

**ELAN 4450: Teaching Writing in Secondary Schools
Course Framework
Fall 2004**

Contact Information

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Session Dates, Times, & Place

This course is a 3 hour class that meets on Tuesdays from 1:30-2:00 PM AND either from 2-3:20 or 3:25-4:45 PM. For the first 30 minutes (1:30-2:00 PM), we will meet as a whole group in room 116. From either 2-3:20 or 3:25-4:45 PM, you will meet in room 116.

Overarching Question

How do my past experiences with writing, my current and on-going observations in high schools, and course readings all contribute to my idea of what a high school writing teacher should be?

Course Description

This course is designed to encourage you to think about the complexities of teaching writing in a high school setting. It will require you to reflect on your own writing experiences and background. Since teachers tend to reproduce the kind of instruction that they have had, it is important for you to be able to analyze the experiences that you have with writing in school. This course is designed not only to help you think of activities to use in your own classroom, but to help you figure out the "whys" behind what you are doing and begin to formulate an informed, reflective writing pedagogy. Therefore, you will be encouraged to think about how the acts of reading and writing get defined in school settings. Complementing that goal is to urge you to think about what the possibilities could be for defining reading and writing in your classroom. Given that no one works in isolation or in a hermetically-sealed classroom, there are many factors that will influence how both you and your students interact. It is your job, not just in this class, but in all of your coursework this semester to investigate what all these "factors" are and how can you best position yourself and your students to work together in creating an atmosphere that is meaningful, engaging, and of benefit to them in the future.

Assignments

1. **6 Response Papers** (Last date to turn these in will be October 26th). These papers should show you grappling with specific ideas that you are encountering in the texts you are reading. You should cite specific passages from the text. If you’re unsure what these are supposed to be, I can give some parameters to get you started. These papers are about writing to explore and develop ideas that at this time may seem only partial. These are not displays of your mastery over the readings; instead, they are the writing that you are doing to think further about teaching writing. I subscribe to the belief that writing is thinking. (It can be many other things too!) Sharon O’Brien’s quote captures some of the spirit of these papers: “Writing became such a process of discovery that I couldn’t wait to get to work in the morning: I wanted to see what I was going to say.” If you still want MORE definite parameters: I think if you work through about 2-3 pages (DS, 12 pt. font) that should get you started. If you need to write more that is fine but if you don’t need to write more, that is fine too. Everyone will turn in their first Response Paper on August 24th. **60 pts.**

2. **Participation in class and other assignments includes the following:** 1) November Unit Writing Components- Due October 12th. This will be the instructions you will give your students, your completion of the assignment, and a rubric. You will get feedback from your writing group and classmates on your writing assignments for your November unit. This should be a completed assignment with drafts, especially if you want to show that practice to your students. 2) Gallery of Writing- December 7th Share 4 pieces of writing from the semester with the class. Each piece should have a paragraph explaining why you chose each of these writing samples to share. 3) In-class writing 4) In-class discussions 20 pts.

3. **Final Project** due by 5 PM December 14th. You should deliver a hard copy of this assignment to Steve or Sharon. This final project should address the following question: How will/have the ideas and theories gleaned from the class readings, class discussions, high school/middle school observations, DJ entries, think pieces, etc. informed your teaching of reading and writing? In answering this question, you should address specific texts from your classes (6 of which should come from Steve and Sharon’s classes). You should have a total list of 10-15 references; these references can include DJ and think pieces as references. This paper should be 8-10 pages long. You can negotiate the paper’s format with Sharon and Steve. **20 pts.**

Grading

Reaction papers 6 @ 10 pts. each

Participation in class discussions and assignments

Final Project

60 pts.

20 pts.

20 pts.

A 100-90

B 89-80

C 79-70

D 69-60

F 59-below

Total Points: 100 pts.

Policies and Procedures

- Absences/Tardies. Given that there are only 13 days of class, a great deal of material must be covered each day. Our work will be intense and work cannot be “made up.” You are expected to attend each class. **If you miss 2 or more classes, expect your grade to be lowered by one letter grade.** Also, much explanatory work about assignments and discussions about expectations are done at the very beginning of class, so tardiness is frowned upon. **Be on time.** If you have more than 1 tardy, expect me to talk with you about why you are unable to get to class on time.
- Late work. Late work will result in a lower grade.

Class Schedule & Readings (14 class meetings):

**Denotes a reading assignment that should be printed from WebCT and brought to class. All readings and reaction papers should be completed for the day that the particular reading assignment is noted on the syllabus.*

1. August 19th Whole Group Meeting
2. August 24 Introductions/Overview of Course “I am from” poems in class
Read Kutz & Roskelly *
First Reaction Paper Due
3. August 31 Writing Ritual in class
Read entire Romano book
Optional Reaction Paper Due
4. September 7
Read Noden book Selected Chapters Ch. 1-4
Optional Reaction Paper Due
5. September 14 Grammar in Context
Optional Reaction Paper Due (Covering 2 or more authors.)
Discuss Noden and Romano.
DJ assignment: Ask you MT about what she or he thinks about the GHGWT. Ask how they think this test influences their teaching? How do they prepare students for this test? What do they think of this test? (You will bring this on Sept. 28th)

Switch to Alternate Placement

6. September 21 Trait Assessment of Writing
Read and present the chapter you were assigned from the NCTE Grammar Book.
Read Spandel Book Chapter One, Flip through this book. What is this book about? What is it not about?
Print off Information on the Writing Test and SAT—look over it and bring to class.
Optional Reaction Paper Due
Optional Reading: I’ve posted three chapters from Weaver’s book Teaching Grammar in Context that you might want to glance through and copy for your professional library. She is the person who is often quoted for making a good case for teachers not to teach grammar in isolation.
7. September 28 Five-Paragraph Theme
Read entire Wesley article from *English Journal**;
Read excerpts (pp. 1-7; pp. 31-34; pp. 36-37 from Johnson & Smagorinsky article*
Optional Reaction Paper Due
Bring in DJ assignment regarding the Georgia High School Writing Test or Georgia Middle Grades Writing Assessment. If you haven’t been able to talk to your MT, write in your DJ what you see as the attitude toward this test is and how your department seems to be preparing for this test in your school. Once you are back, you can still get your MTs view because you’ll have written about it in your DJ and this could lead into some discussion.
Begin talking about writing assignment for November unit. What writing components will you include in your November Unit?

Switch Back to Student Teaching Placement

8. October 5 Assessment/Rubrics
Read Spandel Book Chapters 2-3
Optional Reaction Paper Due
November Unit Writing Assignment...work on this in groups. Bring your November Unit plans to class. Critical Friends Group.

9. October 12
Optional Reaction Paper Due
Read Spandel Selected Chapters
November Unit Writing Components Assignment Due

October 18th November Unit Plan Due to your contact person

10. October 19
Optional Reaction Paper Due
Bring 2 articles to class from a professional journal. One with an idea for a writing assignment that you think is problematic and another for a writing assignment that you would like to try with your current students. How would you adapt these assignments to fit the students you are currently teaching? Has this changed how you view your November Unit?

11. October 26 Last Day to turn in Reaction Papers (Fall Break 28-29)
Read *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

12. November 2
Last day of my class before you go off to teach your November units. Remember to make copies of student writing that you have your students do and bring it to class on Nov. 30th. (Delete names.)

November 8-23 November Unit & November 24-26 Thanksgiving Break

13. November 30
Bring in copies of examples of student writing from your November Unit. Make sure names are deleted.
Read *Monster*

14. December 7 Gallery of Writing

December 14th Final Project Due by 5 PM; No Class

Note/Disclaimer: *The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

Another note: *All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work*
www.uga.edu/ovpi.

Reading and Writing with Adolescents **Bibliography of Required Texts**

Full Texts

- Chbosky, Stephen. (1999). *The perks of being a wallflower*. New York: Pocket Books.
Haussamen, Brock; Benjamin, Amy; Kolln, Martha & Wheeler, Rebecca S. (2003). *Grammar alive: A guide for teachers*. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE.
Myers, Walter Dean. (1999). *Monster*. New York: Harper Tempest.
Noden, Harry R. (1999). *Image grammar: Using grammatical structures to teach writing*. Portsmouth: NH: Heinemann.
Romano, T. (1995). *Writing with passion: Life stories, multiple genres*. Portsmouth: Boyton/Cook Publishers.
Spandel, V. & Stiggins, R. J. (1990). *Creating writers: Linking writing assessment and instruction*. New York: Longman Publishers.

WebCT Texts

- Belok, M. V. and Clift, P. (1974). The Bishop Lowth complex about teaching grammar. *Educational Forum*, 38(3), 271-276.

- Elbow, P. (1998). *Writing without teachers*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Selected Chapter)
- Gee, J.P. (1992). What is literacy? In Shannon, P. (Ed.), *Becoming political: readings and writing in the politics of literacy* (p. 257-265). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Hillocks, George (1975). *Theory into practice: Observing and writing*. Urbana, Illinois: ERIC & NCTE.
- Johannessen, Larry R.; Kahn, Elizabeth; & Walter, Carolyn Calhoun. (1982). *Theory & research into practice: Designing and sequencing prewriting activities*. Urbana, Illinois: ERIC & NCTE.
- Johnson, T., Smagorinsky, P., Thompson, L., and Fry, P. (in press November 2003). "Learning to Teach the Five Paragraph Theme." *Research in the Teaching of English* 38(2), 136-176.
- Kutz, E. & Roskelly, H. (1991). *An unquiet pedagogy: Transforming practice in the English classroom*. Portsmouth: Boyton/Cook Publishers. (Chapter 6 *Writing as Composing* Excerpted to WebCT)
- Murray, D.M. (1989). *Expecting the unexpected: Teaching myself- and others- to read and write*. Portsmouth: Boyton/Cook. (Chapter 2 *Reading for Surprise*, Chapter 3 *First Silence, Then Paper*, Chapter 4 *The Essential Delay: When Writer's Block Isn't*, Chapter 7 *Reading While Writing* Excerpted to WebCT)
- Rosen, Lois Matz. (1987). "Developing Correctness in Student Writing: Alternatives to the Error-Hunt." *English Journal* 76.3: 62-69.
- Weaver, Constance. (1996). *Teaching Grammar in Context*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers. (Selected Chapter)
- Wesley, Kimberly. (September, 2000). The ill effects of the five paragraph theme. *English journal*, pp. 57-60.

Important Dates:

Georgia High School Writing Test

September 29-30, 2004

Georgia Middle Grades Writing Assessment

January 18-20, 2005