

## **ELAN 4120: Language and Literacy—K-5**

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Office hours: By appointment

**Spring 2006**  
**Thurs: 12:30-4:45**  
**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.

### **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 Website as indicated*  
<http://www.arches.uga.edu/~johnny/4120>

## **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 you prepare for 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**

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. If you are unfamiliar with UGA’s guidelines for academic honesty, I strongly urge you to read about the policy, particularly section 5 (<http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.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. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

## 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	20%	Daily
2. Writing Workshop Mini-lesson	10%	February 2
3. Narrative Memoir	20%	February 9
4. Field Work Evaluation	25%	March 23
5. iMovie Digital Literacy Project	25%	April 27

### 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. Each post is to be written on a 5x8 index card and is due at the beginning of each 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 February 2)

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 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.

*\*\*Bring 30 copies of your mini-lesson to class February 2. Each student will have a repertoire of mini-lessons to carry into the field experience.*

#### 3. Narrative Memoir (due February 9)

Discovery is an important part of the writing act, so you will be asked to write a narrative that represents you and the cultures that have shaped you. While this narrative memoir should be written, it does not have to be limited to words; in fact, it is my hope that you do not restrict yourself to words but also include images, colors, objects, even sounds,

movement and food! “Culture” can be defined any way you wish. On the due date, we will create our own “walking gallery,” where your memoirs will be viewed and your peers will be given the opportunity to respond to your work. *The written portion needs to be edited, proofread and accurate according to conventions.*

#### 4. Field Experience Evaluation (due March 23)

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. There will be two parts to this project:

- *Daily jot lists of your observations.* I will provide a template for this daily listing, although you are free to use another method of data recording (please discuss alternative methods with me in advance). In a concise form, describe the mini-lesson/literacy center you or your mentor teacher are presenting, what happened, how the students responded, etc. This chart is to help you plan for each day and to remember what happened during the day.
- *A reflective evaluation of your literacy teaching experience.* In this paper, reflect upon the literacy portion of your field experience. Drawing on the notes you made on the above chart, 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. Focus on the individual student you worked with as well as your whole group teaching. 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 month?
  - 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). You will turn in to me both the daily jottings and the reflective

piece. *The reflective piece needs to be edited, proofread and accurate according to conventions.*

### **5. iMovie Digital Literacy Project (due April 27)**

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 and 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 following your four week field experience. You or your group will share your Imovie Project during our Film Festival on April 19. The following are some Imovie Project ideas, 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., cultural memoir, poetry) and create an Imovie that blends text, music and video together.

## ELAN 4120, Spring 2005—Course Schedule

Date	Focus	Readings/Assignments
January 12	<p style="text-align: center;">Introductions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Teachers as Writers What is Literacy?</p>	
January 19	<p style="text-align: center;">Writing Workshop: Building a Home in a Writing Classroom</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Genre Exploration: Introduction to Memoir</p>	<p><b>Readings</b> Fletcher/Portalupi (WW): Chs. 1, 2 Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 4 Fox: Ch. 1</p> <p><b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i></p>
January 26	<p style="text-align: center;">Mini-lessons: Using Literature to help students develop the craft of writing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Genre Exploration: Digging Deeper into Memoir</p>	<p><b>Readings</b> Fletcher &amp; Portalupi (WW): Chs. 3, 4, 7 Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 5 Fox: Chs. 3</p> <p><b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i></p>
February 2	<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction to Conferencing: Peer and Student/Teacher Conferencing</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mini-lesson Potluck</i></p>	<p><b>Readings</b> Fletcher &amp; Portalupi (WW): Ch. 5 Fletcher (WWN) Ch. 6 Fox: Ch. 5</p> <p><b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i> <i>Mini-lessons due</i></p>
February 9	<p style="text-align: center;">Giving the Grade: Assessment, evaluation and spelling</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Narrative Memoir Gallery</i></p>	<p><b>Readings</b> Fletcher/Portalupi (WW): Chs. 8, 9, 10 &amp; Appendixes M, N, O and P Fletcher (WWN): Chs. 7, 8 Fox: Ch. 9 Laminack &amp; Wood: Chs. 3, 6 <b>(Website)</b></p> <p><b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i> <i>Narrative Memoirs due</i></p>
<b>February 13- March 10</b>	<b>Field Work</b>	<p><b>Assignment</b> <i>Keep your jot lists. Observe and reflect.</i></p>

<b>March 13- March 17</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>	
March 23	Beyond Reading and Writing: Multiple Ways of Knowing in the Language Arts Classroom  Digital Literacy Project: Introduction to iMovie	<b>Readings</b> Berghoff (Website): Sign Systems Fletcher/Portalupi (WW): Ch. 10 Prensky (Website): Digital Natives  <b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i> <i>Field Evaluations due</i>
March 30	Multimodal Possibilities in the Language Arts Classroom  Film: <i>Whale Rider</i>  Digital Literacy Project (lab time)	<b>Readings</b> Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 13 Henkin (Website): Outsiders  <b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i>
April 6	Who's Invited to Share? Gender, Race and Diversity  Digital Literacy Project: Using iMovie as a Literacy Tool	<b>Readings</b> Gray (Website): Men are from Mars Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 10 Henkin (Website): Who's Invited to Share  <b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i>
April 13	Play with Language & Teaching for Social Justice  Genre Exploration: Poetry  Digital Literacy Project (lab time)	<b>Readings</b> Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 12 Fox (RR): Ch. 8 Henkin (Website): Social Justice  <b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i>
April 20	Words of Hope, Words of Caution  Digital Literacy Project (lab time)	<b>Readings</b> Berghoff (Website): Ch. 5 Fletcher (WWN): Final Thoughts Fox (RR): Concluding Ideals  <b>Assignments</b> <i>Think Cards</i>
April 27	iMovie Film Festival	<b>Assignments</b> <i>Digital Literacy Project due</i>