

Augusta State University
College of Education
Department of Teacher Development

Course Title: Best Practices in Language Arts

Course Prefix and Number: EDTD 6221

Instructor: Karen Chase, Ed.S., NBPTS Certified Teacher

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Hours: 3 semester hours, 8/17-10/12, Thursdays, 5:00-8:15 p.m.

Location: Room 355, University Hall

Prerequisites: Admission to master's program and completion of 6161

Course Description: This course focuses on helping teachers learn to implement basic instructional strategies in the area of reading with limited attention to writing. It is intended for students who have never had a course in literacy instruction or have had one that is more than five years old. Practice in informal and authentic assessment is also included.

Specific Course Objectives:

1. The student shall demonstrate competence in knowledge and beliefs about reading, including theoretical foundations of language development and current practices in the area of reading instruction that complement and supplement reading instruction for the classroom teacher.
2. The student shall demonstrate competence in knowledge about reading that includes relevant research on the interrelationship of language and literacy acquisition; various systems of language and their relationship to the reading process; research in special education, psychology, and other fields that deal with the treatment of students with learning disabilities.
3. The student shall demonstrate competence in knowledge about the principles of human growth and development, language development, and the impact of diversity on language development and reading acquisition.

NATIONAL STANDARDS:

This course addresses all of the **IRA/NCTE Standards for English Language Arts**. However, the following standards are specifically reinforced throughout the course:

International Reading Association Standards Addressed:

Standard 1 – Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

Standard 3 – Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g. sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

Standard 5 – Students employ a wide-range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

National Board Standards Addressed:

II. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

- examine research related to *Standards for English Language Arts*

III. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

- define “best practice” as the term appears in the literature and as it appears in schools.
- examine current personal practice for degree of grounding in current research in language arts.
- examine current personal assessment practices in regard to their authenticity.

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance/Participation: Attendance and punctuality are required except in extreme emergencies (which must be discussed with the instructor). According to the Augusta State University attendance policy, “If a student has been absent for more than 10% of class time, regardless of cause, then the professor may withdraw the student from the class for excessive absences.” Because this course meets only eight times during the semester, the maximum number of absences is one. You will be dropped from the class on the second absence. **Missing a class will result in a deduction of ten points from the participation grade.** Makeup work may also be assigned. Much of the learning in this course takes place during class as students interact with one another and the instructor. All students are expected to participate in discussions, etc. and to contribute their professional knowledge and expertise.

100 points

2. Assignments: Read all assignments before class. Be prepared for in-class presentations, sharing of journal articles, précis, and book talks on the assigned date. Students are expected to submit assignments that have been word processed. Computers are available in several locations on campus. Students should make backup copies of work they turn in and print assignments in order to turn them in at the beginning of the class period. All assignments should be typed and double spaced with 1” margins. Use APA format when appropriate. Due dates are listed on last page of syllabus.

30 points - Précis – Read assigned article from *Educational Leadership* on assessment.

Write a précis (British-style – handout to follow) to share with class.

10 points – Read Peter Elbow Interview

Write one-page, double-spaced British-style précis (handout to follow)

50 points – Professional Journal Articles (2)

(25 points each – article summary, connection, and sharing with class)

Select one journal article related to best practices in language arts and one article related to literacy to share with your classmates. Prepare a brief summary of each article, including bibliographic information (APA), and a personal connection with the article based on your teaching practice—current or anticipated. Provide me with a copy of the article.

50 points – Book Share (2)

(25 points each – “one pager” and sharing with class)

Share one multi-cultural book and one book of your choice that you deem engaging and developmentally appropriate for the grade level you teach or intend to teach. Prepare a “one-pager” that summarizes your instructional plan, including GPS standards addressed, culminating activity, and best practices incorporated.

40 points – Guest Speaker Reflections

(10 points each – 4 speakers)

- Guiding Student Reading
- Using Electronic Media in the Language Arts Classroom
- Incorporating Rigor in the Curriculum
- The Language Arts Classroom and Media Center Connections

Write a one page reflection in which you connect ideas presented by guest speakers to your current teaching situation or vision for your future teaching practice. Focus on changes in your thinking about teaching language arts.

250 points- Instructional Unit Development

(200 points – unit plan structured as per templates provided

50 points – presentation of unit plan to classmates)

Students will work individually or with a partner to prepare a unit of instruction using the backwards design model.

Units must include of the following documents and these **5** documents **must be submitted through live text (as well as through hard copy) along with your cover document explained below:**

- Step A: Course Planning Map (thumbnail sketch of entire school year; one complete unit of instruction)
- Step B, Stage 1: Select Learning Goals (from standards)
- Step B, Stage 2: Determine Appropriate Assessments
- Step B, Stage 3: Sequence Instruction and Learning
- Unit Overview (cover page—to be completed last)

Units must purposefully incorporate the following components:

Integration of the arts

Multi-cultural literature

Graphic organizers and rubrics

Use of higher order questioning/rigor appropriate to grade level
(evident in discussion questions, writing assignments, etc.)

Emphasis on vocabulary in authentic activities

Supplemental materials

You will write a cover document that reflects on your unit. Include the following sections:

- What I Learned
- Component(s) I Wish to Showcase (from above list)
- Areas I Will Strengthen (explain how)

Units will be presented to the entire class during the last class meeting. Presentations will be 10-12 minutes in duration.

3. Due Dates – Students are expected to meet deadlines for turning in work. Late work will not be accepted. E-mailed work will not be accepted. In the event the student misses a class, assignments should be sent with another student. Extensions will not be granted.

4. Academic Honesty – In an academic community, honesty and integrity must prevail if the work done and the honors awarded are to receive respect. The erosion of honesty is the academic community’s ultimate loss. The responsibility for the practice and preservation of honesty must be equally assumed by all its members (Augusta State University Catalog). Exclusions to academic honesty are listed in detail, and each is a serious offense. The most common offense, plagiarism, is the presentation as original work of ideas, words or thoughts belonging to someone else. You must provide a citation for any specific words, ideas, images, etc. taken from another source. Any project or paper containing incidents of plagiarism will, at a minimum, receive no credit or grade.
5. Disability/Special Needs – If you have special needs and wish to receive accommodations in class, please contact the Office of Disability Services in Bellevue Hall.
6. Grading Scale – A = 90-100% B= 80-89% C = 70-79% >70% = F (no graduate credit)
7. Cell Phones and Laptops – Cell phones are not to be used during class time. Laptops are not to be used during large and small group interactions unless the learning situation dictates the use of a computer. Proper electronic media etiquette should be adhered to.
8. Texts – Various articles from nationally recognized scholarly journals will be used.
9. Standards/Positions – The following links will be helpful to you. Download standards for your grade and the vertically aligned matrix for your level (Georgia State Performance Standards link) and familiarize yourself with the information provided at all other sites below before the second class meeting.

National Standards

- http://www.nbpts.org/the_five_core_propositio
NBPTS “What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do”
- <http://www.readwritethink.org/standards/index.html>
IRA/NCTE Standards for English and Language Arts
- <http://www.emu.edu/maed/INTASC.html>
INTASC Standards
- <http://www.ncte.org/about/press/rel/125932.htm>
NCTE’s Position on Teaching Grammar Skills
- <http://www.ncte.org/print.asp?id=118876&node=367>
NCTE’s Beliefs about Teaching Writing
- <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/positions/category/read/118620.htm>
NCTE on Reading, Learning to Read, and Effective Reading Instruction

Georgia State Performance Standards

- <http://www.georgiastandards.org/English.aspx>

Course Schedule

- 8/20 Introductions
Requirements
ELA Best Practices
Professional Organizations
ELA GPS
Out of Class: Familiarize yourself with links
Print GPS for your grade and vertically aligned
matrix for your level (link provided above)
ASCD Educational Leadership précis
- 8/27 Backwards Design Model
Assessment: Terminology: Diagnostic, Benchmarks, Formative, Summative
Sharing of Precis
Writing Effective Standards-Based Units: Introduction
Unit Model
Out of Class: Professional Journal Search/Summary; Formulation of unit ideas
- 9/3 Writing Effective Standards-Based Units: Components and Templates
Unit Model
Partner Selection
Authentic Assessment
Out of Class: Professional Journal Search/Summary; Formulation of unit ideas
- 9/10 Guest Speaker – Incorporating Rigor into the Curriculum
Balanced Assessment
Journal Article Round Table (literacy and best practices)
Out of Class: Meet with partner to brainstorm unit focus
- 9/17 Guest Speaker – Guiding Reading
Multi-cultural Literature One-Pager Sharing
Out of Class: Read Peter Elbow article/Write one-page reflection
- 9/24 Guest Speaker - The ELA Classroom and the Media Center
Using Multi-Media to Create Authentic Learning
Multi-cultural Literature One-Pager Sharing
Out-of-Class: Work with Partner on Unit
- 10/1 Guest Speaker – Electronic Media and the Changing Language Arts Classroom
Teaching Writing – Discuss Peter Elbow
Personal Book Choice “One Pager” Sharing
Out of Class: Work with Partner on Unit
- 10/8 Unit Presentations – 10-12 minutes
Five documents and cover document are to be submitted through **Live Text** as well as **hard copy**.

