

**ELAN 4120: Language and Literacy—P-5**  
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**Fall 2004**  
**W: 8:00-11:45**  
**Room: Aderhold 601**

### **Required Text**

- Berghoff, B. et.al. (2000). *Beyond reading and writing*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- 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.
- Laminack, L. & Wood, K. (1996). *Spelling in use*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

### **Suggested Text**

- Calkins, L. (1994). *The art of teaching writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann
- Harwayne, S. (2001). *Writing through childhood: Rethinking process and product*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Fletcher, R. *A writer's notebook: Unlocking the writer within you*. New York: Avon Books.
- Fletcher, R. & Portalupi, J. (1998). *Craft lessons*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
- Fletcher, R. & Portalupi, J. (2001). *Nonfiction craft lessons*. York, ME: Stenhouse.

*Additional chapters and articles will be available in OIT for copying.*

## **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.

### **A Word about Class Structure**

This class has been designed using principles of Universal Design in Learning. The underlying concept behind UDL is that *instruction should be as accessible as possible to as many students as possible*. One way to do this is through flexibility. Therefore, you will find that you have varying flexibility in this class—in the focus of your class projects, the due dates, your grades, your form of presentation. We'll work with flexibility in the following ways:

- This syllabus presents broad descriptions of the projects, but you will decide the specifics.
- With two of the five projects, you will contract the due dates with me.
- For three of the projects, you will create the rubric by which I will grade your work. Ideally, the rubric should reflect what you think are the most vital aspects of the project and/or areas in which you learned the most.
- You will complete a rubric yourself for all of the projects. These rubrics will serve as a contract for your grade. Using the rubrics, I will determine if you have made the grade; if I think you have not, we will discuss your project together, and you will have an opportunity to revise it to receive your contracted grade.

## **Outline of Requirements**

### **Attendance**

- You are expected to attend every class and to be on time unless you have an emergency or a serious illness.
- More than 2 excused absences will result in a 10-point overall deduction in your final grade.
- Every tardy after your second will result in a 2.5-point overall deduction in your final grade.

### **Participation and Oral Literacy**

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. There will be very little lecture in this class; therefore, it is vital that you come to class having read and reflected upon the assigned material. Active participation includes:

- providing evidence that you have read the assigned readings and done any out-of-class activities
- responding thoughtfully and reflectively to the readings
- participating in oral/written/dramatic activities
- demonstrating evidence that you are listening to the ideas and contributions of others
- volunteering to talk in discussions
- working cooperatively in small groups
- raising your own questions as an individual
- 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 other than our mutual work—homework for other classes, reading *The Red & Black*, etc.—I will consider you not in attendance and count you as tardy.

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**

You are to practice academic honesty as defined by the university.

### **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 and pagers**

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. Cultural Memoir + rubric	20%	September 29
2. Literacy Project + rubric	20%	<i>Before field</i>
3. Field Evaluation	20%	November 10
4. Working Writers Notebook	30%	<i>Before field+Dec. 8</i>
5. Final Presentation + rubric	10%	December 8

### Explanation of Assignments:

#### 1. Cultural Memoir (due Sept. 29)

Discovery is an important part of the writing act, so you will be asked to create an artifact that represents you and the cultures that have shaped you.

- “Culture” can be defined any way you wish.
- While this 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!
- 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.
- Provide me with two copies of your created rubric—one blank and one which you have completed yourself.

*The written portion needs to be edited, proofread and accurate according to conventions.*

#### 2. Literacy Project (contracted due dates—before Oct. 14)

Working individually or in groups of no more than four, you will research some aspect of literacy and present your findings to the class. This project is wide open; the topic should be selected based on your interests and needs as writers and teachers. Here are some ideas, but feel free to come up with your own:

- Develop a series of mini-lessons on a particular aspect of literacy instruction, such as grammar, spelling, vocabulary, handwriting, descriptive writing, story structure, drama, etc.
- Do a genre study, author study, or illustrator study, using no less than 5 books.
- Select a film or documentary that deals with the literacy of children and/or teachers and create a reflective piece responding to the work as a depiction of literacy development. Some suggested films: *Girlhood*, *Osama*, *The First Year*, *Whale Rider*, *Children of Heaven*.
- Record 2 hours of children’s television and analyze the type of literacy being taught in the commercials.
- Visit a park, mall, playground, family restaurant, or children’s sports event. Observe the actions and interactions of the children and adults and analyze the kinds of literacy being practiced and learned.

- Create a photo essay of the UGA campus. What kind of literacy is being taught through the layout of the campus and the design of the buildings?
- Learn a new computer game and analyze how the game teaches you to “read” it.
- Following Fletcher’s lead in *Craft Lessons*, create a set of minilessons using children’s literature showing how to help children develop their craft.
- Review a professional book on language arts. Include key points and how this reading might impact your teaching.
- Review technology materials appropriate to support language arts instruction and create an evaluative presentation that includes uses in the classroom, strengths and weaknesses and so on.
- Interview an important Language Arts professional, i.e. Media Specialist, Curriculum Specialist, etc.
- Writing Autobiography: Select artifacts to show yourself as a writer and a teacher of writing. You may include pieces from your school years; comment on what you now see in these samples. Think about questions like: What were your first experiences with writing? How important has writing been to you in your life? What kinds of associations, positive and negative, have you had with writing both in and outside of school? And so on.

Use your imagination—where are all the places literacy is practiced and taught in our culture? What compelling questions about literacy interest you as writers and teachers and how can you begin to explore those questions through this project? You will need to create a final product that communicates what you have learned—for instance, a 3-5 page paper, a Powerpoint document, a portfolio of lesson plans. Before you begin, talk with me about your topic and your choice of final product. Provide me with two copies of your created rubric—one blank and one which you have completed. You will also create a 20-minute presentation of your project for the class. This presentation can take whatever form you like—lecture, discussion, audience participation. Again, use your imagination.

*The written portion, including the bibliography, needs to be edited, proofread and accurate according to conventions.*

### **3. Field Experience Evaluation (due November 10)**

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 it with me. In a concise form, describe the mini-lesson/literacy center you 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?

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, and 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.*

#### **4. Working Writer’s Notebook/Evaluation (contracted due date + December 8)**

- You will keep a writer’s notebook throughout the course, starting this week.
- You are to write in this notebook for a minimum of 15 minutes a day, three days a week—you get to choose the days.
- While writing will be a major part of this notebook, feel free to include other representations, for example, images, collage, textural materials.

This notebook will be exactly what it says it is—a working writer’s notebook. It is a catch-all for your thoughts, dreams, ponderings; for comments and reflections on the class readings and discussions; a gathering place for your writing ideas, false starts, practices, exercises, freewritings, etc. This notebook is your discovery zone where you hopefully will develop yourself as a writer and teacher of writing. I don’t expect neatness; in fact, I wouldn’t mind if your creative energy sometimes EXPLODED on the page in multiple colors and combinations of images and words. I would love it if your notebook makes you laugh out loud sometimes, wipe away a tear sometimes.

In grading your notebook, I will be looking for:

- thoughtfulness and risk-taking
- connections between what you read and what you create

- the establishment of yourself as a working writer
- your development and progress as a writer

At the end of your notebook include a 2-3 page **evaluation** of your notebook, using examples from your writing that employ the same elements discussed in Fletcher's *What a Writer Needs*:

- How well did you use the techniques Fletcher discusses?
- How well did you use descriptive language?
- What kinds of voice came through in your writing?
- What role did specifics play?
- How often did you "write small"?
- Did you employ a variety of representations? Why or why not?

This evaluation will be worth **5** of the **30 pts**. You will need to turn this notebook in to me twice, once on a contracted date before your fieldwork and again on December 8. You will NOT need to keep this writing notebook during your fieldwork.

*This evaluation should be edited, proofread and accurate according to conventions.*

### **5. Final Presentation**

This piece (or pieces) will be selected by you from the writing you generate for this course as the work you want to share with the class. You can draw from writings in both your working writers' notebook or your field work. These pieces, which will be at least 3 pages, can be any genre—poetry, prose, fiction, non-fiction, essay, or a combination. Using the writing workshop approach, we will work on these pieces in class. You will participate in peer conferences, whole group sharing, and student-teacher conferences to gain feedback on your work as you revise and refine. Provide me with two copies of your created rubric—one blank and one you complete yourself. We will publish these pieces in the form of an oral reading during our Writers' Celebration on December 8. Participation in the Writers' Celebration is required and will count for 5 of the 10 pts.

*The final writing piece needs to be edited and proofread.*

## ELAN 4120, Fall Semester 2004— Course Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Readings/Assignments</b>
August 25	Teachers as Writers What is Literacy?	
September 1	The Nitty Gritty of Writing Workshop: Building a Home in a Writing Classroom	<b>Readings</b> Fletcher & Portalupi (WW): Chs. 1,2 Fletcher (WWN): Intro Fox: Ch. 1
September 8	What Can I Write About? Reservoirs of Ideas  Genre Exploration: Memoir	<b>Readings</b> Fletcher & Portalupi (WW): Ch. 7 Fletcher (WWN): Chs. 1,2,3 Fox: Chs. 2,3
September 15	Creating the Written World: Writing as Seeing, Writing Small  Genre Exploration: Poetry	<b>Readings</b> Fletcher (WWN): Ch. 4,5,6, 12 Fox: Ch. 4
September 22	Mini-lessons: Figuring Out What They Need When They Need It  Writing Developmentally through the Blending of Creativity and Skills	<b>Readings</b> Fletcher & Portalupi (WW): Chs. 3,4, 8 Fox: Ch. 9 Laminack & Wood: Chs. 1,2
September 29	Memoir Gallery  An Introduction to Conferencing	<b>Assignment</b> <i>Bring your cultural memoir</i>
October 6	The Heart of the Matter: Peer and Student- Teacher Conferencing  Giving the Grade: Assessment, evaluation and publication  Mini-lesson Potluck	<b>Assignment</b> <i>Bring 25 copies of your mini- lesson</i> <b>Readings</b> Fletcher & Portalupi (WW): Chs. 5,6,9  Laminack & Wood: Ch. 3,4, 5, Conclusion Glaswell, Parr, McNaughton: “Four Ways to Work Against Yourself . . .” (OIT)

<p><b>October 13- November 3</b></p>	<p><b>Fieldwork</b></p>	<p><b>Assignment</b> <i>Keep your jot lists. Observe and reflect.</i></p>
<p>November 10</p>	<p>Beyond Reading and Writing: Multiple Ways of Knowing in the Language Arts Classroom</p>	<p><b>Assignment</b> <i>Field evaluation due</i> <b>Readings</b> Berghoff, Introduction, Chs. 1,2 Fletcher (WWN): Chs. 7,8,10</p>
<p>November 17</p>	<p>Multimodal Possibilities in the Language Arts Classroom  Genre Exploration: Drama</p>	<p><b>Readings</b> Berghoff, Ch. 3 Fletcher (WWN): 13 Fox: Ch. 6, 10</p>
<p><b>November 24</b></p>	<p><b><i>HAPPY THANKSGIVING!</i></b></p>	
<p>December 1</p>	<p>Multimodal Possibilities in the Language Arts Classroom  Film: <i>Rabbit-Proof Fence</i></p>	<p><b>Readings</b> Berghoff, Chs. 4,5 Fletcher (WWN): 9, Final Thoughts Fox: Ch. 5, 11</p>
<p>December 8</p>	<p>Writers' Celebration</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> <i>*Working Writer's Notebook/Evaluation due</i> <i>*Final Presentation</i></p>