

E345: Language and Mathematics Literacy in the Early Grades
Block 1 – Option 1
Fall 2002

Instructor:
Office:
Phone:
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Office Hours:

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Required Text:

Fletcher, R. and J. Portalupi. (2001). Writing workshop: The essential guide.
Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Press.

Fosnot, C.T. and Dolk, M. (2001). Young mathematicians at work: Constructing
number sense, addition and subtraction. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Press.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2000). Principles and Standards for
School Mathematics. Reston, VA: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Wilson, L. (2002). Reading to live: How to teach reading for today's world.
Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Press.

*Additional resource materials pertaining to the teaching of mathematics will be placed
on reserve at the CRC. You will be expected to become familiar with all these resources
and to draw from them for both class and field requirements. Other required readings
will be made available as scanned documents through Oncourse (you will need Adobe
Acrobat Reader to access these).*

About Block 1:

This introduction to the profession of teaching should challenge students to re-examine their beliefs and assumptions about learning and teaching. Given exposure to constructivist learning activities and inquiry, the students can reflect on how learning occurs for them personally, as well as how children develop their concepts and beliefs. Discussion of difference, diversity, equity and fairness should enable students to develop an understanding of the complexity of supporting all learners. For many students, this may be a semester of disequilibrium and frustration as they move beyond their current beliefs and attempt to develop a viable professional stance toward learning and teaching.

About E345

Our main emphasis this semester will be to help you build a professional stance based on teaching for understanding (PTE3). Together we will make sense of how children

develop literacy in both language and mathematics. We will examine the shortcomings of teaching the skills without building student's understanding of the big ideas in the elementary school curriculum. Our work will be grounded in theoretical frameworks based on research on how students learn. Throughout the semester we will address the following questions:

- What is literacy in both language and mathematics?
- How does literacy develop in young children?
- What does it mean to understand?
- How do children come to understand?
- How do we build a classroom community that celebrates diversity supporting the learning of all children?

As a class we will study how to assess young children's understanding through effective questioning strategies (PTE 2). The focus of our studies will be on how best to teach in a way that will foster all students' emergent literacy and natural enthusiasm for learning. It is impossible to teach language and mathematics effectively without a good understanding of those disciplines, so throughout the semester you will examine your own understanding of language and mathematics concepts and strive to grow in any areas of weaknesses (PTE 1).

Through a combination of university-based classroom activities, field-based activities, and independent activities (reading, writing, reflecting) your professional development as a teacher will be enhanced.

Expectations

Assignments:

Details about each assignment will be posted on Oncourse. Assignments are organized under three main categories:

University-based:

- Weekly independent assignments: These will include readings, reflections, and writing to prompts. Readings should be completed before class in order to assure your participation in class discussions. Writing prompts may focus on mathematical content (PTE 1), reflections of your own learning (e.g. Living the Authoring Cycle) (PTE 1), or reflections on theoretical perspectives discussed in class (PTE 2).
- Emergent Literacy Articles – This assignment will introduce you to professional journals and broaden your conceptualization of how young children acquire language and mathematics literacy. (PTE 1, PTE 2, and PTE 3)
- Peer coaching/reflections (PTE 2)

Field-based:

- **Field Experience Portfolio:** Each student will prepare a collection of entries that will comprise this portfolio. Guidelines are described in the Field Experience Handbook. Entries will provide evidence of interns' growth in PTE 1, PTE 2, PTE 3, PTE 4, PTE5, PTE 6.

Professionalism: (PTE 6)

- **Attendance:** As a professional-in-training you should consider good attendance to be one of your highest priorities. You simply must be on time, in class, prepared, and engaged everyday. This is what your teaching profession demands and what is expected of you in a teacher education program. More than one absence per class will have a negative impact on your course grade. Each additional absence lowers your grade by one third (ex. A- would become a B+). If an absence is unavoidable, call/email your instructor prior to class. All missed field experience time must be made up.
- **Engagement:** Being an engaged student requires being attentive, curious, sensitive, concerned, and involved in all aspects of the learning process. You are expected to take initiative when out in the field and make the most of your time with the children and teachers. There should be little, if any, down time when you are in the field. We will be circulating and expect to see you engaged with children, teachers, or completing a field based activity at all times! Guidelines will be provided of how to make the most of your time in the field.
- **Professional Responsibility:** Since you will be working in Professional Development School (PDS) classrooms, you will be expected to understand and respect the nature of professional duties and responsibilities. You need to practice confidentiality, respect diversity, dress appropriately for teaching, and conduct yourself in a professional manner including all types of communication (with elementary students, mentors, staff, administrators, instructors, and peers). It is part of the professional lives of teachers to accept criticism from mentors, administrators, and instructors, and willingly work to overcome perceived weaknesses. Meeting deadlines is also a professional responsibility. You should begin the professional practice of completing your work according to deadlines. **No late work will be accepted.**
- **Sensitivity to Equity Issues: (PTE 5)** As a professional you will be working with children, parents, and colleagues that bring a variety of backgrounds, customs, attitudes and experiences to the learning situation. You need to develop skills that enable you to weave these differences into the fabric of learning.

Field Experiences: *[provide details of school, dates, etc.]*

GRADING

The following rubric will be used for all assignments:

A: Outstanding Exemplar

Outstanding performance:

- is complete, thoughtful, and reflective (PTE 2)
- demonstrates a commitment of the intern to learn from the process of doing the work (PTE 4).
- contains evidence that the intern has made sense of the readings done for class, i.e. the writing is situated within the literature (PTE 2). The student turns to the readings to support their discussion whenever appropriate.
- demonstrates students' ownership for their learning with research that goes beyond the materials provided in class (PTE 4).
- is professional (confidential and respectful of teachers and students in the field) (PTE 5)
- is coherent, and has been carefully reviewed for mechanical errors (PTE 1).
- field-based assignments reveal an understanding of and attentiveness to issues related to child-centered teaching practices (PTE 3).
- mathematical ideas are expressed correctly, and mathematical language is used with precision (PTE 1). The mathematics is addressed in depth and never avoided (PTE 1).
- shows evidence that the student worked at making sense of an idea that may have been elusive at the outset of the project (PTE 4).

B: Very Good Exemplar

Very good, solid, above average quality of work, however, one or more of the characteristics of "A" work is missing.

C: Minimally Acceptable Exemplar

Work is minimally acceptable. It may lack completeness, depth, or clarity. The writing processes, including mechanics and language usage; the structure of the assignment; the ideas involved in the assignment need further development. There is evidence that the student does not fully understand a mathematical concept, a language theory, or a learning theory addressed in the assignment. Field-based assignments reveal difficulty in understanding a child-centered practice.

C- to F: Unacceptable work, not meeting the requirements of the School of Education.

All of your work will be assessed according to these criteria and demonstrations of evidence that you are making progress in the Principles of Teacher Education. Your assignments will be graded with letter grades (and in some cases the instructors may use pluses and minuses at their discretion).