

ELAN 4120: Language and Literacy—P-5

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Fall 2005
M: 1:25-4:25
Aderhold 114

Required Text

- Fletcher, R. (1993). *What a writer needs*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann
- Fletcher, R. & Portalupi, J. (2001). *Writing workshop: The essential guide*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Fox, M. (1993). *Radical reflections*. New York: Harcourt Brace.
- Henkin, R. (1998). *Who's invited to share*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Suggested Text

- Calkins, L. (1994). *The art of teaching writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann
- Fletcher, R. & Portalupi, J. (1998). *Craft lessons*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Fletcher, R. & Portalupi, J. (2001). *Nonfiction craft lessons*. York, ME: Stenhouse.

**Additional readings will be available on the course WebCT as indicated.*

General Information

Purpose and Goals

The guiding philosophy behind this class is that best practices require teachers of writing to *write*. They should see themselves as writers and recognize the varieties of ways in which writers practice their craft. By doing this, pre-service teachers will gain an understanding of their own writing processes and increase their effectiveness as writing teachers.

The goals of this class are:

- to guide and encourage you in your own growth as a writer
- to introduce you to the Writing Workshop approach to writing instruction
- to help inform and enrich your fieldwork
- to introduce definitions of literacy beyond reading and writing
- to allow you to practice and reflect upon oral language skills

We will explore what writing is and what it is becoming, and what the changes in writing mean to us as creative persons and teachers.

Outline of Requirements

Attendance, Participation and Oral Literacy

Attendance and *active* participation are required. You need to be in class in order to learn from classmates, and for them to learn from you. While I do understand that health, work, and family responsibilities at times may preclude attendance, if it is necessary for you to miss a day of class, I would appreciate it if you let me know in advance.

While we all have varying comfort levels of class participation, it is expected that everyone will support the class community and their own learning by engaging in class discussions. The class will generally follow a writing workshop and reading group structure. The success of the class depends on what each of us brings and the manner in which we bring it. There will be very little lecture in this class; therefore, it is essential that you have read, thought, and written about assigned readings *prior* to class. *Active* participation is defined as: (1) providing evidence that you have read the assigned material; (2) engaging in thoughtful and reflective oral and written response to the reading; (3) demonstrating respect for the ideas of others; (4) working productively in small groups.

As evident in the above, we will make oral literacy part of our classroom practices through our whole group and small group discussions. You are encouraged to think beyond the confines of this class and enliven our discussions with your reflections on other readings and experiences. Writing classes must be, by definition, safe and nurturing spaces, and we will work together to create the kind of supportive learning environment in which good written and oral communication can flourish.

Grading Policy

I anticipate that you all will do excellent work in this class, but I do have views on what “excellent” means.

- *A* means excellent work that shows you have not only met the requirements of the assignment but also are challenging yourself and displaying creativity and initiative in your work.
- *B* means good work that meets the requirements of the assignment in a thoughtful and adequate way.
- If I feel that your work does not meet the level of either an *A* or *B*, I will request a conference so we can discuss ways to improve your performance in the class.
- Since so much of classroom learning is social and derived from our collective dialogues, I reserve the right to deduct up to 5 points from your final grade due to lack of participation.

Academic Honesty

Our class will strictly adhere to UGA’s guidelines for academic honesty. If you are unfamiliar with them, I strongly urge you to read about the policy, particularly section 5 (http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm).

Email

You will need to have a working email account for this class. Please check your email twice a week for any messages I might need to send you. Likewise, I will check my email daily for any messages from you.

Late Work

All work is expected at the start of class time on the day it is due.

- Work turned in within the 24 hours after the due time will result in the deduction of half a letter grade.
- Work turned in after 24 hours will result in the deduction of a full letter grade.
- No paper will be accepted three days after the due date.

Cell Phones

Please turn them off when you enter class.

Note: This syllabus is open to change depending upon the needs of the class.

Assignments

All written assignments should be done in 12 pt. Times New Roman font, *double-spaced*, unless you need to alter size, format and font for creative purposes. **All papers should be revised, proofread, and edited before they are turned in.**

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
1. Think Cards	10%	Daily
2. Writing Workshop Mini-lesson	15%	September 26
3. Narrative Memoir	25%	October 3
4. Field Observations #1	5%	October 10
5. Field Observations #2	5%	November 7
6. Field Evaluation	15%	November 28
7. Digital Literacy Project	25%	December 5

Explanation of Assignments:

1. Think Cards (due daily)

Your own searching and inquiry are vital to this class, so it is important that you read the material with a critical and responsive eye. These think cards will allow you to focus some of your more crucial thoughts about the class readings. The think cards are to be written on 5x8 index cards and will be due at the beginning of every class. On them you should note important quotes/ideas/concepts about the class readings and, in addition, pose at least two questions. The questions should reflect things you don't understand, things you wonder about, things that provoke you or make you think about your own teaching and learning processes. We will use these to generate whole and small group discussions on the readings.

2. Writing Workshop Mini-lesson (due September 26)

Following the format in Fletcher and Portalupi's *Craft Lessons* (I will provide you with examples), develop in detail one original mini-lesson using children's literature to help young writers develop their craft. This mini-lesson is to be prepared to fit within a writing workshop and can be used in your field work and your future classroom.

***Bring 25 copies of your mini-lesson to class October 3. Each student will have a repertoire of mini-lessons to carry into the field as well as future classrooms.*

3. Narrative Memoir (due October 3)

In Clarke County, the narrative writing genre is taught throughout the elementary grade levels, particularly at the beginning of the school year. With its link to personal experiences and memories, narrative writing is an assessable genre for all age groups. We will couple our learning about the Writing Workshop with our own narrative memoir piece. A good guideline for this assignment is a writing piece 3-5 double-spaced pages, though you are free to deviate creatively. We will use these narratives to make cultural connections to experiences that have shaped us and to the implications these experiences

have for our teaching. On the due date, we will create our own gallery, where your memoirs will be viewed and your peers will be given the opportunity to respond to your work. *This assignment needs to be edited, proofread and accurate according to conventions.*

4 & 5. Field Observations (due October 10 and November 7)

While you are in the field, in addition to writing instruction, you will need to observe and think about the **writing** and **oral skills** instruction and practices taking place in the classroom. I will provide you with a chart template for weekly observations, although you are free to use another method of data recording (please discuss alternative methods with me in advance). We will generate together a list of things we want to learn about teaching writing to help create a field observation guide. You will focus your observations on the teacher, an individual student, and the classroom as a whole.

6. Field Evaluation (due November 28)

Drawing on the notes you made on the weekly field observation chart, write a *brief* reflective evaluation of your literacy teaching experience. In this paper, you should ponder, question, challenge, and generally cogitate about what happened in terms of writing and oral skills in the classroom. It should NOT be merely a recitation of your time in the field, but an analysis. Make this paper as rich and detailed as you can. Pull meaning from your work with individual students, your whole group observation, and your own teaching experiences. Some of the questions you could address:

- What seemed to “work” for the student(s) as they developed their reading and writing literacy?
- What seemed to block them?
- What did you notice about yourself and your own reactions as you progressed through the semester?
- How did the mentoring teacher operate in the class?
- How did this experience impact your thinking about your future literacy instruction?
- Who is invited to share during conferences and writing groups?

In this paper you should also evaluate your oral literacy practices *during the whole semester*. Remember that oral literacy also includes listening. Some of the questions you could address:

- How did you orally communicate with your students?
- How did you communicate with your mentor teacher and other faculty?
- Did you have a chance to talk with parents? If so, describe and analyze the experience.
- Were there times you thought you communicated particularly well, or perhaps not well enough?
- How well did you communicate with your classmates during whole group and small group discussions? How well do you think your peers felt you communicated?

This reflective evaluation should be between 4-5 pages and should be thoughtful, critical, creative, insightful, even provocative. Include student work if you can (not included in the 4-5 page length). *The reflective piece needs to be edited, proofread and accurate according to conventions.*

7. Digital Literacy Project (due December 5)

Working individually or in groups of no more than four, you will concentrate on some aspect of literacy and present your findings to the class by creating an iMovie. This project is wide open; the topic should be selected based on your interests or needs as writers and teachers. You may want to create a piece that is informational and directed at some specific aspect of literacy, or you may choose to create a movie that is more metaphorical, artistic or self-expressive of your own personal literacy. Again, this project is wide open. *The goal of this project is to introduce you to an available technology applicable to literacy, and to challenge you to think about literacy beyond reading and writing.* More information on creating iMovies will be presented and practiced throughout the semester. You or your group will share your iMovie Project during our Film Festival on December 5. The following are some iMovie Project ideas (I'll also provide in class examples), but feel free to come up with your own:

- Create a video essay of the UGA campus. What kind of literacy is being taught through the layout of the campus and the design of the buildings?
- Create a film that focuses on a sense of place and how space affects you personally. (This iMovie could be silent or contain voice-over narration.)
- Film a documentary of a person in your life with whom you communicate frequently. This may be a grandparent who often tells you stories, or a niece who is learning to speak.
- Visit a park, mall, playground, family restaurant, or children's sports event. Observe and record the actions and interactions of the children and adults and analyze the kinds of literacy being practiced and learned.
- Create an iMovie of an important event in your life solely with photographs and music, similar to a slideshow. You might include text to supplement information.
- Interview an important Language Arts professional, i.e. Media Specialist, Curriculum Specialist, etc., and create a documentary iMovie using voice-over narration.
- Write, act and film a fictional drama about any topic you choose. It may incorporate a current controversial topic in literacy, or it may take on a more autobiographical focus.
- Choose an event that is occurring during this semester that you would like to record with digital video. Film and edit a documentary using iMovie.
- Choose a piece of writing you have developed over the course of this semester (i.e., narrative memoir, poetry) and create an iMovie that blends text, music and video together.

ELAN 4120, Spring 2005—Course Schedule

Date	Focus	Readings/Assignments
August 22	Introductions Teachers as Writers What is Literacy?	

August 29	<p>Writing Workshop: Building a Home in a Writing Classroom</p> <p>Genre Exploration: Introduction to Memoir</p>	<p>Readings Fletcher/Portalupi (WW): Chs. 1, 2 Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 4 Fox: Ch. 1</p> <p>Assignments <i>Think Cards</i></p>
September 5	Labor Day	
September 12	<p>Mini-lessons: Using literature to help students develop the craft of writing</p> <p>Genre Exploration: Digging Deeper into Memoir</p>	<p>Readings Fletcher & Portalupi (WW): Chs. 3, 4, 7 Fletcher (WWN): Chs. 5 Fox: Chs. 3</p> <p>Assignments <i>Think Cards</i></p>
September 19	<p>Introduction to Conferencing: Peer and Student/Teacher Conferencing</p>	<p>Readings Fletcher & Portalupi (WW): Ch. 5 Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 6 Fox: Ch. 5</p> <p>Assignments <i>Think Cards</i></p>
September 26	<p>Giving the Grade: Assessment, evaluation and publication</p> <p><i>Mini-lesson Potluck</i></p>	<p>Readings Fletcher/Portalupi (WW): Ch. 9, Appendixes M, N, O and P Fletcher (WWN): Chs. 7, 8 Fox: Ch. 9</p> <p>Assignments <i>Think Cards</i> <i>Mini-lessons due</i></p>
October 3	<p><i>Narrative Memoir Gallery</i></p> <p>Digital Literacy Project: Introduction to iMovie</p>	<p>Readings Fletcher/Portalupi (WW): Ch 10 Prensky (WebCT): <i>Digital Natives</i> Berghoff (WebCT): <i>Sign Systems</i></p> <p>Assignments <i>Think Cards</i> <i>Narrative memoirs due</i></p>
October 10	<p>Who's Invited to Share? Sharing during Writing Workshop</p> <p>Digital Literacy Project: iMovie as a Literacy Tool</p>	<p>Readings Fletcher (WWN): Chs. 10 Henkin (WITS): Chs. 1, 2, 3 McIntosh (WebCT): <i>Knapsack</i></p> <p>Assignments <i>Think Cards</i></p>

October 17	Dealing Responsibly with Spelling and Conventions Digital Literacy Project (lab time)	Readings Fletcher/Portalupi (WW): Ch. 8, Appendixes H, K, L Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 11 Laminack (WebCT): Chs. 3, 4 Assignments <i>Think Cards</i>
October 24	<i>honeymoon</i>	
October 31	Who's Invited to Share: Gender, Race and Diversity Genre Exploration: Poetry	Readings Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 9 Fox (RR): Ch. 11 Henkin (WITS): Chs. 4, 5 Assignments <i>Think Cards</i> <i>Field observations due</i>
November 7	Multimodal Possibilities in the Language Arts Classroom Film: <i>The Whale Rider</i>	Readings Henkin (WITS): Ch. 9 Assignments <i>Think Cards</i>
November 14	Field Work	Assignment <i>Continue observation and reflection.</i>
November 21	Beyond Reading and Writing: Redefining Literacy Digital Literacy Project (lab time)	Readings Henkin (WITS): Ch. 11 Assignments <i>Think Cards</i>
November 28	Words of Hope, Words of Caution Digital Literacy Project (lab time)	Readings Fletcher (WWN): Final Thoughts Fletcher & Portalupi (WW): Ch. 10, Timeline (p. 126) Fox (RR): Ch. Concluding Ideals Assignments <i>Field evaluations due</i>
December 5	iMovie Film Festival	Assignments <i>Digital literacy project due</i>