American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

Education
EDUC611
Identifying and Diagnosing Reading Difficulties
Credit Hours = 3
Length of Course = 8 weeks
Prerequisite: EDUC503 (May be taken concurrently)

Courses containing assignments that are field based require candidates to be in an instructional setting. The amount of time completing these tasks will vary, but may typically require approximately 10 hours of access time per course to classroom contexts. See specific assignment descriptions and speak with your Instructor Information

Instructor: APUS Faculty

Course Description (Catalog)

This course is designed for general education classroom teachers and focuses on classroom reading assessment. Participants will learn how to administer formal and informal measures of reading assessment, including screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring measures. The assessment to instruction link will be emphasized during each session. Educators will use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading instruction.

Course Scope

This course focuses on the skills needed to assess the reading levels of young students. Other courses will provide you with knowledge of what to do when you locate a reading deficiency, but this course’s focus on the “assess” portion of the “assess-plan-teach” cycle.

This course provides a scientifically based reading research (SBRR) foundation for understanding how assessment can be used effectively to improve student literacy. The course helps develop teachers who are knowledgeable of the foundations and theoretical basis for literacy education, the developmental characteristics of students as readers and writers, and the instructional practices and strategies that best
serve them. The coursework reflects standards advocated by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and the International Reading Association (IRA).

Using the diagnostics embedded in the Assess-Plan-Teach instructional cycle, students will learn fundamentals of literacy assessment and apply it to the five essential components of an effective reading program (NRP, 2000): Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Fluency, and Comprehension. There is an old expression, “If all you have is a hammer, every problem starts to look like a nail.” This course gives you the assessment strategies necessary to have a full set of tools when dealing with the varied and often complex problems of student literacy.

Courses containing assignments that are field based require candidates to be in an instructional setting. The amount of time completing these tasks will vary, but may typically require approximately 10 hours of access time per course to classroom contexts. See specific assignment descriptions and speak with your instructor for further clarification should you have any questions.

**Course Objectives – NCATE/IRA**

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

**Lesson 1 Foundations of Literacy Assessment**
1. Demonstrate knowledge of psychological, sociological, and linguistic foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.
2. 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.

**Lesson 2 Informal Reading Inventories**
3. Use a wide range of assessment tools and practices that range from individual and group standardized tests to individual and group informal classroom assessment strategies, including technology-based assessment tools.

**Lesson 3 Fluency**
2. Use instructional grouping options (individual, small-group, whole-class, and computer-based) as appropriate for accomplishing given purposes.
3. Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at different stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

**Lesson 4 Emergent Literacy**
3. Use a wide range of assessment tools and practices that range from individual and group standardized tests to individual and group informal classroom assessment strategies, including technology-based assessment tools.
3.2 Place students along a developmental continuum and identify students' proficiencies and difficulties.
3.3 Use assessment information to plan, evaluate, and revise effective instruction that meets the needs of all students, including those at different developmental stages and those from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Lesson 5 Word Recognition and Spelling
2.2 Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at different stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
2.3 Use a wide range of curriculum materials in effective reading instruction for learners at different stages of reading and writing development and from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
3.2 Place students along a developmental continuum and identify students' proficiencies and difficulties.
3.3 Use assessment information to plan, evaluate, and revise effective instruction that meets the needs of all students, including those at different developmental stages and those from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Lesson 6 Comprehension
2.2 Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at different stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
2.3 Use a wide range of curriculum materials in effective reading instruction for learners at different stages of reading and writing development and from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
3.3 Use assessment information to plan, evaluate, and revise effective instruction that meets the needs of all students, including those at different developmental stages and those from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Lesson 7 Strategic Knowledge
2.2 Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at different stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
3.1 Use a wide range of assessment tools and practices that range from individual and group standardized tests to individual and group informal classroom assessment strategies, including technology-based assessment tools.

Lesson 8 Affective Factors
3.4 Effectively communicate results of assessments to specific individuals (students, parents, caregivers, colleagues, administrators, policymakers, policy officials, community, etc.).
4.1 Use students' interests, reading abilities, and backgrounds as foundations for the reading and writing program.
4.3 Model reading and writing enthusiastically as valued lifelong activities.
4.4 Motivate learners to be lifelong readers.

Course Delivery Method

The activities of this course will be conducted entirely via the Internet. The bulk of the contact will be done on web interface tools, mainly the course delivery system. We will rely heavily on web based
activities and a premium will be placed on discussion depth, breadth and quality. Web based courses rely heavily on the combined intellectual contributions of every student, as well as the teacher. A technology saying goes "Everyone knows something, no one knows everything." As is often advocated in Distance learning, I will try to be the guide on the side, not the sage on the stage.

### Course Materials

#### Required Course Textbooks


#### Required Course Material

The following are PDFs and found within the course materials:
- Adaptations are Essential: Early Years Reading
- National Reading Panel 2000 Report

#### Additional Course Materials

All the following are Adobe PDFS and are found with the course materials:
- R4 - How to Create a Successful At-Home Reading Program
- An “Exploded View” of Five Essential Steps to Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children
- Reading Development & Assessment of Early Literacy: A Review of the Literature
- Creating a Culture of Literacy: A Guide for Middle School and High School Principals
- Put Reading First: The Research Blocks for Reading Instruction

References for each lesson/module are listed at the end of the syllabus document.

#### Websites

In addition to the required course texts the following public domain Websites are useful. Please abide by the university’s academic honesty policy when using Internet sources as well. Note Web site addresses are subject to change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Website URL/Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Test Support from the Ohio Department of Education</td>
<td><a href="http://www.diagnostictestsupport.org/">http://www.diagnostictestsupport.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Practices Online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective Literacy Instruction for Adolescents from the Executive Summary and Paper Commissioned by the National</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nrconline.org/publications/alverwhite2.pdf">http://www.nrconline.org/publications/alverwhite2.pdf</a></td>
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</table>
**Evaluation Procedures**

- **During this course you will respond to weekly** *Forum* **assignments. Responses to the original Forum question or questions for each week will be due by midnight, Wednesday and responses to classmates will be due by midnight, Saturday. All due dates are relevant to Eastern Time (ET). Weekly Forum discussions are worth 20 points per week and are graded with a rubric.**

- **Homework** is assigned weekly for a total of eight assignments. These assignments are each worth 50 points, for a total of 400 points, and are graded with a rubric.

- **Observation Assessment Activities** are due each week. There are a total of eight activities, each work 40 points, for a total of 320 points towards your final grade. The assignments will be graded with a rubric.

- **A Final Project** is due at the end of Week 8. This assignment is worth 120 points on your final grade. It will be graded with a rubric that is attached to the assignment details.

Please print the Assignment Guidelines as it contains detailed information regarding your assignments for this class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Instruments</th>
<th>Points for Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forum Participation (20 @ 8 each)</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework Assignments (8 @ 50 each)</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations Assessment Activities (8 @ 40 each)</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>120</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
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**Instructor Announcements**

At the beginning of each week’s module, there will be announcements for you. The announcements are important to review and note as they will provide you with a brief highlight of the week’s topics and learning objectives, offer additional guidance on the assignments for the week, and provide reminders for upcoming due dates.

**Reading Assignments**

Every week you will be assigned readings from the course textbook, as well as a lecturette. On some
weeks, you may also be assigned an Adobe PDF file to supplement your text. You are strongly encouraged to keep up with the reading as many of your assignments will be directly correlated with the texts. It will also be beneficial for you to utilize the excellent resources provided by the textbook.

To complement and enhance your textbook readings, there will be a required guided lecturette for each module. There will also be additional readings assigned that pertain directly to the course objectives and content. Furthermore, these readings will provide you with additional information and offer different perspectives on focus topics throughout the course. Your participation in reading these documents is strongly encouraged.

**Forums & Participation**
This course requires you to be actively involved with learning and applying educational concepts and tools. You will be expected to participate in class activities after having completed the assigned readings. Your peer response should add a resource (website, magazine or book reference) or thoughtful reflection of original post. "That's right" and "I agree" one sentence posts are not considered thoughtful reflections. See your discussion rubric for more detail on what constitutes an appropriate post.

**Grading Criteria for Assignments**
Assignments must demonstrate grasp of the course concepts and techniques at the graduate level. All work must exhibit the following quality indicators to be acceptable. The paper, project, or instructional product should:

- Address the content/task appropriately within the context of the course's concepts and techniques;
- Demonstrate critical reasoning or higher order mental engagement with the content or task (e.g., application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation);
- Show creativity, originality, self-direction, and initiative in assignment selection and execution;
- Clearly organize ideas and concepts, and communicate them effectively;
- Exhibit the stylistic requirements of graduate work (e.g., word-processed and meets length, format, citation (APA), writing, grammar, and spelling standards); and
- Follow any directions and/or rubrics attached to the assignment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Learning Objective(s)</th>
<th>Reading(s)</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Foundations of Assessment        | • Demonstrate knowledge of psychological, sociological, and linguistic foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.  
• 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. | Text: “Assessment for Reading Instruction”. McKenna & Stahl. Chapter 1, Introduction to Reading Assessment, pp. 1-23, and Chapter 2, General Concepts of Assessment, pp. 24-40.  
Review the Additional Resources to supplement your learning. | Forum Post 1: Photo Introduction  
Assignments:  
• Assignment 1: Teacher Invaders Assessment Vocabulary Game  
• Observation Assessment Activity 1 |
| 2    | Informal Reading Inventories     | • 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.  
• Use a wide range of assessment tools and practices that range from individual and group standardized tests to individual and group informal classroom assessment strategies, including technology-based assessment tools. | Text: McKenna & Stahl. Chapter 3, Informal Reading Inventories and Other Measures of Oral Reading, pp. 41-74.  
Review the Additional Resources to supplement your learning. | Forum Post 2: Informal Reading Inventory  
Assignments:  
• Assignment 2: Informal Reading Inventory  
• Observation Assessment Activity 2 |
| 3 | Fluency | • Use instructional grouping options (individual, small-group, whole-class, and computer-based) as appropriate for accomplishing given purposes.  
• Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at different stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.  
• Use a wide range of curriculum materials in effective reading instruction for learners at different stages of reading and writing development and from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. | Text: McKenna & Stahl. Chapter 6, Fluency, pp. 148 – 159.  
Review the Additional Resources to supplement your learning. | Forum Post 3: Readers Theater Assignments:  
• Assignment 3: Fluency Lesson Rewrite  
• Observation Assessment Activity 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Emergent Literacy | • Use a wide range of assessment tools and practices that range from individual and group standardized tests to individual and group informal classroom assessment strategies, including technology-based assessment tools.  
• Place students along a developmental continuum and identify students' proficiencies and difficulties.  
• Use assessment information to plan, evaluate, and revise effective instruction that meets the needs of all students, including those at different developmental stages and those from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds. | Text: McKenna & Stahl. Chapter 4, Emergent Literacy, pp. 75-99.  
Review the Additional Resources to supplement your learning. | Forum Post 4: Phonological Awareness Assignments:  
• Assignment 4: Synthesis of Phonemes  
• Observation Assessment Activity 4 |
| | | • Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at different stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds. | Text: McKenna & Stahl. Chapter 5, Word Recognition and Spelling, pp. 100-147. | Forum Post 5: Spelling City.com Assignments:  
• Assignment 5: Fry Sight |
| 5 | **Word Recognition and Spelling** | Use a wide range of curriculum materials in effective reading instruction for learners at different stages of reading and writing development and from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.  
- Place students along a developmental continuum and identify students' proficiencies and difficulties.  
- Use assessment information to plan, evaluate, and revise effective instruction that meets the needs of all students, including those at different developmental stages and those from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds. | Review the Additional Resources to supplement your learning. |  
| **Word Inventory** |  
- **Observation Assessment Activity 5** |

| 6 | **Comprehension** | Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at different stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.  
- Use a wide range of curriculum materials in effective reading instruction for learners at different stages of reading and writing development and from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.  
- Use assessment information to plan, evaluate, and revise effective instruction that meets the needs of all students, including those at different developmental stages and those from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds. | Text: McKenna & Stahl. Chapter 7, Comprehension, pp. 160-185. |  
| **Forum Post 6: Comprehension Assessment.** |  
- **Assignment 6**: Creating Reading Guides and a Cloze  
- **Observation Assessment Activity 6** |
| 7 | Strategic Knowledge | • Use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at different stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.  
• Use a wide range of assessment tools and practices that range from individual and group standardized tests to individual and group informal classroom assessment strategies, including technology-based assessment tools. | Text: McKenna & Stahl. Chapter 8, Strategic Knowledge, pp. 186 – 203.  
File Download: Adaptations are Essential: Early Years Reading.  
Website: Improving Outcomes for all K-8 Students. | Forum Post 7: Adaptations Review Assignments:  
• Assignment 7: Burke Reading Interview  
• Observation Assessment Activity 7 |
| 8 | Affective Factors | • Effectively communicate results of assessments to specific individuals (students, parents, caregivers, colleagues, administrators, policymakers, policy officials, community, etc.).  
• Use students' interests, reading abilities, and backgrounds as foundations for the reading and writing program.  
• Model reading and writing enthusiastically as valued lifelong activities.  
• Motivate learners to be lifelong readers. | Text: McKenna & Stahl. Chapter 9, Affective Factors, pp. 204-245.  
Review the Additional Resources to supplement your learning. | Forum Post 8: Favorite Book Assignments:  
• Assignment 8: Booktrailer/Booktalk  
• Final Project Assignment  
• Observation Assessment Activity 8 |
REFERENCES


National Reading Panel. (2000) Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction. In Report of the National Reading Panel. (NIH Publication #00-4754). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.


3-Tier: Levels of Intervention. Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts. Scientifically Based Research. The University of Texas at Austin, College of Education. 18 May 2005 <http://www.texasreading.org/3tier.levels.asp>.


Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.


