for the yearly review to tackle this issue. Non-performance is something that needs to be confronted as soon as possible. Take a hard look at reality together and make it clear that change is necessary. Get them talking about how they intend to improve. Agree on outcomes and timelines. Set different consequences for different levels of performance.

- **Remember it is a Dialogue, Not a Monologue:** Ask questions and listen attentively to answers. Offer suggestions and support. Jointly consider options. Pay attention to the unique talents of those you are giving feedback to, and if possible, frame solutions that leverage their strengths.
- **Encourage and Energize:** Get excited about the changes your direct reports can make. Give them examples of how they can improve and show that you are supportive of them making these changes for the better. Some feedback discussions will not turn out to be fun encounters. But if managed skillfully, the majority of feedback conversations can leave people feeling fired up...rather than beaten up (McLaughlin, 2010).

Reference

McLaughlin, P. (2010). *Giving good feedback*.

Learning Activities

u09s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

In *Book Buddies: A Tutoring Framework for Struggling Readers*:

- Read Chapter 3, "General Tutoring Plan for the Emergent Reader," pages 62–80.
- Read Chapter 4, "General Tutoring Plan for the Beginning Reader," pages 81–115.

Use the Capella University Library to complete the following:

- Read Palmer, El-Ashry, Leclere and Chang's 2007 article, "Learning From Abdallah: A Case Study of an Arabic-Speaking Child in a U.S. School," from *The Reading Teacher*, volume 61, issue 1, pages 8–17.
- Read Cobb's 2007 article, "Training Paraprofessionals to Effectively Work with all Students," from *The Reading Teacher*, volume 60, issue 7, pages 686–689.

Media

Review the *Teaching Application of Lesson Plan* videos submitted by two other learners in Unit 7. You will discuss them in the second discussion in this unit.

Looking Ahead

Review the assignment that is due in Unit 10.

u09d1 - Paraprofessionals and Classroom Volunteers

Cobb (2007) stated, "reading specialists can facilitate training for paraprofessionals that supports classroom instruction" (p. 687). Based on this article and the readings in *Book Buddies: A Tutoring Framework for Struggling Readers*, describe the steps involved in training paraprofessionals and volunteers to work in your classroom. What are the key components that this training should include? Compare and contrast any differences in the trainings.

Reference

Cobb, C. (2007). Training paraprofessionals to effectively work with all students. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(7), 686–689.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner who has described the training in a different way than you envisioned. Compare your ideas to theirs.

Course Resources

u09d2 - Assessment of Teaching Practices

Please refer to the links of your fellow learners' video recordings posted in the second discussion in Unit 7.

For this discussion you are going to review two of your fellow learner's teaching application recordings. Follow the directions in Kaltura and choose two recordings. Be sure to view the entire video and then use the Review and Comparison of Teaching Videos Project Scoring Guide, linked in Resources, to reflect on each of the teaching practices.

Note: If you require the use of assistive technology or alternative communication methods to participate in these activities, please contact DisabilityServices@Capella.edu to request accommodations.

As you write, remember to focus on the 2+2 approach while giving feedback.

Post your 2+2 feedback in this discussion. You will continue to work with these two videos to complete your final assignment for Unit 10.

Response Guidelines

It is not necessary to respond to the posts of your peers for this discussion.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

2+2 Response Resource

DisabilityServices@Capella.edu

[Using Kaltura](#)

Unit 10 >> Final Thoughts on Literacy Learning

Introduction

In this unit we reflect on the many things we have learned about literacy in the lives of young children. You were asked in Unit 1 to reflect on your own early experiences. Perhaps now you are able to put those early memories into a better perspective or have an understanding of the approach and theory that was used during your formative years. Our own learning experiences drive our educational philosophy and so it is important to be reflective practitioners, giving ourselves credit for our efforts while always turning a critical eye towards our practice. We may choose to keep some of the early ideas, expand upon them, or even delete the practices, but this should be a conscious endeavor based upon your own studies and the research you have read.

Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read.

— **Groucho Marx**

It is also vital to reflect upon areas that may need improvement. A good teacher or leader is always on the look out for personal and professional growth. Seeking out professional development opportunities is a necessity. Consider joining NAEYC, the International Reading Association (IRA), or other relevant professional organizations so that you may remain current in the field. It also helps to feel a sense of connection and engagement with your peers across the nation and world.

Good luck and happy teaching.

Learning Activities

u10s1 - Applying for Your Clinical Experience

A critical component of your program is the clinical experience. As you get closer to the end of your coursework, it is time to begin thinking about your internship, which provides you the opportunity to develop and demonstrate your competence in the professional role for which you are preparing. If you plan to begin your practicum course in the next couple of quarters, you will need to complete a Clinical Practice Application soon. Visit the [Clinical Practice](#) page of the Capella University [Professional Education Unit – Conceptual Framework and Program Guide](#) Web site to review application deadlines and obtain application materials, site and site supervisor resources, and answers to frequently asked questions. Listed deadlines will be strictly enforced by the School of Education.

u10a1 - Review and Comparison of Teaching Videos

In this assignment, you will review two of your fellow learner's teaching application recordings. Follow the directions in Kaltura and choose two. Watch each one once all the way through and then use the assessment guidelines given in the course to reflect on each video's teaching activities.

As you write, remember to focus on the 2+2 approach to give feedback. You will post these 2+2 feedback pieces in the second discussion in Unit 9. Feedback is presented as if you are mentors to one another. Provide recommendations to the other student regarding ways to improve instructional outcomes and student learning.

You will assess each teaching lesson video and describe your assessment of each one. You will then write a 3–5 page paper in which you identify the two videos you are assessing. The paper must describe and evaluate the teaching activity, developmental appropriateness, and supported differentiated reading instruction. Compare and contrast the two approaches giving suggestions for improvement and identifying the strengths of each. Describe how each lesson was appropriate or inappropriate in supporting differentiated reading instruction for the child and how the lessons impacted the literary environment.

Then, add a section in which you will write as if you were the administrator of the school. Provide each teacher with your critique sheet along with recommendations for growth at both the school wide and classroom levels. You will be using a critique sheet during your teaching video review. With this sheet you will be looking for evidence of specific teaching strategies related to fluency, for example repeated reading, modeling fluent reading, choral reading, or readers' theater, and explicit demonstration of vocabulary development using several instructional strategies from your readings. In addition, pay attention to identifying how each teacher included such areas as phonemic or phonological awareness, explicit instruction, guided practice, independent reading, interactive talk, opportunities for response and if there was any opportunity for reading and writing across the curriculum.

Provide suggestions for professional development that you think would assist the teachers in strengthening their ability to teach reading and literacy along with supporting the school wide literacy program.

Note: If you require the use of assistive technology or alternative communication methods to participate in these activities, please contact DisabilityServices@Capella.edu to request accommodations.

Course Resources

2+2 Response Resource

DisabilityServices@Capella.edu

[Using Kaltura](#)

u10d1 - Self-Reflection

In Unit 9 and for the final paper this week in this unit, you are asked to review two of your fellow learner's teaching application recordings. After doing that and after making suggestions for their professional development, reflect on your own teaching abilities and examine where your own knowledge or experience gaps may be. Describe areas you feel you would benefit from in terms of professional development and share these in the discussion.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner and make suggestions as to where they could seek help in finding professional development opportunities for the knowledge or experience gaps they have self-identified.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u10d2 - Looking to the Future

Reflect on the many elements related to early childhood reading and literacy we have discussed. What is the most memorable issue you will take away with you from this course and how will you apply or use that learning in the future?

Response Guidelines

Identify with at least one other learner who shared a similar memorable issue and discuss why the issue is important to you both.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide