

Literacy in Grades 5 – 8
RDNG 4241 Fall 2009

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I. Course Description: This course is a study of the research and theory of teaching adolescents to understand the content and the context of information.

II. Student Competencies Sought: Upon completion of this course the student should be able to

- A. establish purpose and arouse curiosity in students as related to reading.
- B. have a better understanding of how to activate background and help students connect new knowledge to what is already known.
- C. plan activities that help students use references.
- D. develop activities that help elaborate new knowledge and organize it for later recall.
- E. apply the writing process with intermediate and junior high students.
- F. have an understanding of differentiated instruction in content classes
- G. have a better understanding of the current best practices used in teaching reading in the content classes
- H. access the standards from the Tennessee Department of Education

III. Course Content:

- A. Helping All Adolescents Learn in New Times
- B. Adolescents: Literacy, Diversity and Teaching Today's Learner
- C. Ongoing Assessment
- D. Understanding and Using Text
- E. Planning for Teaching and Learning
- F. Activating Prior Knowledge and Increasing Motivation
- G. Building Vocabulary Knowledge and Strategies
- H. Reading to Learn
- I. Content Writing

IV. Student Activities

1. There will be three announced test throughout the semester on information covered from the book and notes. Each test is worth 100 points. (300)
2. You will need to find an upper elementary grade teacher or a junior

high teacher and participate in 15 hours of fieldwork. While you are in class you are to observe, assist or teach the students. If the opportunity arises it would be a benefit to help with an assessment. Keep a journal of the times you are at the school and note what you did on that day. Your teacher be asked to evaluate the times you were working in the schools so be sure to do your best work. (100 points)

3. You will present a well planned reading and writing workshop or a theme based lesson from a content area. On the day you present your lesson you will have 50 minutes to “showcase” your ideas. This assignment should have the following features:
 - a. a standard from the Tennessee Curriculum Framework
 - b. differentiated activities to allow for the range of abilities in the classroom or learning strategies presented in our text
 - c. technology
 - d. an assessment to use with this workshop/lesson

Since there are some 6 presentations please let me know in a general way what you are planning so there are not duplicates. Our “Grand Finale Days” allow you to put into application what we have studied in the chapters. I encourage you to consider using a book that is “popular” or a topic that is linked to content studied in the upper grades. Be creative and ready to “WOW” your classmates as you prepare for this assignment! (100 points)

V. Instructional Methods The methods used in this class will include demonstrations, direct instruction, use of the internet and fieldwork.

VI. Evaluation Points will be used to determine your grade. The points will be compared to the following scale to determine your final grade. Your assignments are due on the dates assigned. Conflicts with these dates should be discussed upon receiving this syllabus.

A = 500- - - -460

B = 459- - - -430

C = 429- - - -400

D = 399- - - -360

VII. Class Policies Good class attendance is an asset to your learning and shows interest in becoming a teacher. You do have one absence to use as a “gift.” After that with a second absence your grade will be dropped by 12% and with a third absence your grade will be reduced by 25%. It is imperative that you demonstrate

good attendance and behavior while you are participating in the important fieldwork assignment.

IX. Text We will be using Content Area Literacy by Mark W. Conley published by Pearson in 2008. (ISBN#10:0-205-45598-0) or (ISBN #13:978-0-205-45598-0).

Class Agenda

- September 3rd - - - Presentation of the Syllabus and Chapter 1 on “Literacy and Learners”
- September 10th - - -Chapter 2 on “Adolescent Literacy, Diversity, and Today’s Learners”
- September 17th - - -Chapter 4 on “Ongoing Assessment”
- September 24th - - -Test #1 and Chapter 5 on “Understanding and Using Text”
- October 1st - - - - Finish Chapter 5 and begin Chapter 6 on “Planning for Teaching and Learning”
- October 8th - - - - Chapter 7 on “Activating Prior Knowledge and Increasing Motivation”
- October 15th - - - Test #2 and Chapter 8 on “Building Vocabulary and Strategies”
- October 22nd - - - Finish Chapter 8 on “Vocabulary”
- October 29th - - Chapter 9 on “Reading to Learn”
- November 5th - - - Chapter 10 on “Developing Content Area Writers”
- November 12th - - Test #3 and workshop planning time
- November 19th - - Workshops #1 _____
- #2 _____
- #3 _____
- November 26th - - We are so blessed to live in America- - -enjoy time with family!
- December 3rd - - -Workshops #4 _____
- (***Fieldwork Log is due)
- #5 _____
- #6 _____
- December 10th - - -Study Day
- December 17th - - Wrap up (returning of field work and a good surprise!)
(last class)

