

# WEBSTER UNIVERSITY

## COURSE SYLLABUS

**Course Number and Section**  
**COMM 5910.01**

**Instructor: Dr. Nancy Johnson**  
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**Course Title**

**Investigations in Reading: Primary**

3 credits

**Site: WEBG**

**Term: Fall II 2002**

**1. COURSE DESCRIPTION: (Student focus, rationale, scope, prerequisites)**

This course has been designed for classroom teachers to explore and investigate the teaching of reading and learning to read to children (preschool through third grade). The course syllabus and assignments are open-ended, permitting students to pursue particular topics of interest. The instructor assumes that students accept responsibility for identifying specific areas of interest and suggesting possible projects.

**2. LEARNING OUTCOMES: (Goals, objectives, course outcomes, etc.)**

In order to provide better literacy instruction for young children, students participating in this course will:

- a) study the reading process and its place in early literacy development; (IRA 1:1; 2:4; 6:1; 6:3; MoStep 1:1)
- b) examine specifically the relationships of written and oral language development to that of reading; (IRA 2:2; 2:3; MoStep 3:1)
- c) understand the role of scaffolding in literacy instruction; (IRA 12:2; MoStep 1:3; 3:2; 3:3; 5:2; 7:3)
- d) explore the interaction of the child who is developing early literacy skills, instructional strategies, and appropriate resources; (IRA 2:7; 2:14; MoStep 1:2; 1:3; 1:4; 2:4; 4:1; 5:1; 8:3)
- e) examine, challenge, support, modify, and extend current beliefs and knowledge about children, literacy development, and learning theory; (IRA 1:6; 4:3; MoStep 1:1; 2:2; 2:4)

- f) study the role of metacognition in literacy development; (IRA 2:8; MoStep 1:4)
- g) explore current methods of assessing, documenting, and reporting literacy growth; (IRA 2:14; 10:1; 11:1; 11:4)
- h) understand the role of classroom organization on literacy instruction; (IRA 5:1; 5:3; MoStep 6:2)
- i) examine the synthetic and analytic methods of phonics instruction;(IRA 2:1; 3:3; 6:2; MoStep 1:2)
- j) read and discuss relevant professional literature and share/reflect on applicable professional experiences. (IRA 13:3; 16:1; 16:2; MoStep 1:1; 9:2)

**3. SCHEDULE OF REQUIRED READINGS, CLASS PREPARATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS, LECTURES, DISCUSSIONS, STUDENT PRESENTATIONS, AND EXAMS:**

**WEEK 1:** Course Overview  
 Examining Beliefs  
 Defining Reading  
 Models of Reading Instruction  
 Scaffolding literacy growth  
 Professional Reflections  
 Defining your role and goals  
 Video of Shelly Harwayne

**Assignments:** Taberski, Chapter 1, 2, and 3; Dorn, Chapters 1-2

**WEEK 2:** Complete discussion from week 1  
**Journal article and summary reflection #1 due**

**WEEK 3:** Examine the role of the student and the teacher in learning to read  
 Concepts of Print  
 How does literacy instruction at the Emergent levels differ from that in the intermediate grades?  
 Organization of classroom: space, materials, time  
 Components of literacy program

**Assignments:** Taberski, Chapter 4-5; Dorn, Chapter 3 and 8; **Journal article summary and reflection #2 due**

**WEEK 4:** Reading Conferences  
Running Records of children’s reading/miscue analysis  
Three cue systems  
Guided Reading  
**Assignments:** Taberski, Chapter 6-7; Dorn, Chapter 4-5; **Journal article summary and reflection #3.**

**WEEK 5:** Assessment of comprehension  
Reading discussions  
Read Aloud/Shared Reading  
**Assignments:** Taberski, Chapter 8. Dorn Chapters 6-7  
**Theme Paper Due**

**WEEK 6:** Guided Reading  
Skills vs. Strategies  
The phonics debate  
Choosing “just right” books  
**Assignments:** Taberski, Chapter 9 – 10; Dorn Chapter 4  
**Presentations of research**

**WEEK 7:** Word study  
One-on-one time  
Deciding what to teach and why  
Building background and understanding  
Independent reading  
Children’s responses  
Remediation vs. acceleration – Reading Recovery  
**Assignments:** Taberski, Chapters 11 - 13.

**WEEK 8:** Finish topics  
**Final Essay**

#### **4. RESOURCES**

Texts Used: *On Solid Ground*, by Sharon Taberski.

*Apprenticeship in Literacy* by Linda Dorn, et. Al.

Supplemental Resources: Teacher handouts, videos, professional journal articles

5. **EVALUATION:**

Professional Journal Articles – Students will read one journal article for each of weeks 2, 3 and 4. Students should summarize each article on the front of a 4 X 6 Index card and write a personal/professional reaction on the back. A copy of the Article is to be submitted with the summary/reflection, and different journals should be represented among the articles selected for review.

Possible Professional Journals include, but are not limited to:

Primary Voices

Reading Teacher

Language Arts

Reading Research Quarterly

Educational Leadership

Handbook of Reading Research

Elementary School Journal

Phi Delta Kappan

Theme Paper – Due Week 5 – Typed or word processed and printed paper (6-8 pages), researching a topic related to primary reading instruction. At least half of the resources must be a professional journal in the field of literacy. Four to five references should be cited in the text. APA Format. Reference Page. Brief (5-7 minute) presentation summarizing the topic for the class.

Points will be deducted for assignments turned in after the due date unless previous arrangements have been made with the instructor. No late work will be accepted after Thursday, July 25. An incomplete (I) grade is only given due to personal illness or family emergency. The majority of the coursework must be completed before consideration for an incomplete will be given.

Final Essay – done in last class on Primary Literacy.

Class Participation – Active participation in small and whole group activities is expected.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

All students' work must conform to Webster University's policies on academic Dishonesty. Acts of dishonesty include cheating and plagiarism. Plagiarism Includes a variety of things: submitting exams, reports, or reflections as one's Own work when the work has been prepared by another person or copied from Another person. When you copy something word for word or when you merely Rephrase ideas from someone else, you **must cite** your sources. Include the last Name of the author and date of publication. If it is a direct quote include the page Number.

6. **FINAL ESSAYS:** Final essays will be returned to students by mail if they furnish a self-addressed, stamped envelope.
7. **ATTENDANCE:** Unapproved absences will result in the lowering of a grade or reduced credit for the class. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from the course if he/she has more than two absences.

**This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Therefore, regular attendance is required.**