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## **Individualized Reading Instruction in the Elementary Grades Education 403, Section 1**

### Introduction

The distinction between learning to read and write and using reading and writing to learn is, in many respects, artificial. As you learned in Education 401, very young children express themselves in drawing and other written forms of representation before they write conventionally and very young children are engaged in “reading” the world, and in fact, reading text, before they are able to read conventionally. That said, typically, the focus of literacy instruction in the primary grades is on: helping young children learn the alphabetic principle, supporting them in the use of invented spelling and writing, and engaging them in shared reading as they acquire an understanding of the forms and functions of written language. As children proceed through the grades, the expectation is that they will independently use reading and writing for the purposes of developing knowledge of subject matter (e.g., science, social studies, and mathematics), literature, the world, and themselves. When students reach the upper elementary and middle school grades, our attention as literacy educators is increasingly focused on: comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and composition so that our students have the tools and dispositions to construct meaning through reading, writing, viewing, and speaking.

### **Our course goals are:**

- To begin developing a deeper understanding of the kinds of texts that students in the upper-elementary and middle-school grades are expected to read, and the array of purposes for which they are expected to read,
- To begin to learn how to analyze texts for their challenges and opportunities, so that instruction can be planned accordingly,
- To begin developing an understanding of the instructional strategies that support student engagement in self-regulated learning from text ,
- To begin to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to engage in productive discussions with text
- To begin developing a deeper understanding of writing and aspects of the craft of writing, including the conventions of grammar, mechanics, and usage,
- To continue to develop an understanding of vocabulary development and instructional strategies that support that development,
- To continue to develop your understanding of reading assessments appropriate for upper-elementary and middle-school children and youth,
- To develop thoughtful and motivating literacy assignments related to literature and content-area texts
- To explore the productive use of information and communication technologies to advance student learning,
- To continue to advance your thinking about the kind of classroom culture you wish to cultivate and how the curricular and pedagogical decisions you make will influence that culture,
- To continue to support your thinking about the ways in which instructional decisions must be shaped by issues of: development, and individual linguistic, cognitive, and cultural differences,
- To advance your capacity to design literacy programs that reflect your knowledge of curriculum, assessment, instruction, and state and national standards,
- To continue to support the development of your identity as a literacy educator, including learning about professional resources and organizations that can support that identity.

### **What we will learn to do**

In addition to the knowledge and skills identified in the preceding goals, we are committed to your leaving this class prepared to undertake the following practices that are integral to being a competent teacher of literacy:

- Conduct language and word study,
- Plan and lead reading workshops that include independent reading, guided reading, and literature study,
- Plan and lead writing workshops,
- Administer and interpret the *Qualitative Reading Inventory*,
- Prepare for, enact, and evaluate a text-based discussion, using content area text, for the purpose of promoting knowledge building.

#### Structure of the course.

A topic (or two) has been selected for each class session. Typically, there will be a related reading and interactive lecture regarding this topic. In addition, there will be the opportunity to experience a literacy activity that would be appropriate for use in an upper elementary/middle school classroom. These activities will be designed to model the components of a language arts block. We will participate in these activities as both learners and prospective teachers. Finally, there will be several assignments that will be field-based and incorporated in our class discussions.

#### Resources for ED 403

We will use the following books, which are available for purchase at Ulrichs, Michigan Book and Supply, and the Michigan Union:

- Barone, D. M. (2006). *Narrowing the literacy gap. What works in high-poverty schools*. New York: Guilford.
- Bear, D. R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2008). *Words their way: Word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction*. New Jersey: Merrill.
- Beck, I. L. & McKeown, M. G. (2006). *Improving comprehension with Questioning the Author*. New York: Scholastic.
- Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford.
- Fountas, I. C. and Pinnell, G. S. (2001). *Guiding readers and writers. Teaching comprehension, genre, and content literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Hesse, K. (1997). *Out of the Dust*. New York: Scholastic.

In addition, selected readings for this course will be posted to CTools and you will be provided with copies of Leslie, L. & Caldwell, J. (2000). *Qualitative Reading Inventory*. New York: HarperCollins College, which we will share and use to complete the assessment assignment.

## Course plan

Date	Topic(s)	Activity	Assignments for the week and in progress <sup>1</sup>
1/7/08	<p>Orientation to the course</p> <p>Defining reading comprehension</p> <p>Characterizing the self-regulated reader</p>	<p>After reviewing the syllabus, we will pair up and think aloud while reading a narrative and informational text. We will use this activity to discuss the nature of text comprehension as it relates to the features of the text, the purposes for which we are reading, and our activity as readers. Together, we will read and discuss a theoretical perspective that will inform our understanding of how comprehension occurs. We will use this analysis and reading to discuss the implications for teaching students how to comprehend and learn from text. This will set the stage for our in-class work on planning and enacting guided reading lessons.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read <i>Narrowing the Literacy Gap</i> and prepare for the jigsaw discussion that we will hold in class on 1/14 (see guidelines and complete response).</li> <li>▪ Read Chapter 18 (Understanding the Reading Process) in Fountas and Pinnel using guiding questions that will support relating the reading with the think-aloud activity conducted in class.</li> <li>▪ Read pages 15-25 in Fountas and Pinnell,</li> <li>▪ In consultation with your CT, select the informational text and topic you will use in a discussion with students in your practicum site. Also identify a time (at least 20 min.) for this discussion to take place within the next two weeks. Finally, make sure you have a tape-recorder with which to record your discussion.</li> <li>▪ Complete interview and inventory regarding language arts instruction in your practicum site, by 1/28.</li> </ul>
1/14/08	<p>Building an understanding of why students struggle with literacy achievement and what we, as teachers, can do about these struggles.</p>	<p>In this session, we will discuss <i>Narrowing the Literacy Gap</i>, using a jigsaw participation structure. In addition, we will discuss the reading you did on “understanding the reading process” for the purpose of advancing our understanding of text comprehension and our roles as teachers in mediating student understanding of text. Finally, we will introduce you to a model of language arts instruction that we will enact in</p>	<p>Please:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read pages 26-39 in Fountas and Pinnell</li> <li>▪ Conduct brief survey with four to six students in your practicum site by 1/28.</li> <li>▪ Complete “Dirty 30s” activity to be used in class 1/28.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Please see accompanying guidelines for each written assignment and guiding questions for each reading.



			<p>plan and enact a series of lessons in which you introduce students to the words (see pages 31-35), share the child-friendly definitions you have constructed for those words (see pages 35-44), engage students in using the word meanings (see pages 44-95, and design and administer an assessment (see pages 95-101). This activity should be completed by 3/24. Follow the guidelines for reporting on this.</p>
2/11/08	<p>Word and language study</p> <p>Guided Reading</p> <p>Writing workshop</p>	<p>In this session, we continue to experience guided reading using <i>Out of the Dust</i>.</p> <p>The word and language study component will be word study, building upon the knowledge you acquired about word study in ED 401.</p> <p>The writing component will focus on revision and the structuring of mini-lessons. To support our learning, we will view videotapes of teachers engaged in writing instruction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read pages 114-141 of Fountas and Pinnell and complete written response.</li> <li>▪ Read pages 197-227 of <i>Out of the Dust</i> and complete written response</li> <li>▪ In consultation with your cooperating teacher, and with the assistance of <i>Words their Way</i>, select a spelling inventory (see pages 29-30) to be administered with a group of your students, score and analyze the students' inventory (using pages 33-38). This activity should be completed by 3/10. Using the results of your spelling inventory, select an appropriate word-study technique from <i>Words their Way</i>, plan several lessons using this (these) techniques and conduct these lessons with a group of students by 3/31</li> <li>▪ Using the mini-lesson architecture, create a mini-lesson regarding revision.</li> <li>▪ Try three revision strategies using the writing you have done in your writer's notebook.</li> <li>▪ Read posted excerpts from</li> </ul>

			CTools folder labeled 2/18.
2/18/08	<p>Word and language study</p> <p>Guided Reading</p> <p>Writing workshop</p> <p>Supporting the literacy learning of English-language learners</p>	<p>The word and language study will focus on fluency</p> <p>We will conclude our guided reading of <i>Out of the Dust</i></p> <p>The writing component will focus on editing, including addressing developmental goals and how one embeds editing in a writer's workshop. We also discuss the role of writing partnerships in the writing process.</p> <p>In the final third of class, we discuss teaching English-language learners, and will view and analyze a video of teachers engaged in practices designed to support the learning of these students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read Chapter 19 in Fountas and Pinnell and complete written response</li> <li>▪ Read Chapters 1 through 5 of <i>Questioning the Author</i> and complete the written response that will draw upon your first text-based discussion.</li> <li>▪ Bring a published piece of writing to class on 3/3.</li> <li>▪ Please collect three writing samples from students in your field site to bring to class on 3/10</li> <li>▪ Choose and read three authors' reflections on writing from <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/books/specials/writers.html">http://www.nytimes.com/books/specials/writers.html</a>.</li> </ul>
2/25/08	Winter break		
3/3/08	<p>Planning for - and conducting - productive discussions with text</p> <p>Writer's workshop</p>	<p>In the first half of class, we will begin by discussing your initial experience leading a text-based discussion and sharing the writing you did in response to Chapters 1-5 of <i>Questioning the Author</i>. We will advance our understanding of <i>Questioning the Author (QtA)</i>, by viewing and discussing video of Dr. Linda Kucan engaging in QtA. We will compare Dr. Kucan's practices as she leads a text-based discussion with our own initial attempts to lead a text-based discussion. Finally, we will practice analyzing the text we will use in our second text-based discussion and will begin planning the discussion based upon our analysis.</p> <p>For writer's workshop, we will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Please read Section 2 of <i>Questioning the Author</i></li> <li>▪ Please read Chapter 28 (Making teaching decisions using continuous assessment) in Fountas and Pinnell.</li> <li>▪ Continue planning for second text-based discussion that will be conducted the week of 3/17</li> <li>▪ Complete Part B of Vision of Writing assignment for next week.</li> <li>▪ Read posted excerpts from CTools folder labeled 3/10.</li> </ul>

		do a writer's celebration.	
3/10/08	Assessment in reading and Writing	<p>Building on your knowledge of running records, you will be introduced to the <i>Qualitative Reading Inventory</i>, which incorporates running records, but also assesses prior knowledge, comprehension, and reading across genres.</p> <p>You will be introduced to a system for assessing writers and writing. We will apply the system, using the writing samples that you have collected from your students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to acquaint yourself with the QRI. In consultation with your cooperating teacher, identify a child with whom you will administer the QRI. Plan three sessions for this administration. The first will be administering the word list to determine the level at which you will assess continuous reading and comprehension. The second and third will be administration of the reading passages. The write-up of the QRI is due 4/14</li> <li>▪ Start working on Student Writing Assessment &amp; Mini-Lessons. You will be expected to have implemented your chosen lesson and completed a written reflection by 3/31.</li> <li>▪ Read posted excerpts from CTools folder labeled 3/17.</li> </ul>
3/17/08 3/18/08 3/19/08	Second text-based discussion, collection and use of record of practice	<p>This week, we will enact our text-based discussion in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms of Ms. Swanson and Bearman in Willow Run Middle School. Working in pairs, half of you will lead the discussion Monday morning from 9:00-9:59. In seminar on Wed. morning, we will share selected video records of practice for the purpose of analyzing our practice leading the discussion and planning for the continuation on Thurs. On Thursday, the second partner will lead the discussion with the same group of students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Please read Chapter 9 (independent reading) in Fountas and Pinnell</li> </ul>
3/24/08	Debriefing on text-based discussions  Debriefing regarding vocabulary lessons	<p>We will use this session to continue sharing records of practice from last Thursday's text-based discussions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read Chapter 23 (genre and content literacy) of Fountas and Pinnell</li> <li>▪ Read posted excerpts from CTools folder labeled 3/31.</li> </ul>



	Discussion of independent reading	<p>We will also debrief on the experiences you had conducting your vocabulary lessons.</p> <p>Finally, we talk about the role of independent reading in the language arts block and how you coordinate independent reading in your curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Student Writing Assessment and Mini-Lessons assignment for next week.</li> </ul>
3/31/08	<p>Debriefing regarding word study lessons</p> <p>Teaching from content area text</p> <p>Writer's workshop</p>	<p>In this session, we debrief on the experiences you had conducting word study lessons.</p> <p>We consider issues specific to teaching with content area text.</p> <p>Our writer's workshop will focus on the use of conferring and the use of mentor text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read posted excerpts from CTools folder labeled 4/7.</li> <li>Complete text mining assignment and post on CTools.</li> </ul>
4/7/08	Introduction to Basal Reading Programs	<p>After an initial orientation to comprehensive language arts programs, we will sample lessons to critique and modify them, given our knowledge of effective language arts instruction. In addition, we relate the use of comprehensive language arts programs to state standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember that your QRI write-up is due next week and that we will use these in class.</li> </ul>
4/14/08	Wrapping it up	<p>In this session, we will debrief regarding our QRI administrations and interpretations and reflect on our learning for this semester, setting new goals for the next year of your preparation to become teachers.</p>	

## Assignments and Grading<sup>2</sup>

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Assignment related to <i>Narrowing the Literacy Gap</i>	1.14	15
Interview and inventory regarding literacy curriculum and instruction in your field site	1.28	20
Popular culture surveys with students in field site	1.28	10
Assignments related to the reading of our class novel: <i>Out of the Dust</i>		
▪ Dirty Thirties research	1.28	5
▪ Written response (pgs. 1-51)	2.4	5
▪ Written response (pgs. 53-189)	2.11	5
▪ Written response (pgs. 191-227)	2.18	5
Assignments related to reading of Fountas and Pinnell		
▪ Response 1	1.14	10
▪ Response 2	2.4	10
▪ Response 3	2.18	10
▪ Response 4	3.3	10
Text-based discussion		
▪ Transcribing first discussion	2.4	10
▪ Coding and analysis of first discussion	3.3	20
▪ Planning, conduct, and analysis of second text-based discussion toward middle of semester.	group work	
▪ Text analysis specifying learning goals, challenges and opportunities	group work	
▪ Plan specifying stopping places, questions, and follow ups	group work	
▪ Preparation and presentation of record of practice	3.18 or 3.24	20
▪ Comparison of first and second discussions for in-class discussion	3.31	20
Vision of Writing		
▪ Part A	2.4	5
▪ Part B	3.10	5
▪ Part C	4.17?	5
Planning, enactment, and reporting on vocabulary lessons	3.24	20

<sup>2</sup> Assignments are planned in conjunction with course goals and activities. The due dates correspond with in-class activity related to the assignment; hence, assignments must be completed on time and points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late.

Administration and interpretation of informal spelling inventory	3.10	5
planning, enactment, and reporting on word study lessons.	3.31	15
Assessing student writing to plan and implement mini-lesson and reflection	3.31	15
Mining read aloud text for teaching points	Post on CTools by 4.7	5
Administration and interpretation of an informal reading inventory (The <i>Qualitative Reading Inventory</i> ) with one student in your practicum site	4/14.	Administration - 15 Interpretation - 25

Course grading<sup>3</sup>: The assignments total 290 points. In addition, class participation, in which members of the class contribute to our being a productive learning community (by coming prepared to class, sharing your thinking, and responding to the ideas of others) will be recognized with an additional 20 points. Because the completion of assignments is integral to our class sessions, no late assignments will be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made. The final course grade will be determined as follows:

% of points and grade	% of points and grade
94-100 = A (A+ for exceptional work)	77-79 = C+
90-93 = A-	74-76 = C
87-89 = B+	70-73 = C-
84-87 = B	67-69 = D+
80 - 83 = B-	64-66 =D

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<sup>3</sup> If you have special learning needs for which accommodations may be needed, please inform me as soon as possible so that we plan accordingly.