

ELAN 4120: Language and Literacy P-5

Instructor: Beth Friese

Email: egfriese@uga.edu

Office: 126 D Aderhold Hall

Office Hours: After class or by appointment

Spring 2009

Th 1:00-4:45

114 Aderhold Hall

Required Texts:

Buhrow, B. & Garcia, A. U. (2006). *Ladybugs, tornadoes, and swirling galaxies: English language learners discover their world through inquiry*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Dorfman, L. R. & Capelli, R. (2007). *Mentor texts: Teaching writing through children's literature, K-6*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Ray, K. W. with Laminack, L. L. (2001). *The writing workshop: Working through the hard parts (and they're all hard parts)*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Other required readings will be posted in WebCT.

This syllabus is open to change depending upon the needs of this class. It is a general plan for the course; deviations may be announced to the class as necessary.

Purpose and Goals

ELAN 4120 is the second in a two-course sequence of instruction in children's language and literacy development for Early Childhood Education majors at UGA. The guiding philosophy behind this class is that in order to become better teachers of writing, we ourselves must engage in the writing process. We should see ourselves as writers and recognize the varieties of ways in which writers practice their craft. By doing this, we gain an understanding of our own writing processes and increase our effectiveness as writing teachers. 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.

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

A guiding philosophy behind this class is that language constructs how people think, write, speak, and interact with each other. Teachers of writing have the special opportunity to view how children construct themselves, each other, and the world around them in their writing. Most importantly, teachers of writing can work with students to help them to construct themselves, each other, and the world around them in order to promote social justice. Since each classroom is a unique and diverse collection of people constructing their worlds in different ways, we will be studying language and cultural diversity with regards to literacy instruction. This philosophy is in concert with the Department of Language Education's Cultural Diversity Requirement for Elementary and Middle School Language Arts/Children's Literature Undergraduate Programs:

I. Cultural Diversity Requirement for Elementary and Middle School Language Arts/Children's Literature: Undergraduate Programs

The faculty from the Department of Language Education responsible for teaching courses for elementary

and middle school majors have devised an action plan to address the Multicultural Education Initiative's mandate for change. Our plan has six components, or strands, which will run through and across all of our courses and will meet the need to educate the future teachers of our state and nation in ways that reflect our country's increasingly diverse population. These strands are:

- I. Examining and understanding our own cultural assumptions and how they affect teaching and learning
- II. Recognizing that language diversity is enriching and not something requiring remediation
- III. Learning to recognize stereotypes and other manifestations of discrimination and prejudice in curriculum materials and school practices
- IV. Identifying and understanding the impact of differential access based on ethnicity, age, class, gender, and ability
- V. Developing cross cultural understanding and practices that embody and reflect that understanding
- VI. Promoting the development of curricula and classroom practices that promote social justice for all students

Course Requirements

Attendance, Participation and Oral Literacy

This class is designed as a community of learners. Learning in this class will depend on the contributions of each member of the community. For this community to thrive, all of us need to be present, prepared, and participating. I do understand that health problems may occasionally prevent you from being in class. If you must miss class, please contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange alternative assignments. You are responsible for any material missed. More than one absence will result in a 5-point reduction in your final grade. Punctuality is also of critical importance. If lateness becomes a problem, I will request a conference with you.

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 and large groups;
- (5) raising your own questions as an individual;
- (6) being an open, inquisitive, and dynamic learner.

In short, you are expected to attend to the material and to our class discussions. If you use your class time for matters other than our mutual work—homework for other classes, text messaging, surfing the web, checking your email, reading *The Red & Black*, etc.—I will consider you not in attendance and count you as tardy.

As evident in the description 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. Literacy classrooms must be, by definition, safe and nurturing spaces, and we will work together to create the kind of supportive learning environment in which effective written and oral communication can flourish.

Assignments

All written assignments (with the exception of the Writer's Notebook) should be submitted in 12pt., Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, unless you need to alter the size, format and font for creative purposes. All papers should be revised, proofread and edited before they are turned in.

Exact details for submitting each assignment will be discussed in class. For assignments submitted through WebCT, please name your file with your last name, the name of the assignment, and the course number. Example: **Friese_Focuslessondraft_ELAN4120.doc**. Please submit electronic files as a .doc, .pdf, or URL, not a .docx.

Writer's Notebook (25 points) – Due 2/5 and 4/23

You will keep a writer's notebook throughout the course, starting this week. You are to write in this notebook during our in-class writing workshop time and also at least once per week outside of class. You should write in it once per week during your time in the field. While print writing will be a major part of this notebook, feel free to include a variety of representations such as images, collage, artifacts and links to digital literacy projects. Be sure to date each entry.

This notebook will be a working writer's notebook. It is a catch-all for your writing workshop work: a gathering place for your writing ideas, inspirations, false starts, practices, exercises, drafts, freewrites, etc. This notebook is your discovery zone where you hopefully will develop yourself as a writer and teacher of writing. In grading your notebook, I will be looking for:

- thoughtfulness and risk-taking
- connections between what you learn and what you create
- the establishment of yourself as a working writer
- your development and progress as a writer

As a culminating writing activity we will devote our last class meeting to an author's celebration where I hope you will present some pieces of your writing.

Weekly Readings (9 posts @ 2 points each = 18 points) – Due Wednesdays by 7pm

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 postings will allow you to focus your thoughts about the class readings. With each post, you should note a few 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, and 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. Please do not simply summarize the readings. I am more interested in your engagement with the material. Post as an inline text to the appropriate discussion board each Wednesday before class by 7pm.

Bring your writing about your reading and the physical copy of the readings with you to class on the day of discussion. This will give you resources to tap during the in-class discussion and also help me know that you are making an effort to actively participate in class activities.

Fieldwork

Part 1 – Focus lesson – 7 points – Draft Due 1/29; Final Due 2/5

Develop an original focus lesson that you will use in your fieldwork. It should be based on a piece of children's literature. I will share a template for this in class. Bring in a draft of this lesson and be

prepared to teach it to a small group on 1/29. Each member of the class will get feedback from peers on their lesson, then have the opportunity to further develop that lesson based on the feedback. The final version will be due on 2/5.

Part 2 – Field Assignments

Paper 1: (5 points)

Provide a thorough 2 to 3 page description of the current approach to writing instruction in your classroom. What kinds of writing occur? How often? What is the writing and resource environment like? What are the strengths? What might be done differently? What are the attitudes of students toward writing? What is the attitude of the teacher? What opportunities do you see for your time in this classroom? What challenges do you face?

Paper 2: (10 points)

For the second field assignment, develop at least four focus lessons for writing instruction and teach them to a large or small group. Submit copies of these lessons.

In addition, write a reflective evaluation of your literacy teaching experience. Using Paper 1 as a starting point, you should ponder, question, challenge and generally consider what happened in terms of literacy instruction in your field classroom. It should NOT be merely a recitation of your time in the field, but an analysis. This paper should be 4 to 5 pages and should be thoughtful, critical and insightful. Include copies of student work if you can. Make this paper detailed and be sure to focus some of your reflection on the writing workshop that you had the opportunity to teach. Some points to address:

Reflect on your Writing Workshop lessons.

What were the strengths? What would you change?

Describe the young writers you worked with during your lessons.

What was the most challenging part of writing instruction?

How did your mentor teacher organize the literacy block in the classroom?

What were the strengths of the literacy instruction in the classroom?

What could be added to further enhance instruction?

How did this experience impact your thinking about literacy instruction in your classroom?

Additionally, be sure to address oral literacy practices as well.

How did you orally communicate with your students?

How did your mentor teacher orally communicate with the students?

What kinds of issues did you encounter as a result of linguistic diversity?

What other diversities did you notice in the classroom?

How did you address these diversities?

As a new teacher what are your thoughts and concerns pertaining to these issues?

Mentor Text Set (10 points) – Due 4/2

Develop a set of 10 mentor texts around a particular aspect of writing. It should clearly address one of the GPS writing standards. Bring in all of the texts on April 2, along with a handout (1-2 pages) listing all of the texts (in APA style) and a brief 5-6 sentence description of why each makes an effective and interesting mentor text for this particular aspect of writing. Consider your choices carefully, including

a diverse range of texts. You will see several examples of mentor text sets throughout the semester. We will discuss options for this in class several weeks before the set is due.

Writing Workshop Project (Individual or Group) (25 points) – Due 5/4 at 5pm

In this class, we will explore and discuss several approaches to writing workshop. This is a project explaining what your writing workshop will look like in your future classroom. Not only do you need to provide the reader with what you will do, you will also need to explain how you will do what you will do and why you are doing it. You may choose to do this project individually or with a group of up to 4 people. However you choose to construct it, your final project should involve an amount of work equivalent to writing a traditional 10-12 page research paper. This paper, website, artwork, etc., will need to have a bibliography and citations throughout it. If you do not do a traditionally written text (e.g. paper or website) you will need to write a brief 3-5 page explanation of your project with the bibliography and citations. You will have time during class to complete a substantial portion of this assignment. You will turn in a rubric with a self-evaluation for your work.

The following items will need to be addressed in the project, using scholarly citations where appropriate:

- Your cultural background and your background as a writer (for each group member – may be submitted privately if desired),
- your vision for the writing workshop,
- classroom management (space and students),
- the environment for both students and teachers (materials, routines),
- a general outline of a year in your writing workshop, including different units of study,
- the format of your writing workshop,
- how Universal Design will be used,
- how you will adjust your workshop for different elementary grade levels,
- how standards will be addressed,
- how you will assess writing, and
- how you will conference with students,
- what you still want to learn more about as an educator of young writers (for each group member – may be submitted privately if desired).

Policies and Other Information

Grading Policy

I anticipate that you will all 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 with you so that we can discuss ways to improve your performance in this 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.

Detailed rubrics for major assignments may be distributed in class. Late submissions will receive, at most, half credit. No work will be accepted three days after the due date. If I feel your work is not meeting the criteria for the class, I will request a conference with you. If you would like to discuss a grade you

received on an assignment, contact me within one week of receiving the grade. I am happy to discuss any grade you receive, but grades will not be changed after one week.

Grading Scale:

A: 93-100 / A-: 90-92 / B+: 88-89 / B: 83-87 / B-: 80-82
C+: 78-79 / C: 73-77 / C-: 70-72 / D: 60-69 / F: below 60

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and require academic accommodations, please contact me individually as soon as possible. You may also speak with Disability Services at (706) 542-8719 to discuss the process for requesting accommodations.

Academic Honesty

Our class will strictly adhere to UGA's guidelines for academic honesty. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Guidelines can be found at http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm. All students are responsible to inform themselves about these standards before performing any academic work.

Cell Phones – Please turn cell phones off during class.

Computers - Computers are welcome and encouraged as long as they are used to further the academic work we are engaged in.

Communication – Use WebCT email when contacting me about anything related to class. I will check WebCT for emails once or twice a day, and I will respond to you within 24 hours, except on weekends. You should check your WebCT account every day or two as well for updates and emails. If you have an urgent concern, email me at egfriese@uga.edu.

Additional Course Guidelines – We will develop additional guidelines and professional expectations on the first day of class.

Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings Due	Assignments Due
1/8	Introduction to Course Overview of Assignments The Writer's Notebook Working from Children's Literature Reading Like A Writer	n/a	n/a
1/15	Why Writing Workshop? Workshop Structure - The Basics Writing Standards Teaching Teams - Creating Focus Lessons for the grade level Mentor Texts	WW - 1-5 MT - 1, 3	Weekly Reading Post
1/22	Independent Writing Time Focus Lessons - Ideas Finding Mentor Texts Conferencing	WW - 6, 10, 13-14 MT - 4 or 5 (jigsaw), 10 (resources)	Reading Post Find out what kind of writing will be happening in your field classroom
1/29	A Diverse Group of Writers Universal Design Sharing Time Assessment Choice and Voice	WW - 11, 15, 17 MT - 8 Delpit (WebCT) Michael & Trezak (WebCT)	Reading Post Focus Lesson Draft Due – Teach to your small group

2/5	The Atmosphere of Writing Workshop Reading Aloud Spelling Syntax	WW - 7-9 MT - 2 (skim), 9 Laminack & Ray (WebCT)	Reading Post FOCUS LESSON DUE WRITER'S NOTEBOOK #1 Midcourse Feedback
2/9-3/6	Field Work		FIELD ASSIGNMENTS DUE (exact dates announced in class)
3/9-13	Spring Break (UGA)	n/a	n/a
3/19	Writing Workshop Units of Study A Year in the Writing Workshop Poetry Project Teams	WW – 12, 16 MT - 6,7 Romano Poetry (WebCT)	Reading Post
3/26	Another View on Writing Workshop Informational Writing More on Diverse Writers	LTSG - 1-3 Ladson-Billings (WebCT)	Reading Post
4/2	Digital Writing Inquiry Process Multigenre Writing	LTSG - 4-6 Romano Multigenre (WebCT)	Reading Post MENTOR TEXT SET DUE
4/9	Work on Display Revision Publishing More Digital Writing	WW - 18-19 LTSG - 7-8 Harper (WebCT)	Reading Post
4/16	Content Area Writing Another View of Assessment	LTSG - 9-10 Lassonde (WebCT)	Reading Post
4/23	Author's Celebration	n/a	Present a piece (or pieces) of writing WRITER'S NOTEBOOK #2
5/4			WRITING WORKSHOP PROJECT DUE Course Evaluations Due