

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Literacy Program

EDRD 630.6L1 – Literacy Foundations and Instruction for Diverse Populations:
Birth through Middle Childhood
3 Credits, Fall 2020
Arlington Cohort

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

Admission to a graduate program in literacy, or permission of the academic program coordinator.

University Catalog Course Description

Explores literacy theory, research, and practice as it relates to younger learners. Includes teaching of reading to English Learners and language acquisition for diverse populations (including Special Education students who access the general curriculum). Addresses sociocultural, cognitive, linguistic, psychological, and developmental influences on children's literacy. Includes reading, writing, and oral communication.

Course Overview

Not Applicable

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online using a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous formats via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on August 24.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.

- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

Course Week: Our course week will begin on Wednesday and end on Tuesday. Synchronous meetings take place on Tuesdays from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on the dates indicated in the class schedule.

- Log-in Frequency:
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation:
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities, and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content, or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Interpret major theories and empirical research that describes the cognitive, linguistic, motivational, and sociocultural foundations of reading and writing development.
2. Explain the evidence-based components of reading (e.g., concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, fluency, comprehension), writing processes, foundational writing skills (e.g., spelling, sentence construction), and components of language (e.g., language acquisition, structure of language) related to young learners.
3. Identify literacy instructional strategies and theories that address the needs of all young learners.
4. Read and analyze the scholarship of the field.

Professional Standards (aligned with standards from the International Literacy Association)

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following Standards for Reading/Literacy Specialist Candidates from the International Literacy Association's 2017 *Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals*:

Professionals:

- 1.1 Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based components of reading (e.g., concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) development throughout the grades and its relationship with other aspects of literacy.
- 1.2 Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based aspects of writing development, writing processes (e.g., revising, audience), and foundational skills (e.g., spelling, sentence construction, word processing) and their relationships with other aspects of literacy.
- 1.3 Candidates demonstrate knowledge of theoretical, conceptual, historical, and evidence-based components of language (e.g., language acquisition, structure of language, conventions of Standard English, vocabulary acquisition and use, speaking, listening, viewing, visually representing) and its relationships with other aspects of literacy.

Virginia Standards for Reading Specialist Programs addressed in this course:

- 2a. Demonstrate expertise in the knowledge, skills, and processes necessary for teaching communication, such as speaking, listening, and media literacy.
- 2b. Demonstrate expertise in developing students' phonological awareness skills.
- 2c. Demonstrate effective strategies for facilitating the learning of Standard English by speakers of other languages and dialects.
- 2d. Demonstrate an understanding of the unique needs of students with language differences and delays.
- 2e. Demonstrate the ability to promote creative thinking and expression, such as through storytelling, drama, and choral and oral reading.
- 3a. Demonstrate expertise in explicit and systematic phonics instruction, including an understanding of sound and symbol relationships, syllables, phonemes, morphemes, decoding skills, word analysis, and word attack skills.
- 3d. Demonstrate expertise in the structure of the English language, including and understanding of syntax, semantics, and vocabulary development.
- 4b. Demonstrate expertise in systematic spelling instruction, including awareness of the purpose and limitations of "invented spelling," orthographic patterns, and strategies for promoting generalization of spelling study to writing.
- 6c. Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of cultural contexts upon language.
- 6d. Demonstrate an understanding of varying degrees of learning disabilities.
- 6k. Demonstrate knowledge of current research and exemplary practices in English and reading.
- 6l. Understanding of and proficiency in grammar, usage, and mechanics and their integration in writing.

Required Texts

Scanlon, D. M., Anderson, K. L., & Sweeney, J. M. (2017). *Early intervention for reading difficulties: The interactive strategies approach* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Additional readings will be made available on Blackboard and through GMU Library databases.

Recommended Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Blevins, W. (2017). *Phonics from A to Z: A practical guide* (3rd ed.). Scholastic.

OR

Blevins, W. (2017). *Teaching phonics & word study in the intermediate grades* (2nd ed.). Scholastic.

Morrow, L. M. (2020). *Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write* (9th ed.) Pearson. (Earlier editions are also acceptable.)

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

- **Assignments and Examinations**

(See Blackboard for specific guidelines and evaluation rubrics for all assignments.)

1. Course Engagement (6 points)

Being engaged in this course is essential to the teaching-learning process. Engagement involves attendance, timeliness, and active participation. Class attendance (face-to-face and online) is both important and required (see Academic Policy 1.6 in the GMU Catalog). It is expected that you fully engage in all course activities whether online or face-to-face. It is critical to keep up with the readings, course presentations, and activities. It is expected that you are fully prepared for each class, complete work in a timely manner, offer critical insights to discussions, ask in-depth, thoughtful questions, and provide thoughtful, responsive feedback to your peers.

Course engagement will be evaluated using the following rubric:

Criteria for Evaluation	Excellent	Satisfactory	Minimal	Unacceptable
	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Synchronous Class Attendance	Missed no synchronous class sessions.	Missed 1 synchronous class sessions.	Missed 2 synchronous class sessions.	Missed more than 2 synchronous class sessions.
Synchronous Class Participation	Actively participated in small group activities and class discussions and demonstrated <i>in-depth understanding</i> of the course content.	Actively participated in small group activities and class discussions and demonstrated <i>basic understanding</i> of the course content.	<i>Rarely participated</i> in small group activities and class discussions. OR Demonstrated a <i>limited understanding</i> of course content.	Never participated in small group activities and class discussions.

2. Online Modules (14 points)

Throughout the semester you will complete asynchronous online modules that involve an array of activities including recording your thoughts, reactions, connections, and questions related to assigned readings and content. These activities are designed to encourage you to think deeply about the materials

you read/view as you critically analyze, synthesize, and reflect on the course content while applying your new understanding. All instructions for these assignments will be posted to Blackboard. For each asynchronous class session, all online tasks and assignments must be completed by 11:59 p.m. on the date in the course schedule. There are 7 online modules (each is worth 2 points).

3. Theory Map (10 points)

The objective of this assignment is to blend theories with classroom application. You will create a visual or written representation of literacy practices occurring in your classroom (may include photographs, drawings, or other materials). You may also include aspirational literacy practices or strategies that you hope to include in your literacy instruction in the future. Once you have identified these practices, you will identify the primary educational/literacy theories (behaviorism, constructivism, social learning theory, etc.) discussed throughout the course that are aligned with each practice. You will need to be specific about what aspects of the instructional approach reflect the theories learned and be specific in your identification of theories. Note that many instructional practices draw from more than one theory. Once you complete your map, if needed, create a brief written description explaining how it demonstrates your understanding of the connections between your practice and theory.

4. Research Article Critiques (6 points each, 12 points total)

The objective of this assignment is to read research in the field of early literacy, and to learn to provide effective critique regarding the research foundation, content, and impact of the piece. You will choose *two* articles (denoted by an *) from the assigned readings to summarize and critique. The critiques are due on Blackboard on the date listed in the course schedule. You will also discuss and critique the articles with a peer group (see Small Group Online Article Discussions below) in the week that follows.

In each two-page critique, include the purpose of the article, main points of the article, critical comments/reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the research, and your own brief reflection on the article (based on your previous knowledge or experience).

5. Small Group Online Article Discussions (8 points)

The objective of this assignment is to explore within an ongoing small group the early literacy content and writing craft of selected research-based reading. You will also make connections between class content, personal experiences, and assigned reading while developing leadership skills within a small group of peers.

You will work within a fixed small group of peers. Each of you will take turns leading synchronous online discussions (to be held at times scheduled by your group) using Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. On the date of submission of the research article critique (see above), if you are the discussion leader, you will start a new discussion board thread for the group containing an attachment of your critique and at least 3 questions to be discussed during the conversation. This will help your group members better prepare for the discussion. Then, at the time designated by the group, all group members must join the Collaborate session and participate in a 15- to 20-minute online discussion. You will need to turn your video and microphone on as you participate. During the online conversation, if you are the discussion leader, you are responsible for facilitating the conversation, using prepared discussion questions and topics to keep the conversation going. The leader is also responsible for recording the Collaborate session and posting a brief summary of the group's conversation along with lingering questions for the instructor about the article to the group's discussion board.

Each person is responsible for leading 2 article discussions and participating in 4 of the other article discussions within your group. The discussion leader role is worth 2 points for each article (total of 4 points), and your participation in your group's article discussions are worth a total of 4 points (1 point

per discussion). Your participation will be assessed in terms of quality. Thoughtful responses that synthesize readings and course topics will earn full points.

6. Annotated Bibliography (20 points)

An annotated bibliography is a collection of source references about a specific topic. The goal of an annotated bibliography is to provide researchers interested in a specific problem or topic with information about a source's contents and usefulness. You will research a literacy topic addressing the literacy needs of diverse learners in the birth to grade 4 range. You will locate and read at least 5 related, peer-reviewed, high-quality research articles and provide annotated bibliographic information for each. You will also create a brief synthesis of the research reviewed, explaining the overall message in the articles and how they relate to and support each other.

7. Midterm Exam & Final Exams (15 points each, 30 points total)

There will be one midterm and one final exam (*not* comprehensive). Material will be based on assigned readings and class notes. The exams may include multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions. You may use your readings or notes as you complete the timed exam. The purpose of this assignment is to help prepare you for the licensure exam you must complete at the end of your program in order to be licensed as a reading specialist.

- **Other Requirements**

Assignment Guidelines

All assignments and online tasks are due by 11:59 p.m. (or by class time if so noted) on the date listed in the class schedule. You are expected to submit assignments on time regardless of your class attendance on the day an assignment is due. Unless arrangements have been made beforehand with your instructor, 10% of the total points will be deducted from the assignment for *each* day the assignment is late.

Assignments should follow current APA formatting. Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall score for each assignment, so proofread carefully and use formal, academic writing. Be sure to use APA format when providing citations for relevant research. (See Blackboard for resources.) When submitting electronic files, please name the files using your first and last name and assignment title (ex: JOHNDOEResearchCritique1.docx).

Graduate level writing is expected for all assignments in this course. If you find that you need support, the University Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>) is available to you. They offer one-to-one consultations at any stage of the writing process. You can schedule in-person or video appointments with writing tutors on Mason's Fairfax and Arlington campuses. You can also use their Online Writing Lab (OWL) to receive written feedback on drafts of your writing if you are not able to meet during the Center's hours of operation.

Communication

Email is my preferred form of communication, so please check your GMU email account daily, as that will be the account I use to contact you. I am always available via email, but please allow a 24-hour response time for replies during the week, and 48 hours during weekends and holidays. If you have not heard from me within 48 hours, please email me again. The class schedule may need to be modified during the semester. If this occurs, notice of changes will be by announcement in class, by email, and/or by changes to this syllabus posted on Blackboard.

Advising

Advising information is located on Blackboard, including timeline, program of study tracking, course sequencing, RVE registration information, graduation information, and program updates. To access, (a)

login to Blackboard, (b) click the Organizations tab in the top right corner, and (c) go to the Literacy Program Advising and Information Organization to find all documents. You are responsible for regularly checking the advising organization to maintain your program of study and desired program completion timeline.

- **Grading**

Assignment	Points	Due Date
Course Engagement	6	ongoing
Online Reading/Viewing Responses (2 points each for 7 modules)	14	September 1, 15, 22 & 29 November 3, 17, & 24
Theory Map	10	September 15
Research Article Critique 1	6	as assigned
Research Article Critique 2	6	as assigned
Small Group Online Article Discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion leader (2 points each for 2 sessions = 4 points) • discussion participant (1 point each for 4 sessions = 4 points) 	8	as assigned
Annotated Bibliography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • topic (1 point) • reference list (2 points) • draft of 1 entry (2 points) • final annotated bibliography & synthesis paper (15 points) 	20	October 6 October 27 November 10 December 1
Midterm Exam	15	October 20
Final Exam	15	December 15

Total 100

Grading Scale

Grade	Range
A	= 94 – 100%
A-	= 90 – 93%
B+	= 85 – 89%
B	= 80 – 84%
C	= 75 – 79%
F	= below 75%

Literacy students must re-take any course in which they receive a grade of C or lower. Incompletes must be cleared before moving to the next course in the instructional sequence.

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

Class Schedule

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Articles marked with * should be used for the Research Article Critique assignment.

**As assigned. See the schedule on your Online Discussion group's page for details.

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1 August 25 ASYNC	Reading & Understanding Literacy Research	- Duke & Martin, 2011	- none
August 31	LAST DAY TO ADD CLASSES		
Week 2 September 1 SYNC	Theoretical & Historical Perspectives on Literacy Development & Instruction	- Schwanenflugel & Knapp, 2016 - Tracey & Morrow, 2017	- Module 1 activities - Module 2 activities
Week 3 September 8 SYNC	Theoretical & Historical Perspectives on Literacy Development & Instruction (cont.)	- Scanlon et al., Ch. 1, 3 - Cartwright & Duke, 2019 - Gabriel, 2020	- Module 3 activities
September 8	LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES WITH 100% TUITION REFUND		
Week 4 September 15 ASYNC	Supporting the Literacy Development of Young English Learners	- Hill & Miller, 2013 - Martínez, 2019 - Mohr et al., 2019 - Schwanenflugel & Knapp, 2016	- Module 4 activities - Theory Map
September 15	LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES WITH 50% TUITION REFUND		
Week 5 September 22 ASYNC	Oral Language Development	- *Boyd, 2015 - Hadley et al., 2020 - Wasik & Hindman, 2018 - Zucker et al., 2020	- Module 5 activities - Research Article Critique for Boyd**
September 28	LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM CLASSES (NO REFUND)		
Week 6 September 29 ASYNC	Print Awareness Concept of Word Phonological Awareness	- Scanlon et al., Part II Intro., Ch. 4, 5 - Bowling & Cabell, 2019 - *Mesmer & Williams, 2015	- Module 6 activities - Small Group Online Discussion for Boyd** - Research Article Critique for Mesmer & Williams**
Week 7 October 6 SYNC	Alphabetics Phonics	- Scanlon et al., Chs. 6-11 - *Jones & Reutzel, 2012 - Stahl et al., 1998	- Module 7 activities - Small Group Online Discussion for Mesmer & Williams** - Research Article Critique for Jones & Reutzel** - Topic for Annotated Bibliography
Oct. 13	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK (Monday classes meet on this day.)		

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 8 Oct. 20 ASYNC	Midterm Exam		
Week 9 October 27 SYNC	Spelling Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bear, 2019 - *Raynolds et al., 2013 - Vines et al., 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Module 9 activities - Small Group Online Discussion for Jones & Reutzel** - Research Article Critique for Raynolds** - Reference List for Annotated Bibliography
Week 10 November 3 ASYNC	Word Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scanlon et al., Part III Intro., Ch. 12, 13 - Helman & Burns, 2008 - *Lee & Schmitt, 2014 - Miles et al., 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Module 10 activities - Small Group Online Discussion for Raynolds et al.** - Research Article Critique for Lee & Schmitt**
Week 11 November 10 SYNC	Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scanlon et al., Part IV Intro., Ch. 14 - *Davis et al., 2018 - Kuhn et al., 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Module 11 activities - Small Group Online Discussion for Lee & Schmitt** - Research Article Critique for Davis et al.** - 1 Completed Annotated Bibliography Entry (be prepared to share during class and then post to Bb)
Week 12 November 17 ASYNC	Vocabulary & Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scanlon et al., Ch. 15, 16 - Kuhn et al., 2017 - *Wright & Neuman, 2014 - Zoski & Erickson, 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Module 12 activities - Small Group Online Discussion for Davis et al.** - Research Article Critique for Wright & Neuman**
Week 13 November 24 ASYNC	Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILA, 2020 - *Jones, 2015 - Choose 2 articles from the folder on Bb. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Module 13 activities - Small Group Online Discussion for Wright & Neuman** - Research Article Critique for Jones**
Week 14 December 1 SYNC	Supporting Young Students Experiencing Difficulties with Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scanlon et al., Ch. 2, 17 - Hrubby, 2019 - Johnston, 2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Module 14 activities - Small Group Online Discussion for Jones** - Annotated Bibliography
Week 15 December 15 ASYNC	Final Exam		

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.