

**George Mason University**  
**Graduate School of Education**  
**EDRD 630**  
**Advanced Literacy Foundations and Instruction, Birth to Middle Childhood**  
**3 Credits**

**Spring 2004**

Instructor: Shanon D. Hardy, Ph.D.  
Time: Wednesdays, 4:30pm – 7:10 pm  
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**Prerequisite:**

Admission to the Literacy specialization or permission of the literacy program coordinator.

**Course Description:**

This course provides a research-based foundation in literacy development for younger learners. Study includes investigation of:

- ◆ Cognitive, socio-cultural, linguistic, developmental and motivational influences on literacy and language development; and
- ◆ Instructional strategies that facilitate learning for this age range.

Comprehension development, fluency development, phonemic awareness, word recognition, vocabulary development, writing, spelling, family literacy, emergent literacy, oral communications, and the needs of diverse learners are included.

**Course Outcomes:**

- 1.1 Students will demonstrate knowledge of psychological, sociological, linguistic, and anthropological foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.
- 1.2 Students will summarize and synthesize in writing their knowledge of reading research and histories of reading.
- 1.3 Students will explain (orally and in writing) their knowledge of language development and reading acquisition and the variations related to culture and linguistic diversity, including:
  - a. Reading development (e.g., strategies for comprehension, fluency, word recognition, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary/concept development).
  - b. Writing development (e.g., spelling, writing for a variety of audiences, and writing for personal expression).
  - c. Oral communication development (e.g., speaking, listening, and creative expression).

- d. The language and literacy development of all learners (e.g., children who are learning English as a second language, children who find literacy learning difficult, and children with diverse special needs).
- 1.4 Students will model reading and writing enthusiastically as valued life-long activities.
- 1.5 Students will continue to pursue the development of professional knowledge and dispositions.
- 1.6 Students will demonstrate knowledge of the major components of reading (phonemic awareness, word identification and phonics, vocabulary and background knowledge, fluency, comprehension strategies, and motivation) and how they are integrated in fluent reading.

### **Readings:**

#### Required Texts:

Morrow, L. M. (2001). *Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

EDRD 630 Reading Packets

#### Optional Texts:

Dahl, K. L. & Farnan, N. (1998). *Children's writing: Perspectives from research*. Newark, NJ: International Reading Association.

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Washington, DC: Author.

### **Electronic Requirements:**

Students must have access to email and the Internet, either at home, work or GMU campus. GMU provides students with free email accounts which must be accessed for information sent from the university or the Graduate School of Education. Go to <http://mason.gmu.edu/> for information on accessing email.

After introductory training, students will also be expected to access Blackboard prior to every class session to download agendas and other pertinent course documents. Blackboard can be accessed by going to <http://blackboard.gmu.edu>.

### **George Mason University Honor Code:**

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For

further information, please refer to the University Catalog or website at <http://www.gmu.edu>. Code in the University catalog can be found online at <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html>.

### **George Mason University Policy on Disabilities:**

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs, or activities of all State and local Governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has a disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester so arrangements can be made. Please call the Disability Resource Center for required documentation (703-993-2472). The Disability Resource Center Website is at <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/>.

### **Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organization:**

This course addresses new and required state and national competencies for K-12 Reading Specialists. This course also provides an advanced, research-based study of literacy professional development for teachers seeking a Virginia Reading Specialist License.

### **Nature of Course Delivery:**

This class will be structured around discussion and small group activities; it is critical for you to keep up with the readings and to participate in class. Instructor and student generated questions related to course readings and assignments/projects will often be the focus of group discussions. Be prepared to discuss the content of the text and its relation to your teaching experiences, course assignments, and projects, and to ask questions for clarification, exploration, or to promote discussion. The instructor will use a lecture method periodically for brief periods of time. Students will also be engaged in activities designed to encourage application of materials from the readings and discussions to the role of a reading specialist in Virginia. An electronic discussion that students participate in outside of class is an additional course delivery mechanism.

### **General Requirements:**

1. Class attendance is both important and required. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, you must contact the instructor via phone or email. Students with more than two absences may drop a letter grade or lose course credit.
2. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that students

- occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, please speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.
3. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is critical for you to keep up with the readings and to participate in class.
  4. All GMU literacy cohorts are required to attend at least one literacy-related professional conference during the school year.
  5. According to university policy, all beepers and cell phones should be turned off before class begins.

### **Specific Course Requirements:**

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. In addition, reading in professional journals is required for the research report. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities pertaining to literacy from birth to adolescence, it is imperative that you keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Each student needs to write a one-two page summary/reflection on three (3) articles/assigned readings. The summary should include the following parts: Purpose, Summary (if you summarize a research article you should include the methods and results), and Critical Comment/Reflection (strengths, weaknesses, and your own reflection on the article). Your article summary needs to include the article reference in APA style. Each student will need to discuss the summaries during the regular class discussion of that article. **Each student will choose the 3 articles to be summarized: one article from the Language and Emergent Literacy Group; one article from the Phones and Balanced Literacy, Spelling Group; and one article from Families, Diversity, Assessment and Intervention Group. The summaries will be due on the day the article is discussed in class. (The first article summary can be resubmitted for evaluation after the student has received instructor feedback). The summaries are worth 20% of the final grade.** An example will be provided.
3. Students will participate in electronic discussions related to class topics through the use of GSE's conferencing system, Blackboard. **Participation in the Blackboard electronic discussions is worth 10% of the final grade.**
4. Participation in class discussions and activities. **Class participation is worth 10% of the final grade.**
5. There will be a mid-term essay examination covering the assigned readings and materials discussed in class. **The mid-term examination is worth 20% of the final grade.**

6. Each student will write an eight to ten page paper related to a literacy topic from class discussions (topics stated on the class schedule). *Since this class focuses on literacy from birth to adolescence the topic for the paper must address typical literacy learners in this age range.* The paper needs to draw from multiple sources (including library resources and assigned, in-class readings) and address the diverse families and children that are present in Northern Virginia. Details about the paper will be provided and discussed in class. Participation in writing feedback groups for in-class feedback and work on your final paper is also part of this assignment. You will meet with classmates periodically to talk about your own research and provide feedback to others on their research process. We will discuss in class when you will be responsible for having drafts of your writing to share with copies for each of your group members. Each student will also make a 10 minute class presentation on her/his topic to the class. **The paper is worth 40% of the final grade.**

### **Evaluation:**

#### **Article Summaries (20%)**

Criteria for evaluation of each summary include purpose statement, summary, strengths and weaknesses of the article, and reflection based on previous knowledge. The summaries must demonstrate graduate level writing (at a minimum it means that words are properly spelled; punctuation is appropriate; sentences are complete; verb/subject, pronoun/antecedent agree; and writing is appropriately concise and clear).

#### **Mid-Term Essay Examination (20%)**

The mid-term examination will be evaluated using the following criteria: accuracy in explaining literacy theories, appropriate citation of research, ability to apply knowledge gained in class and in reading to the essay and coherence of writing that demonstrates graduate level writing.

#### **Literacy Topic Paper (40%)**

Criteria for evaluation will include ability to analyze and synthesize reference materials and other sources as well as writing clarity and coherence (writing that demonstrates graduate level writing). Specific criteria for different parts of the paper will be discussed in class.

#### **Blackboard Discussion (10%)**

Criteria for the Blackboard electronic discussions will include: 1) whether or not students post their message in a timely manner (before the next class meeting); and 2) the connection of the posted messages to class discussions, personal experiences, and assigned readings. It is expected that students will post at least one response for each Blackboard discussion strand.

### Class Participation Assessment (10%)

Class participation will be evaluated using the following rating scale:

A (9-10) *Excellent* – regularly asks questions or makes observations that indicate reflection and analysis appropriate to the topic. Participates actively in small group activities. Submits all in-class reflections on readings and class discussions and research paper drafts.

B (7-8) *Competent* – occasionally asks questions or makes observations that indicate reflection and analysis appropriate to the topic. Participates in small group activities. Submits some in-class reflections on reading and class discussions and research paper drafts.

C (5-6) *Minimal* – rarely asks questions or makes comments that indicate familiarity with the topic. Does not participate in small groups. Does not submit in-class reflections on readings and class discussions and research paper drafts.

#### Grading Scale:

**A+ = 98-100**

**A = 94-97**

**A- = 90-93**

**B+ = 85-89**

**B = 80-84**

**C = 70-79**

**F = did not meet course requirements**

<b>Week – Class</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
<b>1. 1/21/04</b>	<b>Introduction &amp; Course Overview</b>	<b>Routman (2000) <i>Conversations: Strategies for teaching, learning, and evaluating.</i></b>  <b>Au (1997) <i>Literacy for all students: Ten steps toward making a difference.</i></b>	Balanced Instruction
<b>2. 1/28/04</b>	<b>Historical Perspectives: Language &amp; Literacy</b>	<b>Pearson &amp; Stephens (1998) <i>Learning about literacy: A 30-yr journey.</i></b>  <b>Anderson (1994) <i>Role of the reader's schema in comprehension, learning, and memory.</i></b>  <b><i>Introduction to the Field of Literacy Education</i></b>  <b>Morrow: Chapter 1</b>	Literacy Theories

3. 2/04/04	Language & Literacy	<p>Ruddell &amp; Ruddell (1994) <i>Language acquisition and literacy processes.</i></p> <p>Snow, Burns &amp; Griffin (1998) <i>Preventing reading difficulties before Kindergarten.</i></p> <p>Morrow: Chapter 4</p>	
4. 2/11/04	Emergent Literacy & Early Literacy	<p>NAEYC (1998) <i>Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children.</i></p> <p>Mason &amp; Sinha (1993) <i>Emerging literacy in the early childhood years: Applying a Vygotskian model of learning and development.</i></p> <p>Lesiak (1997) <i>Research based answers to questions about emergent literacy in Kindergarten.</i></p> <p>Morrow: Chapter 5</p>	DUE: A list of the three articles you've chosen to critique
5. 2/18/04	Library Orientation	Prince William Campus	
6. 2/25/04	Writing Theory	<p><i>Understanding the Essential Characteristics of the Writing Workshop</i></p> <p>Ray &amp; Laminack (2001) <i>The Writing Workshop</i></p> <p>Morrow: Chapter 9</p>	Sign-up for read-aloud/think-aloud demonstrations
7. 3/03/04	Phonics/ Phonemic Awareness	<p>Fountas &amp; Pinnell (1999) <i>What does good first teaching mean?</i></p> <p>Morrow: Chapter 8</p>	
8. 3/10/04	NO CLASS	GMU SPRING BREAK	
9. 3/17/04	MID-TERM		
10. 3/24/04	Balanced Literacy &	Hoffman (2002) <i>WORDS.</i>	Choice of topic for topic paper

	<b>Spelling (Part 1)</b>	<b>Pressley, Rankin &amp; Yokoi (1996) <i>A survey of instructional practices of primary teachers nominated as effective in promoting literacy.</i></b>  <b>Templeton &amp; Morris (1999) <i>Questions teachers ask about spelling.</i></b>  <b>Morrow: Chapter 10</b>	
<b>11. 3/31/04</b>	<b>Balanced Literacy/ Use of Basals (Part 2)</b>	<b>Dahl, Scharer, Lawson &amp; Grogan (1999) <i>Phonics instruction and student achievement in whole language first-grade classrooms.</i></b>  <b>Guillaume (1988) <i>Learning with text in the primary grades.</i></b>  <b>Groff (1989) <i>An attack on basal readers for the wrong reasons.</i></b>  <b>Weaver (1989) <i>The basalization of America: A cause for concern.</i></b>	
<b>12. 4/07/04</b>	<b>NO Class</b>	<b>Independent Work on topic papers</b>	
<b>13. 4/14/04</b>	<b>Small Group Feedback on Topic</b>	<b>Suggestions and comments concerning topic papers</b>	<b>Small Group Work</b>
<b>14. 4/21/04</b>	<b>Families &amp; Community</b>	<b>Baker (1999) <i>Opportunities at home and in the community that foster reading engagement.</i></b>  <b>Au (1998) <i>Constructivists approaches, phonics, and the literacy learning of students of diverse backgrounds.</i></b>  <b>Morrow: Chapter 3</b>	<b>DUE: Outline or Graphic Organizer of topic paper</b>
<b>15. 4/28/04</b>	<b>Writing &amp; Technology/ Assessment &amp; Intervention</b>	<b>Karchmer, Mallette, &amp; Leu (2001) <i>Early literacy in a digital age</i></b>  <b>Taylor, Hanson, Justice-Swanon, Watts (1997) <i>Helping struggling readers</i></b>  <b>Morrow: Chapters 2 &amp; 8</b>	
<b>16. 5/05/04</b>	<b>Last Class</b>	<b>Topic Paper sharing &amp; wrap up</b>	<b>Presentations</b>

## **Articles and Assigned Readings to Choose from for the Summary/Reflection Assignment:**

### **Language and Emergent Literacy Group**

Lesiak, J. L. (1997). Research based answers to questions about emergent literacy in kindergarten. *Psychology in the Schools, 34*, 143-160.

Mason, J. M., & Sinha, S. (1993). Emerging literacy in the early childhood years: Applying a Vygotskian model of learning and development. In B. Spodek (Ed.) *Handbook of research on the education of young children* (pp. 122-136). New York: Macmillan.

Snow, C. E., Burns, S. & Griffin, P. (Eds.). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press (pp.137-171).

### **Phonics, Balanced Literacy, Spelling**

Dahl, K. L., Scharer, P. L., Lawson, L. L., & Grogan, P. R. (1999). Phonics instruction and student achievement in whole language first-grade classrooms. *Reading Research Quarterly, 33*, 312-341.

Hoffman, J. V. (2002). WORDS (on words in leveled texts for beginning readers). In D. L. Schallert, C. M. Fairbanks, J. Worthy, B. Maloch, & J. V. Hoffman (Eds.), 51<sup>st</sup> Yearbook of the National Reading Conference (pp. 59-81). Oak Creek, WI: National Reading Conference.

Pressley, M., Rankin, J., & Yokoi, L. (1996). *A survey of instructional practices of primary teachers nominated as effective in promoting literacy*. *Elementary School Journal, 1996*, 333-384.

Stahl, S. A., Duffy-Hester, A. M., & Dougherty, K. A. (1998). Everything you wanted to know about phonics (but were afraid to ask). *Reading Research Quarterly, 33*(3), 338-355.

Templeton, S., & Morris, D. (1999). Questions teachers ask about spelling. *Reading Research Quarterly, 34*, 102-112.

### **Families, Diversity, Assessment, and Intervention Group**

Au, K. A. (1998). *Constructivist approaches, phonics, and the literacy learning of students of diverse backgrounds*. In T. Shanahan & F. V. Rodriguez-Brown (Eds.), 47<sup>th</sup> Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, (pp.1-21). Chicago: National Reading Conference.

Baker, L. (1999). *Opportunities at home and in the community that foster reading engagement*. In J. T. Guthrie & D. E. Alvermann (Eds.), *Engaging reading*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Karchmer, R. A., Mallette, M. H., & Leu, D. J. Jr. (2001). *Early literacy in a digital age: Moving from a singular book literacy to the multiple literacies of networked information and communication technologies*. In D. M. Barone & L. Mandel Morrow (Eds.), *Literacy and Young Children* (pp. 175-194). New York: Guilford.

Taylor, B. M., Hanson, H. E., Justice-Swanson, K., & Watts, S. M. (1997). Helping struggling readers: Linking small-group intervention with cross-age tutoring. *The Reading Teacher*, 51(3), 196-209.