

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Literacy Program

EDRD 627 DL1 –Comprehension and Vocabulary Development for K-12 Learners
3 Credits, Fall 2023
Asynchronous, Online

Faculty

Name: Dr. Emily C. Bigelow
Office Hours: by appointment
Office Location: Thompson Hall, Suite 1500, Fairfax Campus
Office Phone: 615-504-4621
Email Address: ebigelo@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites

None

University Catalog Course Description

Examines the complex nature of language and its connection to literacy development. Explores theories of comprehension and vocabulary development. Evaluates materials and evidence-based strategies to engage K-12 learners in complex comprehension, including across the disciplines.

Course Overview

Not Applicable

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) 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 Monday, January 16, 2023.

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: Because asynchronous class sessions do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Tuesday, and finish on a Monday.
- 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 2 times per week.
- 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. Examine theories of reading comprehension.
2. Explain the role of vocabulary knowledge in comprehension.

3. Explain factors that affect comprehension including text, reader, context, and sociocultural influences.
4. Design evidence-based literacy instruction across subject areas to support all learners in reading comprehension.

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

Upon completion of this course, students will have addressed the following *Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals 2017*:

1 – Foundational Knowledge

Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical, historical, and evidence-based foundations of literacy and language and the ways in which they interrelate and the role of literacy professionals in schools.

2 – Curriculum and Instruction

Candidates use foundational knowledge to critique and implement literacy curricula to meet the needs of all learners and to design, implement, and evaluated evidence-based literacy instruction for all learners.

Required Texts

Fisher, D., Frey, N. & Law, N. (2020). *Comprehension: The Skill, Will and Thrill of Reading Comprehension*. Sage Publishing.

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

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/or Examinations

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

Assignment	Total Value
Reader Response Notebook	20%
Module Activities	40%
Reflection	15%
Instructional Planning	25%

Reader Response Notebook (20%)

You will select a middle grade or high school level book from the list below to read and respond to throughout the semester. As you read this book, you will engage with the text through Reader Response activities. These activities can serve as models for future students and their reading assignments.

Module Activities (20%)

Throughout the semester you will have ongoing online assignments that involve an array of activities, including practicing strategies we learn through our readings and recording your thoughts, reactions, opinions, connections, and questions, related to assigned readings and videos. These activities are designed to encourage you to think deeply about the materials you read and reflect on and raise questions about the assignments. You will also have the opportunity to interact with your peers

through discussion boards, blogs, and other course collaboration tools. All instructions and due dates for these assignments will be posted weekly to Blackboard.

Reflection (15%)

At the end of each module, you will write a journal entry reflecting on your learning that week. Prompts will be given to support this process. Journal entries should be approximately 400-500 words, and address the assigned journal prompt. Make sure that you have completed the coursework and readings assigned in the module before completing the journal entry. Refer to the journal rubric and prompt as you construct your entry.

Instructional Planning (25%)

There will be opportunities throughout the semester to apply the course content in a variety of instructional planning activities. These assignments will cover instructional planning skills including: text selection, creating text dependent questions, selecting appropriate instructional strategies based on texts, planning comprehension and vocabulary lessons. The culminating project for this course will be to create a comprehension text set that includes a variety of texts, teaching activities, and vocabulary words.

Grading Scale

Grade	Points
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	85-89
B	80-84
C	70-79
F	below 70

Professional Dispositions

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

Class Schedule

Module	Date	Topics
Module 1	8/21-8/27	The Skill, The Will & The Thrill Complex Texts
Module 2	8/28-9/3	Reading Comprehension Models Text Structure
Module 3	9/5-9/10	Reading Strategies Matching Strategies and Texts
Module 4	9/11-9/17	Reading Comprehension Skills Background Knowledge
Module 5	9/18-9/24	Phonemic Awareness, Phonics & Fluency Text Selection

Module 6	9/25-10/1	Inferring, Summarizing, Synthesizing, Monitoring Reading Strategy Instruction
Module 7	10/2-10/8	Vocabulary and Comprehension Vocabulary - Selecting Words to Teach
Module 8	10/10-10/15	Vocabulary Teaching Routines Vocabulary Strategies
Module 9	10/16-10/22	Text Dependent Questions Student Motivation
Module 10	10/23-10/29	Choice and Relevance in the Classroom Tasks as Tools
Module 11	10/30-11/5	The Thill of Reading Critical Literacy
Module 12	11/6-11/12	Talk and Comprehension Planning and Supporting Classroom Discussions
Module 13	11/13-11/19	Assessing Comprehension Assessing Vocabulary Knowledge
Module 14	11/20-12/2	English Language Learners Exceptional Education Learners
Final Exam	12/9	Assignments due instead of exam

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

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 VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. 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 “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures 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/>.