

Literacy Development in the Elementary and Middle School  
 Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey – Graduate School of Education  
 Summer 2021  
 Course 15:299:516: C1  
 3 Credits

Instructor: Dr. M. Randall-Weeks	maqueda.randall.weeks@gse.rutgers.edu
Phone Number: n/a Email is the preferred and most reliable way to reach me.	Location: Online course
Office Hours: Virtual: By appointment (Send an email to set up day/time)	Prerequisites or other limitations: Must possess initial teacher certification in order to take the online section of this course.
Mode of Instruction: <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes

**Faculty Syllabus Statement for Disability Services:**

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 documentation: <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 (<https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration>).

**Learning Goals:**

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:

- Articulate a philosophy of literacy instruction that emphasizes the interactive and integrative nature of language and builds upon these connections when creating learning opportunities.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills that are needed for creating and implementing a literacy curriculum using small and large group work, collaborative learning, conferencing, and individual work based on professional standards.

- Identify, plan, and design literacy instruction based on students' needs, developmental progress, learning styles and prior knowledge.
- Identify and understand the characteristics, uses, advantages, and limitations of different types of assessments for evaluating how students learn, what they know and are able to do, and what kinds of experiences will support students' growth and development.
- Critically reflect on his/her teaching and learning.
- Identify and use available resources and materials for instructional planning.
- Articulate how educational research can be used as a means for continuous learning and development.

## **Course Catalogue Description:**

Emphasizes integrated language arts approach to literacy learning in grades three through eight. Connections between reading, writing, and oral language addressed. Reviews strategies to integrate literacy learning with instruction in the content areas.

## **General Course Information:**

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

## **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 children's or young adult nonfiction or historical fiction text published since approximately 2010. (See additional criteria and email the instructor for approval.)
- A variety of required readings in the form of PDF files, websites, online texts, etc. will be available through the Rutgers library system and/or from your course instructor
- One professional book from a list provided in class for your professional development group (PDG)

## **Additional Resources** (provided by course instructor):

### *Journal Articles:*

Botzakis, S. (2014). Visual and digital texts. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 57 (6), 503-505.

Fang, Z. & Pace, B. G. (2013). Teaching with challenging texts in the disciplines: Text complexity and close reading. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 57 (2), 104-108.

Hagood, M. C., (2012). Risks, responsibilities, and rewards of using new literacies in the middle

grades. *Voices from the Middle*, 19 (4), 10-16.

Henry, L. A. (2006). SEARCHing for the answer: The critical role of new literacies while reading on the internet. *The Reading Teacher*, 59 (7), 614-627.

Hutchinson, A., & Woodward, L., (2014). A planning cycle for integrating digital technology into literacy instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 67 (6), 455-464.

Kucan, L. (2012). What is important to know about vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher*, 65 (6), 360-366.

McLaughlin, M., & DeVogd, G. (2004). Critical literacy as comprehension: Expanding reader response. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 48 (1), 52-62

Pacheco, M. B., & Goodwin, A. P. (2013). Putting two and two together: Middle school students' morphological problem solving strategies for unknown words. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 56 (7), 541-553.

Snow, C., & Moje, E. (2010). Why is everyone talking about adolescent literacy? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 91 (6), 66-69.

*Digital Resources- Podcasts, blogs, newscasts:*

Voice of Literacy podcast by Dr. Julie Coiro <http://www.voiceofliteracy.org/posts/44978>

## Course Organization

This course is organized into eight modules. Each module will have its own page on our Canvas course site that will outline all required work. It may be helpful to **think of each module as a class session** which, if held in person, would be about *three hours in duration*. Therefore, in addition to readings that should be completed before the module (class session), there will be activities and other work listed on the module that will take approximately three hours to complete. Also, as is the case in a face-to-face course, there will be additional major assignments due periodically throughout the semester.

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

**Modules 2 – 6** make up the majority of the course. Within this section of the course, you will take a close look at effective instruction in various literacy domains including comprehension, vocabulary, fluency and word study. You will also examine issues related to differentiation and critical literacy.

**Module 7** gives special attention to the materials and instructional programs that can be used to teach literacy or require literacy skills (e.g. textbooks). Here you will consider how to best use the materials available to teachers at this level. You will also consider the types of instructional support needed to ensure success in the reading and writing texts required in content area classes (e.g. science class or math class.)

**Module 8** will be your creation. It is here that you will share with your classmates what you have learned about a particular aspect of writing instruction.

## Assignments:

### Course Policies

Assignments are due as indicated on the course schedule. The syllabus, course schedule, and due dates can be found on our class Canvas website. You are responsible for knowing the due dates.

Some of your assignments require you to post information onto our class Canvas site. Please make sure all comments and responses are posted by their due dates. Major assignments must also be submitted by their due date. If there is a problem with our Canvas submission site, you should submit your assignment to the email address listed above.

### Participation Policy

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

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

### Academic Integrity Policy

You can find the Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students at the following site: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml> . You are responsible for understanding and adhering to the policy. Any violation of academic honesty is a serious offense and is therefore subject to an appropriate penalty. Please pay particular attention to the information provided on Cheating, Fabrication, and Plagiarism.

### 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 should you relate stories from classrooms or schools that may be embarrassing to specific teachers or students or that include sensitive information about a child or family.

## Netiquette

Please remember that communicating online should not be any different from when you communicate in a face-to-face class. Although some of your writing assignments do allow for less “academic” and more informal conversations, please refrain from using Internet slang, abbreviations, and acronyms. We cannot assume that everybody understands them. All communications should be courteous and professional.

## Technology Policy

In order to make the most of your online learning experience, there are several technical requirements you will need to fulfill. Refer to the guidelines at the following website to help ensure your online success: <https://ecollege.rutgers.edu/technicalreq.jsp>.

Throughout the semester, you will be using various online programs and tools. Many of these are Web 2.0 tools that are found on free, public websites. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate technology capabilities to successfully complete assignments and activities. Rutgers University provides technology assistance for Canvas and I am also available to assist you whenever I can.

Murphy’s Law states, “Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong.” Computers crash. Internet access can be limited during a thunderstorm. All of these issues cannot prevent you from submitting assignments on time. My advice to you is:

- Aim to complete all assignments one day early. This way you have one more day to get to the library or a friend’s house if the worst happens. You’ll also have time to contact me and notify me of any problem.
- Be sure your computer is in good working order. If it has any problems or issues you want to make sure those are ironed out BEFORE the course begins.
- Be sure to arrange access to a 2nd computer. This could be your own; this could be the computer lab or a friend’s home computer. This may become important if your first choice computer fails at some point in the semester.
- Test the websites you are assigned to use as soon as you receive the assignment. Our Canvas course website may work at your place of business; however, you may find that later in the course that a site you are expected to access is filtered (not accessible from your place of business). Some sites don’t work on older computers while others don’t work on newer computers. Videos may not play. Security settings may need to be checked.
- Keep usernames and passwords in a safe place.
- Create back-ups. You should always have two copies of your work. Copying your file to a USB drive and deleting the original is not a back-up. The USB drive can fail too. You should save your work in several places, keeping all files until the course is complete. It may not be going too far to say that important work should be stored online as well as locally (meaning store a copy online somewhere. This can be accomplished by sending yourself an email with the file attached.)
- Consider drafting your comments for discussion boards on Google Docs so that your work is

being saved while it is in progress.

- Double-check that your work has been submitted successfully. Make sure assignments are uploaded and posts are submitted. If you have emailed an assignment to me, be sure that you have received an email verifying that I have received it within 24 hours. If you don't hear from me, email me again and reattach your work.

## Assignment Details

### ***Online Discussions*** 25%

Active participation and collaboration is necessary for an effective course. In order to fully develop your understanding of the ideas and concepts reviewed in the modules, you will participate in online discussions with the members in your small group on a regular basis (typically one discussion per module).

In these discussions, you will construct responses to given topics and reply to the posts of the members in your group, as directed. These discussion topics will require you to not only demonstrate your understanding of the required readings, but to take that information and reflect on how it relates to your personal experiences with education, as well as the society around you.

Although requirements for online discussions may differ per module, the following are the general criteria I will look for in your responses:

- **Initial discussion posts** should be *approximately 250-500 words*; **responses to the members in your small group** should be *approximately 100 words*.
- Discussion posts should be supported by your readings and properly cited using APA format.
- All posts and responses to posts should be completed by the due dates that appear below in this syllabus.
- All responses should clearly and adequately answer the entire discussion prompt.
- It is not advisable to use postings such as “I agree,” “I don’t know either,” “ditto,” etc. These types of responses take up space and do not add anything substantial to the conversation. It is important to know that such responses will not be counted for assignment credit.
- Respect each other’s ideas, feelings and experience when posting responses.
- Remember to avoid Internet slang and overly informal language (see course policies).

***Nonfiction /Historical Fiction Multi-Media Book Talk*** 25% **Personal Submission DUE 6/15; Peer Review DUE 6/21**

You will read a text appropriate for use in grades 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 and create a multi-media book talk based on the text. The book should be new to you and published within the past 5 years (unless special arrangements have been made).

You will then create a multi-media book talk (using VoiceThread, Prezi, Animoto, MovieMaker, PowerPoint, iMovie, etc) of approx 5 – 10 minutes in length that could be used to encourage students in grades 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 to read the book themselves.

You will post your multimedia book talk for your classmates to review. You will **view the book talks of your classmates** and will **post feedback for at least three** of them.

***Lesson Plan*** 25% **DUE 7/6**

This assignment requires you to develop a lesson that teaches a comprehension strategy. A lesson plan format will be provided along with further instructions.

***Professional Development Group and Multi-Media Book Talk*** 25% **DUE 7/20**

This assignment will require each of you to select a professional text from a list of titles supplied by your instructor. Groups will be formed based on interest, and you will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with classmates who are also reading about this aspect of writing instruction. Throughout the course, you will collaborate with these classmates to share what you have learned. You will then create an **INDIVIDUAL** multi-media book talk on the chosen professional text.

## **Grading Policy**

### Grading Scale

A = 90% and above

B+=87–89.9%

B =80–86.9%

C+=77–79.9%

C =70–76.9%

D =60–69.9%

F = below 60%

### Grading Summary



A = Outstanding work

B = Good work

C = Satisfactory work

D = Poor work

F = Failing work

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

- Online Discussions/Chats (25%)
- Nonfiction/Historical Fiction Multimedia Book Talk (25%)
- Lesson Plan (25%)
- Professional Development Group and Multi-Media Professional Development Book Talk (25%)

**Academic Integrity Policy:**

Academic integrity: Make sure that you provide proper citations for all materials that you use in all written work. Any violation of academic honesty is a serious offense and is therefore subject to an appropriate penalty. Refer to <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/> for a full explanation of policies

**Course Schedule\***

Week	Module Title	Readings	Due Dates
1 6/1-6/7	Building an Online Community	Tompkins – Chapter 1  Hagood (2012), Hutchinson & Woodward (2014), and Botzakis  McLaughlin, M., & DeVoogd, G. (2004). Critical literacy as comprehension: Expanding reader response. <i>Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy</i> , 48 (1), 52-62.	Select the text you will read for your multimedia book presentation by June 5th.  Complete Module.  Participate in threaded discussions.
2 6/8-6/14	Literacy in Grades 3-8 Overview	Tompkins- Chapters 2 and 3  "Why is Everyone Talking About Adolescent Literacy" by Catherine Snow & Elizabeth Moje (Phi Delta Kappan, 2010)	Complete Module.  Participate in threaded discussions.



<p><b>3</b> 6/15-6/21</p>	<p>Fluency</p>	<p>Tompkins- Chapter 5</p>	<p><b>Multimedia Book Talk Due June 15.</b></p> <p>Complete Module.</p> <p>Participate in threaded discussions.</p> <p><b>Complete Book Talk Peer Reviews by June 21.</b></p>
<p><b>4</b> 6/22-6/28</p>	<p>Vocabulary</p>	<p>Tompkins-Chapter 6</p> <p>Pacheco, M. B., &amp; Goodwin, A. P. (2013). Putting two and two together: Middle school students' morphological problem solving strategies for unknown words. <i>Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy</i>, 56 (7), 541-553.</p> <p>Kucan, L. (2012). What is important to know about vocabulary. <i>The Reading Teacher</i>, 65 (6), 360-366.</p>	<p>Select and order your professional development book on writing instruction so you have it for the last module.</p> <p>Complete Module.</p> <p>Participate in threaded discussions.</p>
<p><b>5</b> 6/29-7/5</p>	<p>Comprehension</p>	<p>Tompkins-Chapters 7 and 8</p> <p>Brown, R. (2008), <i>The Road Not Yet Taken: A Transactional Strategies Approach to Comprehension Instruction</i>. <i>The Reading Teacher</i>, 61: 538–547.</p> <p>Voice of Literacy podcast by Dr. Julie Coiro  <a href="http://www.voiceofliteracy.org/posts/44978">http://www.voiceofliteracy.org/posts/44978</a></p> <p>Henry, L. A. (2006). SEARCHing for the answer: The critical role of new literacies while reading on the internet. <i>The Reading Teacher</i>, 59 (7), 614-627.</p>	<p>Complete Module.</p> <p>Participate in threaded discussions.</p>
<p><b>6</b> 7/6-7/12</p>	<p>Writing and Differentiation</p>	<p>Tompkins- Chapters 4 and 9</p>	<p><b>Reading Comprehension Lesson Plan due July 6.</b></p> <p>Complete Module.</p> <p>Participate in threaded</p>

			discussions.
7 7/13- 7/19	Literacy Materials	Tompkins- Chapters 10, 11 and 12  Fang, Z. & Pace, B. G. (2013). Teaching with challenging texts in the disciplines: Text complexity and close reading. <i>Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy</i> , 57 (2), 104-108.	Complete Module.  Participate in threaded discussions.
8 7/20- 7/23	Professional Development in Writing	Professional development multi-media book talk on writing instruction.	<b>Complete your professional development book talk by July 20.</b>

\*Syllabus and schedule may change during course of semester. Students will be electronically updated in a timely fashion if changes are necessary.

**RUTGERS**

Graduate School of Education

Learning and Teaching Graduate School of Education  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey 10 Seminary Place  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1183  
Ph: 732-932-7496, Ext. 8125 Fax: 732-932-7552  
<http://gse.rutgers.edu/>