

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
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Literacy Development in the Elementary and Middle School
Spring 2021
Mondays, 9:50am-12:50pm
Synchronous Meeting Dates: 1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 3/1, 3/22, 4/5, 4/19, 5/3
Location: <https://zoom.us/j/94439498461>

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| Instructor: Amy Lewis | Email: amy.lewis@gse.rutgers.edu |
| Phone Number : 848-932-0683 | |
| Office Hours: During asynchronous class meeting times & by appointment (schedule via email or Remind app) | Prerequisites or other limitations: <i>Admission to the Teacher Education Program</i> |
| Mode of Instruction: <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other | Permission required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Directions about where to get permission numbers: |

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentations: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING GOALS

The **New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (2014)** can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap9.pdf>. In this course, we will be covering the following standards:

Standard #1: Learner Development

The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning

and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

Standard Two: Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

Standard Three: Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Standard Four: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches, particularly as they relate to the Common Core Standards and the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

Standard Five: Application of Content The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

Standard Seven: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

Standard Ten: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

Council for the Accreditation of Education Professionals 2018 K-6 Elementary Teacher Preparation Standards (2018)²

Standard 1: Understanding and Addressing Each Child's Developmental and Learning Needs *Candidates use their understanding of child growth and development, individual differences, and diverse families, cultures and communities to plan and implement inclusive learning environments that provide each child with equitable access to high quality learning experiences that engage and create learning opportunities for them to meet high standards. They work collaboratively with families to gain a holistic perspective on children's strengths and needs and how to motivate their learning.*

1.b – Candidates use their understanding of individual differences and diverse families, cultures, and communities to plan and implement inclusive learning experiences and environments that build on children’s strengths and address their individual needs.

Standard 2: Understanding and Applying Content and Curricular Knowledge for Teaching

2.a – Candidates demonstrate and apply understandings of the elements of literacy critical for purposeful oral, print, and digital communication.

Standard 3 - Assessing, Planning, and Designing Contexts for Learning

Candidates assess students, plan instruction and design classroom contexts for learning. Candidates use formative and summative assessment to monitor students’ learning and guide instruction. Candidates plan learning activities to promote a full range of competencies for each student. They differentiate instructional materials and activities to address learners’ diversity. Candidates foster engagement in learning by establishing and maintaining social norms for classrooms. They build interpersonal relationships with students that generate motivation, and promote students social and emotional development.

3.c – Candidates plan instruction including goals, materials, learning activities and assessments.

3.d – Candidates differentiate instructional plans to meet the needs of diverse students in the classroom.

3.f – Candidates explicitly support motivation and engagement in learning through diverse evidence-based practices.

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts:

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela/>

Common Core English Language Arts Standards: <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>

Course catalog description

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

Other description of course purposes, context, methods, etc.

This course serves as an introduction to the teaching of literacy in the upper elementary and middle school. The major focus of the course will be literacy instruction in grades 4 through 8 with some discussion of literacy learning at other levels. Throughout the semester, we will examine the ways in which the term “literacy” is constantly evolving in today’s society. In addition, we will explore the relationship between various areas of literacy, as well as the role of literacy across the curriculum. The course is designed to assist future teachers in developing the fundamental knowledge, skills/strategies and dispositions needed to carry out a literacy program where all students’ expertise in reading, writing and oral language is nurtured.

During each class session, we will explore research-based practices for building literacy in diverse learners. Classes will involve a variety of collaborative activities, such as discussing readings, examining curriculum/assessment materials, analyzing/developing lesson plans, participating in reading/writing workshops and other cooperative learning activities related to content and pedagogy. The instructor will also model lessons specially geared to grades 3 to 8 with an emphasis on higher order comprehension skills, vocabulary development, content area reading, expository writing and struggling readers. There will be an emphasis on exposure to upper elementary and adolescent literature.

Learning Goals & Objectives

At the end of the course, students should be able to...

- Articulate a philosophy of literacy instruction that emphasizes the interactive and integrative nature of language and builds upon these connections when creating learning opportunities.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills that are needed for creating and implementing a literacy curriculum using small and large group work, collaborative learning, conferencing, and individual work based on professional standards.
- Identify, plan, and design literacy instruction based on students' needs, developmental progress, and prior knowledge.
- Identify and understand the characteristics, uses, advantages, and limitations of different types of assessments for evaluating how students learn, what they know and are able to do, and what kinds of experiences will support students' growth and development.
- Critically reflect on his/her teaching and learning.
- Identify and use available resources and materials for instructional planning.
- Articulate how educational research can be used as a means for continuous learning and development.

Course Organization

This course covers the research and theory that frame instruction in the middle grades. This “sets the stage” for discussing literacy instruction in grades 4-8. You will learn about research, theory, and educational standards (both state and national) that guide teaching at this level. During the majority of the course, participants will take a close look at effective instruction in various literacy domains, including comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and word study, in addition to differentiation and critical literacy. Finally, the course gives special attention to the materials and instructional programs that can be used for literacy instruction. This addresses how to best use the materials available to teachers at this level with emphasis given to supporting literacy learning across disciplines.

Required Texts

- Tompkins, G. E. (2009). *Literacy in the middle grades: Teaching reading and writing to fourth through eighth graders* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson. (ISBN: 978-0132348492)
- One professional book from a list provided in class for your professional development group (PDG)

- One independent reading book that meets specific criteria identified
- A variety of required readings in the form of PDF files, websites, online texts, etc. will be available through the Rutgers library system, provided online, and/or available through our class website.

Grading Policy & Turning in Assignments

Assignments are due as indicated on the course schedule. The syllabus, course schedule, and due dates can be found on our class website. You are responsible for knowing what the due dates are. Unless arrangements are made in advance of the due date, late assignments will not be accepted.

Communications & Announcements

I will update our Canvas site each week to post information for your assignments. You are responsible for any information that is presented in our Canvas Announcements, so please make sure to check the site between classes so that you are aware of any additions and/or changes and set your Canvas profile so that you receive Announcements via email.

I will use e-mail to contact you individually. If you do not usually use your Rutgers e-mail account, be sure that you have set it to forward to the account you do check.

Attendance/Participation Policy

Attendance (this policy is separate from the participation grade): You are allowed ONE absence about which you must inform your instructor. Beyond that, your final grade will be reduced as indicated (unless, of course, you have a doctor's note or other documentation indicating a bona fide reason): 2 absences—reduction of a half grade; 3 absences—reduction of 1 full grade; 4 absences—failing grade in course. Again, if it is an excused absence, you are responsible for contacting the instructor, getting the course materials, and making up for the class in order to receive the participation points.

This class is discussion-oriented; therefore, your active participation in this course is vital to the course and to your learning. All students must come prepared to discuss this week's assigned readings. Keep notes on the reading. These notes will be important for helping make meaning, participating in online discussions, giving feedback to your peers, sharing how you connect readings to classroom experiences, and so on. You are expected to participate in a variety of ways throughout the semester, and your various assignments and projects will incorporate participation as part of their grade. Additional information on requirements for class participation is provided below.

Evaluation of Course Work

The following will be considered and used when evaluating your work:

- Only work that meets professional standards will be accepted. As teachers, we are expected to clearly communicate information to parents, administrators, and colleagues. For this course, you are expected to hand in proofread work.
- You will be evaluated on clarity, conciseness, and organization of writing. Responsiveness to the task or question will also be evaluated (e.g., are you fulfilling the requirements of the assignment).
- An 'A' assignment is exceptional work; not work that merely meets the requirements outlined in the syllabus.
- Responses will be judged by completeness and depth. You must present the necessary amount of detail to support your points. Write or present as though your audience is not an expert on your topic and in a way that demonstrates depth of analysis of the topic.
- Your work must demonstrate independent judgment. This includes going beyond the information presented by others. Be critical, seeing both strengths and weaknesses, and support opinions with your own reasons.
- Be sure to pay attention to professional style. Papers should be typed or word-processed and follow APA format.

Grading Scale

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| A | = 90% and above |
| B+ | = 87 – 89.9% |
| B | = 80 – 86.9% |
| C+ | = 77 – 79.9% |
| C | = 70 – 76.9% |
| D | = 60 – 69.9% |
| F | = below 60% |

Academic Integrity Policy

Any violation of academic honesty is a serious offense and is therefore subject to an appropriate penalty. Refer to <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml> for a full explanation of policies.

Confidentiality

When discussing classroom situations during course sessions, do so carefully. Mask the name of a student on any written or visual work shared in class or used in an assignment. When discussing teaching practices you have observed in the field, be mindful of maintaining a tone of professional courtesy. Under no circumstances (whether in class or in casual conversation with friends) should you relate stories from classrooms or schools that may be embarrassing to teachers or students or that include sensitive information about a child or family.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW, ASSIGNMENTS & TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Your overall course evaluation and final grade will be based on the following:

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| 1. Attendance, Preparation, & Participation | 10% |
| 2. Literacy Strategies & Independent Book Work | 20% |
| 3. Professional Development Group (PDG) | 20% |
| a. Discussion Leader Plan, Analysis, and Reflection (10%) | |
| b. Multimedia Book Share & Workshop (10%) | |
| 4. Clinical Teaching Work Sample 1 | |
| Essential Literacy Skill/Strategy Lesson | 50% |
| a. Task 1 - Lesson Plan & Planning Analysis (20%) | |
| b. Task 2 - Analysis of Teaching (10%) | |
| c. Task 3 - Assessment Artifacts & Assessment Analysis (20%) | |

WEEKLY ATTENDANCE, PREPARATION, & PARTICIPATION

Your participation and attendance are necessary for you and your classmates to get the most out of this course. You are expected to **attend every class** session having completed all required readings. It is understandable, however, that extenuating circumstances might result in an absence. If you miss class, use the university absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to your professor, but you should also follow with your professor to understand what was missed. You are allowed one missed class without it having a negative impact on your grade. You will still be expected, however, to turn in any assignments that are due on that day. Missing additional class time will result in a loss of participation points. For example, you will not earn full credit if you arrive late/leave early regularly, miss more than one class, or if you do not actively participate both synchronous and asynchronous class meetings.

Synchronous activities are used to inform course planning count toward your participation grade. Activities related to readings will take the form of written reflections, discussion leader, article discussion group work, participation in online discussions, etc. At times materials prepared outside of class will also contribute to this portion of your grade.

LITERACY STRATEGIES & INDEPENDENT READING BOOK

At the beginning of the semester, you will be invited to choose an independent reading book. The book you choose must meet the following set of criteria:

- appropriate for 4th-8th grade
- realistic fiction

- addresses a social justice issue (i.e. racism, xenophobia, ableism, classism, etc.) or highlights the experiences of a main character who is BIPOC

Throughout the semester, you will use your IRB to engage in literacy strategies. At the end of the semester, you will analyze this book for characteristics of reading for diversity (using the Teaching Tolerance survey) and informally share your analysis with peers. A variety of authors, examples of books, and organizations for book searches that meet these criteria will be offered on Canvas.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Throughout the semester, you will participate in a Professional Development Group (PDG). This will include selecting a professional text to study from titles introduced in class. Groups will be formed based on interest and you will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue and activities centered on the pedagogical and theoretical presentations of literacy instruction offered in the multiple texts. Recommended texts and a book survey will be posted on Canvas.

Discussion Leader Plan, Analysis, and Reflection

For each meeting session, one person from your group will act as the Discussion Leader/Meeting Facilitator. This person will be asked to prepare a plan including protocol for sharing ideas and/or discussing content to use in facilitating the group's discussion. The lesson plan should be submitted prior to the meeting. (A template for this plan can be found on Canvas.) Two days after the meeting, the Discussion Leader should submit an analysis of what was learned by the group (citing evidence of learning) and a reflection on the effectiveness of the meeting overall. (Discussion Leader sign-ups will be posted on Canvas)

Multimedia Book Share & Workshop

Upon completion of the PDG experience, PDGs will share the book's content with the class using a multimedia presentation. This assignment should be completed by the group but each member of the group must have a designated role in the development of the Multimedia Book Share & Workshop. In Week 14, the Multimedia Book Shares & Workshops will be conducted by the PDGs.

ESSENTIAL LITERACY SKILL/STRATEGY LESSON

This assignment requires you to develop, teach, and analyze a lesson designed to address an essential literacy skill, such as fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, or writing. This assignment will be completed in three tasks.

Task 1: Lesson Plan & Planning Analysis

First, you will meet with your cooperating teacher (with whom you work in your clinical placement) to discuss his/her current literacy unit/block. With your cooperating teacher's help, you will plan an upcoming literacy lesson that is situated within a broader learning segment. A lesson plan format will be provided in class along with further instructions on the design of the plan. You will cite course readings to answer reflection and analysis questions/prompts for the essential literacy skill(s) targeted and the strategy planned in your lesson.

Task 2: Analysis of Teaching

After planning, you will be expected to teach this lesson in the field and video record it for your own analysis. (Permission slips for recording instruction can be found on Canvas.) You will then conduct and submit an analysis of your teaching. (You will NOT be expected to submit a video of your lesson.) For this analysis you will, first, evaluate your instruction using an observation tool (Danielson Rubrics Domains 2 & 3) and then explain and reflect on your instructional decisions using a set of prompts. In your analysis and reflection, you will be expected to cite course readings as support for your answers.

Task 3: Assessment Artifacts & Assessment Analysis

Using artifacts of learning collected during the lesson, you will analyze what students learned using a predetermined set of criteria from Task 1. You will explain what students learned through both a quantitative and qualitative analysis and use the data collected to identify "next steps" for instruction.

Critical Feedback Team: For this assignment you will be on a team of your peers responsible for critically reviewing each others' work. You will be expected to provide your teammates with constructive criticism and positive feedback about the content and construction of their lesson plan and other related tasks.

Tentative Course Schedule by Week

| Class Session | Topic | Readings Due | Assignments Due |
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| Week 1 1/25 | Introduction – Literacy in Our Lives: <i>What does it mean to be literate? How might literacy take on different forms in different contexts?</i> | Introductions Syllabus & Course Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation • Independent Reading Books & Asynchronous Assignments • PDG Books Tasks (Take PDG Book Survey) • CTWS1: Essential Literacy Tasks | |
| Week 2 2/1 | Literacy in the Middle Grades: <i>What does effective literacy instruction look like in 4th through 8th grade?</i> | Tompkins Ch. 1 Muhammad, G. (2020). <i>Cultivating Genius</i> , Chapter 2: What is Historically Responsive Literacy? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autobiographical Literacy Narrative • Sign-up for Discussion Leaders in PDGs |
| Week 3 2/8 | Examining Reading and Writing Processes: <i>What are the basic principles for planning and managing a balanced literacy program?</i> | Tompkins Ch. 2 Parker, K. (2020). Students and Teachers: Inquiring Together. <i>Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy</i> , 64(1), 94–97. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get your Independent Reading Book (IRB) • Begin discussing your CTWS1 plan with your CT |
| Week 4 2/15 | Assessing Literacy Learning & Supporting All Learners: <i>How can teachers assess reading and writing? What tools could be used as artifacts</i> | Tompkins Ch. 3 <i>Finding Common Ground</i> from the " Engaging with Literature " series by Annenberg. (If the link brings you to the main list, access the video by scrolling to video #8 and click on the VOD icon on the right.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDG Mtg. #1 Facilitation |

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| <p>Week 5 2/22 ASYNC</p> | <p><i>of literacy learning? How can teachers use assessment to inform literacy instruction?</i></p> | <p>Video set: 1. What is an Informal Reading Inventory? 2. How do you administer an Informal Reading Inventory? 3. How do you score an Informal Reading Inventory?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asynchronous Assignment • PDG #1 Mtg. Facilitator's Reflection Due |
| <p>Week 6 3/1</p> | <p>Promoting Comprehension—</p> | <p>Tompkins Ch. 7 & 8</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDG Mtg. #2 Facilitation |
| <p>Week 7 3/8 ASYNC</p> | <p>Reader Factors: <i>What theories inform reading comprehension instruction? What do good readers and writers do in order to comprehend text?</i></p> | <p>Boyles, N. (2012). Closing in on Close Reading. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 70(4), 36. Serravallo, J. (2015). <i>Reading Strategies Book</i>, Chapter 6: Supporting Comprehension in Fiction</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTWS Task #1: Essential Literacy Strategy Plan Outline Assignment • Literacy Strategies & Independent Book Work (Asynchronous Assignment) • PDG #2 Mtg. Facilitator's Reflection Due |
| <p>SPRING RECESS</p> | | | |
| <p>Week 8 3/22</p> | <p>Eliminating Obstacles to Fluency: <i>What supports can teachers offer students to become more fluent readers and writers?</i></p> | <p>Tompkins Ch. 5 & 6</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDG Mtg. #3 Facilitation |
| <p>Week 9 3/29 ASYNC</p> | <p>Expanding Academic Vocabulary: <i>What are the stages of word knowledge? What are some techniques for teaching vocabulary?</i></p> | <p>Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2014). Content Are Vocabulary Learning. <i>The Reading Teacher</i>, 67(8), 594-599. Kucan, L. (2012). What is important to know about vocabulary? <i>The Reading Teacher</i>, 65(6), 360-366.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTWS Task #1: Essential Literacy Skill/Strategy Lesson Plan Draft to share with CFT Discussion • Literacy Strategies & Independent Book Work (Asynchronous Assignment) • PDG #3 Mtg. Facilitator's Reflection Due |

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| <p>Week 10 4/5</p> | <p>Teaching Writing: <i>How can teachers create an environment to support effective writing practices?</i></p> | <p>Tompkins Chap. 9</p> <p>Stillman, J., Anderson, L., & Struthers, K. (2014). Returning to reciprocity: Using dialogue journals to teach and learn. <i>Language Arts</i>, 91(3), 146-160.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTWS Task #1: Essential Literacy Skill/Strategy Lesson & Planning Commentary Final Draft Due • PDG Mtg. #4 Facilitation |
| <p>Week 11 4/12 ASYNC</p> | | <p>Serravallo, J. (2015). <i>Reading Strategies Book</i>, Chapter 13: Improving Writing About Reading</p> <p>Read Write Think: Unit Planning http://www.readwritethink.org/search/?resource_type=6&type=12</p> <p>National Writing Project https://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/922</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTWS Task #2: Essential Literacy Skill/Strategy Lesson Analysis of Teaching • Literacy Strategies & Independent Book Work (Asynchronous Assignment) • PDG #4 Mtg. Facilitator's Reflection Due |
| <p>Week 12 4/19</p> | <p>Critical Literacy: <i>How can we meaningfully bridge students' in/out of school literacy practices? How can we support students in critically examining informational resources?</i></p> | <p>Tompkins Ch. 12</p> <p>Muhammad, G. (2020). <i>Cultivating Genius</i>, Chapter 6: Toward the Pursuit of Criticality</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDG Mtg. #5 Facilitation |
| <p>Week 13 4/26 ASYNC</p> | | <p>McLaughlin, M., & DeVoogd, G. (2004). Critical literacy as comprehension: Expanding reader response. <i>Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy</i>, 48(1), 52-62.</p> <p>Kist, W. (2013). New Literacies and the Common</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTWS Task #3: Essential Literacy Skill/Strategy Lesson Assessment Artifacts Draft to share with CFT Discussion • Literacy Strategies & Independent Book Work (Asynchronous Assignment) |

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| | | <p>Core. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 70(6), 38-43.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Tolerance Reading Diversity: Independent Reading Book • PDG #5 Mtg. Facilitator's Reflection Due |
| <p>Week 14 5/3</p> | <p>Analysis, Evaluation, Synthesis: <i>How can teachers' leverage their professional knowledge and expertise in practice?</i> <i>What do we still need to learn?</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTWS Task #3: Essential Literacy Skill/Strategy Lesson Assessment Artifacts & Assessment Analysis Final Draft Due • PDG Book Share & Workshops Presented • Teaching Tolerance Reading Diversity: Independent Reading Book Share | |