

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA  
College of Education - Department of Language and Literacy Education

**READ 3430**

**Reading Assessment in the Elementary School**

*Course Description:* The purpose of this course is to provide early childhood education majors with information and experiences that will enable them to utilize formal and informal methods for assessing children's reading ability and planning instruction.

**Instructor:** Jessica Baxter  
301 Aderhold Hall – Office A  
(706) 227 – 4481  
[jessbax@uga.edu](mailto:jessbax@uga.edu) (preferred method of communication)

**Class Meetings:** Wednesday 1:25 p.m. – 4:25 p.m. (Room 317)

**Office Hours:** Before or after class (or by appointment)

READ 3430, "Reading Assessment in the Elementary School," is the second course in the reading sequence. It is important to note that reading, literacy and the language arts content and instruction are addressed in two other courses: ELAN 3110 and ELAN 4120. Thus, this four course block should be viewed as a unified set of courses that prepares ECE majors to teach children to develop proficiency and interest in reading, writing, oral language and children's literature.

**Course Text**

Clay, M. (2006). *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*. Auckland, New Zealand: Heinemann Education.

Tompkins, G. (2006). *Literacy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century: a balanced approach (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

**Course Objectives**

- Explore the role of the teacher as a reading/literacy instructor and assessment decision maker
- Discuss how alternative assessment as well as standardized test scores inform instructional decision making, facilitate parent/child conferences, and allow children to have a voice in reflecting upon their reading strengths and needs
- Select, administer, and interpret reading assessment instruments
- Make instructional recommendations based on assessments
- Explore how a variety of strategies and assessments can be adapted to fit individual needs
- Explore issues of culture as it relates to reading assessment

**Professionalism**

Attendance, punctuality, preparedness, active participation, and collegiality all contribute to being viewed as a professional. Successful class sessions depend on thoughtful and careful reading, attentive listening, and a willingness to participate in discussion and interactive activities. Being collegial means sharing your ideas and showing respect for other people's thinking- even if different from your own. Throughout this course, we will concentrate on encouraging and supporting one another throughout our journey to discover the most effective ways to assess student learning and make consequential instructional decisions. Remember also that as a student at The University of Georgia you are bound and protected by the policies and practices of academic honesty specified in the booklet titled [A Culture of Honesty](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm). [http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic\\_honesty/culture\\_honesty.htm](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm) All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty". All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

### **Class Attendance**

Because many of the topics and considerable content covered in the course are taught and communicated by way of class demonstrations, class activities, and class discussions, attendance is crucial for a full understanding of course material. Therefore, attendance will be a factor in computing your grade. Only one absence will be excused this semester, and only for a severe illness or personal/family emergency. For an absence to be considered excused, notify the instructor before class via email with a valid reason for missing class and be responsible for missed class information. Any unexcused absence will result in five points deducted from your grade (from the point total, not the percentage). Missing two or more classes may be considered "an excessive number of absences" and may be subject to withdrawal from the class (see the UGA Bulletin). Timeliness is also appreciated and rewarded. Upon your arrival to class, a quick write topic or 'quick check' assignment over the week's assigned reading will be available for you. This assignment will serve as a record of your attendance in class. It will also serve as an indicator of your level of understanding of course material.

### **Course Requirements**

**Readings:** Each week you will be responsible for reading the required class material and be knowledgeable enough about the content to engage in class discussions in an informed manner.

**Mid-Term Exam and Final Exam:** You will be given a midterm and final exam that will require demonstration and knowledge of appropriate classroom assessments and instruction. The midterm will be given to you on **October 8<sup>th</sup>** and the final exam will be given to you on **TBA**.

### **Field Experience Requirements**

**Guided Reading Observations:** You should select two guided reading lessons prepared for groups of varying ability levels to conscientiously observe. Upon completion of the observation, you will compare and contrast the happenings within the two groups. During these observations, informal notes should be taken on what is happening within the lesson. Suggestions are provided below for questions to ask as you observe. Please understand that you are not limited to these questions, but rather these questions should serve as a springboard for possible areas of exploration within the observation. This observation should also include notes on discussion that occurs between you and the teacher prior to the teaching of the lesson and afterwards. You are encouraged to review the teacher's lesson plan for the group that is to be observed prior to the lesson, conference with the teacher upon completion of the lesson to debrief, and ask insightful questions. An observation form is included with the syllabus for your use during these weekly observations. These observations will be utilized in our class discussion. A sheet will be passed around in class so that you may sign-up for a date to present your recorded information from the observations. On these dates, you will facilitate the group discussion. Any connections to class material should be highlighted in your discussion with the class.

*Suggestions for Exploration in Observations*

- ✓ Document how much time is spent actually reading by the students. How much time is spent reading aloud by the teacher? How much time is spent by the teacher giving direct instruction?
- ✓ Make note of discussion that takes place between the teacher and individual students- as well as discussion taking place between students and the teacher. What kinds of questions are being asked? Does the teacher provide 'wait time' for students when asking questions?
- ✓ Is the teacher recording information as she teaches? How does she organize information collected from informal and formal assessments?
- ✓ What preparation goes into the teacher's lesson? What steps are taken by the teacher upon completion of the lesson?

**Assessment & Instruction:** After collaboration with the mentor teacher, you will choose one student to whom you will provide reading instruction. I suggest that you choose a below average to average student. These students will benefit most from additional one-on-one instructional time. Ongoing assessment and tutoring will be provided by you throughout your placement. Before the end of the Friday visits, you are expected to have selected a student (again with the mentor teacher's input) and have administered an interest inventory (to be discussed in class). Assessment of the child's reading skills are to take place in the first few weeks of the field experience. Specific assessment tools will be discussed in class, and the intern will be expected to choose the appropriate assessments for the student. Based on information gathered from the assessment data, you will design a daily, 30 minute tutoring program for the child to be implemented during the last three weeks of the field experience. A minimum of five tutoring sessions are required. The tutoring sessions should support the child, include specific reading strategies and skills identified as a result of the assessments, and should fit within the context of other classroom activities. You are expected to keep a daily tutoring log that includes: (a) the specific, detailed daily activities and instruction (your lesson plan); (b) a reflection critiquing how the session went, (c) specific details on how the child is responding (new understandings), and (d) information on how this session will inform the next session. This reflection should be completed as soon as the tutoring session is over. This is all submitted as item #3, Final Project, as described next.

**Final Project:** As a final project, the intern will prepare a Case Study Report based upon the child they have tutored. The Case Study Report will include the following:

1. Background information
2. Tests administered
3. Observations during testing
4. Summary and recommendations for instruction
5. Appendices (interest inventory, assessment sheets)
6. Tutoring log

If possible, I would appreciate receiving all of this in a 1/2 inch three ring binder or paper folder with brads. If it won't fit, a one inch binder is acceptable. The completed project will be due in class on **December 3<sup>rd</sup>**. However, periodical checks will be required throughout the semester to ensure adequate progress is being made.

### **Additional Information**

**Preparation of written work:** This is an upper-division university course, so you are expected to exhibit competence in your written work. In addition, given that the focus of this course is literacy teaching and learning, it is essential that you demonstrate high levels of literacy for students in current and future classrooms and in written professional communications with colleagues, administrators, and parents. Therefore, your written products in this course will be graded not only for substance in your writing (clarity, depth, insight) but also with regard to the form of your written work (how you present the information stylistically). Correct grammar, proper punctuation, correct spelling, neatness, and adherence to assignment guidelines will be part of the grading process.

**Disabilities and health-related issues:** Students with a disability or health-related issue who need a class accommodation should make an appointment to speak with the instructor as soon as possible.

**UGA inclement weather policy:** Please be aware of the UGA Inclement Weather Policy regarding the possible closings of the university on the main homepage [www.uga.edu](http://www.uga.edu).

**Grading**

<b>Course Requirement</b>	<b>Points Assigned</b>
Participation: (minus five points for each unexcused absence) <input type="checkbox"/> completion of quick write and 'quick check' assignments <input type="checkbox"/> active participation in class discussions and activities <input type="checkbox"/> class preparation	30
Guided Reading Observation Recording Forms and Discussion Facilitation	30
Mid-Term Exam	40
Final Project: Case Study <input type="checkbox"/> Rubric will be given in class	60
Final Exam	40
Total Possible Points	200

Course grades will be determined by computing a final point total, which will be converted to a course grade as follows:

Points: A=180-200; B=160-179; C=140-159; D=120-139; F=0-119  
 (Percentage: A= 90-100; B=80-89; C= 70-79; D= 60-69; F= 0-59)

***Anticipated Schedule of Topics***

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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
August 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of Course</li> <li>Syllabus</li> <li>Effective Teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Literacy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</u>: Chapter 1</li> </ul>	
August 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literacy Development</li> <li>Guided Reading</li> <li>Observation Task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Literacy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</u>: Chapters 3-4</li> <li><i>Chapter One: What is Guided Reading</i> (Fountas &amp; Pinnell, 1996)</li> </ul>	Syllabus Contract
September 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement</u>: Chapters 1-3 and 5</li> </ul>	
September 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Running Records</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement</u>: Chapter 4</li> </ul>	
September 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzing Assessment</li> <li>Teaching the Reading and Writing Processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement</u>: Chapters 6-7</li> <li><u>Literacy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</u>: Chapter 2</li> </ul>	
September 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading Processes</li> <li>Activities to utilize as assessment informs instruction</li> <li>Peer Edit of Initial Case Study Findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Chapter Two: Helping Students Build a System for Processing a Variety of Text</i> (Fountas &amp; Pinnell, 2006)</li> <li><i>Chapter Twelve: Teaching for Strategies</i> (Fountas &amp; Pinnell, 1996)</li> <li><i>Chapter Thirteen:</i></li> </ul>	Initial Observations and Background Information

		<i>Learning About Letters and Words</i> (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996)	
October 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring Student Progress</li> <li>Continued discussion on assessment's role in instructional decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Chapter Eight: Assessing Comprehension and Fluency to Document Progress and Inform Teaching</i> (Fountas &amp; Pinnell, 2006)</li> <li><i>Marie Clay Supplement</i></li> </ul>	
October 8	• MID-TERM	• MID-TERM	
October 15	•	•	
October 22	•	•	
October 29			
November 5			
November 12	• Class will not meet due to field observations	• Class will not meet due to field observations	
November 19	•	•	
November 26	• Thanksgiving Break	• Thanksgiving Break	
December 3	•	•	Case Study
December 10	• UGA Reading Day	• UGA Reading Day	
TBA	• FINAL EXAM	• FINAL EXAM	

- Upon completion of the mid-term- final course topics will be determined as I am a firm believer that my assessment should guide my instruction.