Course Number: ED & HUD 795-9, 710, (0228C)
Credits: Three (3) Graduate credits
Prerequisite: Graduate Standing (Must have earned a bachelor’s degree); participants must also be registered with CESA 7 at www.cesa7.k12.wi.us
Instructor: Linda Helf
Dates/Times: Tuesdays, September 26; October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; November 7; and December 5, 2006 (1:00-6:30 p.m.)
Location: Manitowoc School District Offices – Room 203

NOTE: Final course grade will be reported in January 2007

Course Description:
This three-credit course is designed for grades 3-5 classroom teachers. The course contains introductory information: research basis and definitions of comprehensive literacy, formal and informal assessment, essential components of a comprehensive literacy program in grades 3-5, and formats for working within those essential components. The comprehensive literacy model is organized around four strands: guided reading, self-selected reading, word work, and content area reading. The emphasis is on how to use research-based instructional practices to teach literacy. (Note: Comprehensive literacy is the new term for balanced literacy.)

Course Objectives:
- To raise the awareness about the instructional needs of children who are lower achieving readers and writers
- To learn the components and common vocabulary of comprehensive literacy
- To identify assessment tools that work with the various strategies and components of balanced literacy
- To use continuous and periodic literacy assessment methods to gather relevant data for evaluating their effectiveness in meeting the needs of all learners
- To use systematic observation techniques to monitor changes in children’s learning over time and to guide daily decision-making
- To identify strategies and practices within the comprehensive literacy model that will enhance the growth of the lower achieving readers and writers
- To implement balanced literacy practices into the classroom
- To collaborate with colleagues more effectively to refine teaching decisions
- To reflect critically on participant’s own learning and how that is influencing their teaching decisions
Readings:

Main source:


Related (Cited) Sources:

- *Guiding Readers and Writers, Grades 3-6, Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literature* by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, Heinemann, 2001.
- *35 Must-Have Assessment and Record-Keeping Forms for Reading (Grades 4-8)*, Scholastic, 2001.
- *Guided Reading The Four Blocks Way*, Patricia Cunningham, Dorothy Hall, and James Cunningham
Course Requirements:
1. Plan a schedule that would include all parts of the balanced literacy format.
2. Complete a “Literacy Profile” for one case-study child that includes explanation and reflection of strategies and techniques used with the child.
3. Design, implement, and reflect on new strategies tried in the various components of balanced literacy.
4. Participate in sharing discussions about use of strategies and techniques within the classroom and the school.
5. Read and respond to current literature related to balanced literacy as assigned.
6. Complete a reflection log during the course.

Evaluation and Assessment:
Course grades are based on the following criteria:

- Attendance and active participation at the scheduled classes
- Sharing in discussions about work taking place in the teacher’s classroom and school
- Completing a classroom schedule that accommodates balanced literacy (20 points)
- Completion of reading and responses to current literature related to balanced literacy as assigned, specifically relating to the vocabulary of balanced literacy and assessment
- Case Study of a student, including:
  - A collection of data showing formal and informal assessment of the child (10 points)
  - Reflection of that assessment data to determine strategies to use with the child (10 points)
  - Identification and description of strategies used in each component of comprehensive literacy to aid student growth (10 points)
- A lesson design for a new strategy or approach tried in each of the components of balanced literacy: guided reading, independent reading and word work and accompanying student work (10 points for each lesson = 40 total) with a reflection about the strategy usage (10 points for reflection)
- Completion of a reflection log throughout the course.

Wisconsin Teacher Standards Addressed in the Course:

- The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines she or he teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for pupils. (Standard 1)
- The teacher understands how children with broad ranges of ability learn and provides instruction that supports their intellectual, social, and personal development. (Standard 2)
- The teacher understands how pupils differ in their approaches to learning and the barriers that impede learning and can adapt instruction to meet the diverse needs of pupils, including those with disabilities and exceptionalities. (Standard 3)
- The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies, including the use of technology, to encourage children’s development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills. (Standard 4)
- The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation. (Standard 5)
- The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the pupil. (Standard 8)
- The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on pupils, parents, professionals in the learning community and others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally. (Standard 9)
Preliminary Outline for “Comprehensive Literacy in Grades 3-5”

Session 1:
- Research basis and definitions for balanced literacy
- Foundation of comprehensive literacy in grades K-2
- Research about comprehensive literacy
- Balanced literacy and the WKCE-CRT framework
- Identification of the components of the organizational structure of a balanced literacy program
- Intricacies of scheduling each block into a classroom teacher’s day
- The optimal learning model

Session 2 and 3: Self-Selected Reading
- The use of the readers’ workshop format for self-selected reading
- Fluency
- Read alouds
- Connecting students to books
- Conferencing with students
- Journals or response logs
- Sharing time
- Book clubs, discussion cards

Session 4: Guided Reading
- The use of the workshop format in guided reading (mini-lesson, practice, closure)
- Gradual releasing responsibility to students in strategy instruction
- Flexible grouping strategies
- Literature circles and book groups for practice
- Comprehension skills and strategies
- Before, during, and after reading activities
- Retelling as a developmental process
- Correlation with materials that are already in the teacher’s classroom

Session 5: Content Reading (textbooks, expository text)
- Before, during, and after reading strategies for content area reading and nonfiction
- Vocabulary as a connection to text
- Text structure and format as techniques that lead to success in reading
- Use of writing with content area reading

Sessions 6 and 7: Word Work/Writing
- Creating a connection between phonics and word work
- Motivating students to have a spelling conscience
- High-frequency words (word wall)
- Words that follow a pattern
- Common spelling patterns
- Multi-syllabic words
- Word strategies connected to writing
- Components of writer’s workshop
- Writing conferences

Follow-Up Session: Implementation and Reflection
- Use of assessment tools
- Planning to include flexible grouping, materials, and assessment
- Sharing of lessons and results

Last updated 5/9/2006--CL