

RDG 561 LANGUAGE ARTS: THEORY AND INSTRUCTION
SPRING 2008
College of Education

Department of Language, Literacy and Special Populations

RDG 561 is a required course for the Master's in Reading and the Texas Reading Specialist Certification

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TEXT/READINGS

Fletcher, R. (1993). *What a Writer Needs*. NH: Heinemann. **(Required)**

Various language arts journals and book chapters are available on-line or placed on electronic reserve at the Newton Gresham Library at Sam Houston State University (the library may be accessed at www.shsu.edu/~lib.www) (Required) In addition to these required readings, learners will self-select book related to their inquiry topics.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This version of RDG 561 is designed as an “on-line only” course. This is a graduate level course in language arts that uses research and researched best-practice to inform and guide instructional decision-making. Emphasis is place on discussion the problems of teaching English language arts, specifically written English, and exploring ways to integrate the process of composing into the classroom. It is assumed that learners in this course are practicing teachers and, subsequently learning activities are designed to explore one’s own classroom practice. Prerequisites: None.

Standards Matrix:

Objectives/Learning Outcomes	Activities (* indicates field-based activity)	Performance Assessment	Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>State Standards</u> • <i>Specialty Organization Standards</i> • <u>Conceptual Framework #</u>
Demonstrate that writing/composing are a part of the communication process	Participate as a member of a writing community in Writing Workshop.* Complete an individual inquiry on a topic related to the course objectives.*	Published writing PowerPoint presentation and written paper Inquiry Support Group	1.35k, 1.36k, 1.40s 2.1
Apply the standards for language arts developed by professional organizations	Teach a writing craft lesson	Lesson plan, kid watching notes, teaching reflection paper. Forum responses	

Write in different genres for different purposes, for differing audiences	Multigenre Writing Participate as a member of a writing community in Writing Workshop. *	Published writing Writers Support Group	<u>1.37k, 1.412, 1, 1.42s</u> 9.1, 9.2
Examine language arts resources for best instructional practice	Critique 5 professional language arts resources * Critique 3 children/young adult literature selection or resources. *	Paper Inquiry Support Group Paper	<u>1.38k</u> 9.1
Apply the composing process (precomposing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing).	Participate as a member of a writing community in Writing Workshop. *	Published writing Writers Support Group	<u>1.30k, 1.39s, 1.48s</u> 9.2
Investigate the development nature of the writing process and apply instructional strategies for each development stage.	Complete an individual inquiry on a topic related to the course objectives. * * Teach a writing craft lesson. *	PowerPoint presentation and written paper Inquiry Support Group Lesson plan, kid watching notes, teaching reflection paper.	<u>1.29k, 1.36s, 1.38k</u> 9.1
Analyze and develop appropriate writing environments.	Classroom checklist and proposal for change.*	Analysis paper	<u>1.38s</u> 5.1
Incorporate instruction of grammar, usage, spelling, and other language conventions into writing instructional time.	Teach a writing craft lesson. * End of course reflection.	Lesson plan, kid watching notes, teaching reflection paper. Reflection paper	<u>1.31k, 1.32k, 1.34k, 1.36s, 1.37s, 1.46s, 1.47s</u> 3.3, 9.3, 162.
Critique technological influences on the composing process.	Critique 5 professional language resources. *	Paper and forum responses	<u>1.38k</u> 5.7, 12.4
Assess and evaluate the assessment and evaluation of writing.	Analysis of four children's writing pieces. *	Analysis paper	<u>1.39k, 1.342, 1.352</u> 10.2
Differentiate the ways in which the language arts are used throughout the curriculum.	Analysis of integration of the language arts in individual's school. *	Forum responses	5.6

Web address for **state standards**: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>

Web address for **specialty organization standards**: <http://www.reading.org/advocacy/standards/introduction.html>

Web link for **Conceptual Framework**: <http://www.shsu.edu/~ncate/concept.html>

COURSE FORMAT:

The content of this course is delivered using Blackboard. In addition, course concepts are learned through self-study, collaborative study, small group discussions, writer response groups and small PowerPoint presentation. Evaluation consists of self-evaluations, peer evaluations, and professor rubrics using rubrics for products, discussions and presentations.

In this course focus will be on these major objectives (as assessed by the IDEA course evaluation system):

Essential:

- 1) Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view need by professionals in the field most closely related to this course (writing and literacy).
- 2) Learning fundamental principles, generalizations or theories.

Important:

- 1) Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing.

COURSE CONTENT:

- Week 1: Course overview, technology exploration, reflection
- Week 2: Composing as communicative act
Theoretical foundations for writing instruction
- Week 3: The composing process
Teachers as composers
Responding to composers/writers
- Week 4: Development of writing
Principles of beginning writing
Strategies for beginning writers
Strategies for middle school writers
- Week 5: The writing environment
Writing workshop
Teaching craft lessons
- Week 6: Writing genres: Expressive, literary, poetry
- Week 7: Writing genres: Informative, argument/persuasion, reports, multigenre
- Week 8: Language conventions: Grammar and usage, spelling
Handwriting
Technology and the language arts
- Week 9: Assessing and evaluating writing
- Week 10: Language arts across the curriculum
- Week 11: Inquiry presentation

PROCEDURES, EVALUATION, AND STANDARDS:

The on-line classroom formatted includes lecture or narrative presentations, small group discussions, whole class discussions, self-selected inquiries, writing workshop, and individual presentations. Evaluation consists of self-, peer, and professor assessments using rubrics for products, discussions, workshops and presentations. It is expected that graduate students be active, enthusiastic, and collegial participants during the semester. In addition, it is expected that course work is completed in a timely and professional manner on the schedule posted. Points are lost if these expectations are not fulfilled.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Assigned Readings, Weekly Courses Activities and Participation. Read the assigned texts and course narratives, complete the course activities and participate in weekly whole class discussions over the required readings and course narratives. Evaluations of weekly course activities will be made by the professor. Evaluation of participation in on-line whole class discussions will be both self-assessment and professor assessment. See “Course Information” for a rubric for *Self-evaluation: Readings and Discussions* and a rubric for *Instructor Evaluation for Weekly Course Activities*.

Participation (weeks 1-12, whole group)

Course activities (5 points each week) 60 points

Reading discussions (5 points each week) 60 points

2. Inquiry Project Readings & Discussions, Paper and Presentation. Each learner will conduct an inquiry in an area of interest related to the language arts. You will be grouped with others who select a related inquiry for inquiry support groups. You will select resources to your inquiry topic to read and discuss weekly with your inquiry support group. Learners will develop a PowerPoint presentation for classmates and each individual will turn in a paper documenting the findings from the inquiry and reflecting on the learning process. Evaluation of the inquires will be self, peer, and professor evaluation. *Inquiry Project Guidelines Evaluation Weekly Inquiry Progress and Support* and an *Inquiry Presentation Evaluation* rubric can be found in “Course Information.”

Inquiry (weeks 3-11)

Participation (inquiry support group)
(5 points each week) 45 points

Presentation 50 points

Paper 50 points

3. Writing Workshop. In order for us to be credible as teachers of writing and in order to model appropriately for our students, teachers should have many experiences with writing workshop. This course requires you to participate as a member of a writing community. There are three components:

- Keep a writer’s notebook. Make entries 2 or more times each week. If you have difficulty finding a topic to write about use the prompts in the Ralph Fletcher book, *What a Writer Needs*. Each week select one of your notebook entries to “make public” by sharing with your on-line writer’s group. You will receive three (3) points automatically when you pose a one-page (minimum) entry.

- Read and respond to members of your writer’s group. Self-assess your feedback. **Guidelines for Writers and Their Readers and Self-assessing Writer’s Group Support** are found under “Course Information.”
- Select one of your notebook entries to take through the writing process, through revising, editing, ending with publishing. As you draft, revise and edit, use your writer’s group for advice and feedback. You will post your final published piece for the whole class to read and respond to. The final piece will not be “graded” in the traditional sense; instead you will self-assess. See **Self-assessing, My Published Piece** under “Course Information.”

Writing Workshop (weeks 3-10)

Notebook entries (3 points each week)	24 points
Reading & responding (writer’s group) (5 points each week)	40 points
Published piece	30 points

4. Teaching a Craft Lesson. Plan a writing mini-lesson, teach it to your children, and reflect on the experience, and post it to your home page. See **Craft Lesson Guidelines** and **Craft Lesson Evaluation Rubric** under “Course Information.”

Craft Lesson 50 points

5. **Language Arts Resources.** Find and critique five (5) professional language arts resources. These resources can include books, journals, writing magazines, internet sites, and videos. The five critiqued resources are due at the same time. See **Guidelines and Rubric for Critiquing Language Arts Resources** under “Course Information.”

Language arts professional resources 50 points

6. **Children’s and Young Adult Literature and Resources Supporting Writing Process.** Find and critique 3 children/young adult literature selections or resources teachers could use in the classroom that focus on children as writers or the writing process. See **Guidelines and Rubric for Critiquing Children’s Resources** under “Course Information.”

Children’s resources 30 points

EVALUATION (* indicates field-based activity):

Because your active participation is so important, it is imperative that all assignments be submitted on dates due. Assignments will be considered "on time" if submitted by midnight the day due. (NOTE: All due dates/times are based on Central Standard Time.) Submission of work after midnight will be considered late. All assignments must be completed in order to pass this course.

- Late assignments with rubrics lose a percentage of the points for that assignment: After one day -- one-third of the points; Two days -- one-half of the points. No assignments earn points after the second day, but must be completed.
- Late readings, viewings, or postings subtract from Professionalism points. One day -- minus 3 points; Two days -- minus 5 points; After two days -- minus 8 points.
- Rewrites: Any assignment that needs to be rewritten for content and/or grammar/mechanics will lose 2 points per section.

Participation (weeks 1-12, whole group)		
Course activities and reading discussions		60 points
Inquiry (weeks 3-11)		
Paper		50 points
Presentation		50 points
Participation		45 points
Writing Workshop		
Notebook entries (3 points each week)		24 points
Reading & responding (writer's group)		
(5 points each week)		40 points
Published piece		30 points
Craft Lesson		50 points
Language Arts Professional Resources		50 points
Children's Resources		30 points
	TOTAL POINTS	429

Letter grades: A= 90-100% B= 80-89% C= below 80%

The professor reserves the right to alter course requirements to better meet the learning needs of the graduate candidates.

Expectations:

Technology requirements. It is expected that graduate candidates who register for this online course have the following computer skills: sending/receiving emails, attaching documents to emails, creating tables, creating PowerPoint presentations, conducting an online search, and using library electronic reserves. Microsoft Word is the word processing program that is necessary to complete assignments. It is also necessary that students have access to a computer at home since much of the work for the course is done in the evenings and on weekends. It is also expected that graduate students who register for this course feel comfortable using a computer. The course moves quickly and all students need to hit the ground running. This is NOT a place to begin learning the technology skills.

STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor.

A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). This request must be made in the first fifteen days of the semester or the first seven days of a summer session in which the absence(s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified individual with disabilities shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic or Student Life program or activity. Students with disabilities may request help with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities from their instructors, school/department chair, or by contacting the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, or by calling (936) 294-1720.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities that may affect adversely their work in this class should register with the SHSU Counseling Center and talk with their University supervisor and classroom mentor teachers about how they can help. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until registration with the Counseling Center is complete.

Bibliography:

Fletcher, R. (1992). *What a writer needs*. NH: Heinemann.

Suggested Texts:

Allen, C. (2001). *The multigenre research paper: Voice, passion and discovery in grades 4-6*. NH: Heinemann.

Boomer, R. (1995). *Time for meaning: Crafting literature lives in middle & high school*. NH: Heinemann.

Culham, R. (2001). *6+1 traits of writing: The complete guide grades 3 and up*. NY: Scholastic Professional Books.

Elbow, P. *Writing with power: Techniques for mastering the writing process*. (1998). Oxford University Press.

Heard, G. (1998). *Awakening the heart: Exploring poetry in elementary and middle school*. NH: Heinemann.

Fletcher, R. (2006). *Boy writers: Reclaiming their voices*. Portland ME: Stenhouse Publishers

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- Lane, B. (1993). *After the end: Teaching and learning creative revision*. NH: Heinemann
- Lane, B. (1999). *Reviser's toolbox*. Shoreham, VT: Discover Writing Press
- Nagin, C. (2006). *Because writing matters: Improving student writing in our schools*.
National
Writing Project.
- Noden, H. (1999). *Image grammar: Using grammatical structures to teach writing*. NH:
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- Portalupi, J. & Fletcher, R. (2001). *Nonfiction craft lessons: Teaching information writing K-8*.
NY: Stenhouse Publishers.
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- Romano, T. (2000). *Blending genre, altering style: Writing multigenre papers*. NY:
Boynton/Cook.
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- Spandel, V. *Creating writers: Through 6-train writing assessment and instruction*. 3rd
ed.(2001).NY: Pearson
- Wooldridge, S. G. (1996). *Poemcrazy: Freeing your life with words*. NY: Three Rivers Press.