EDU 353: Reading and Writing in the Content Area  
Fall 2010  
Monday 4:30 – 7:15  
Instructor: Karin Howe

Home:  
475 N Wade Road  
Wade, ME 04786  
455-7010

Work:  
Teague Park School  
59 Glenn St.  
Caribou, Maine  
493-4248  
karin.howe@maine.edu

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will explore how literacy –broadly defined as reading, writing, speaking, and listening—can be a tool for thinking and learning across the disciplines. The course is based on the belief that teachers of different content areas and grade levels can learn a great deal from each other about these interrelated processes. Another key component is that teachers who experience as learners some of the strategies they hope to share with students will understand those strategies more thoroughly and use them more efficiently than teachers who merely read and discuss them. The course will be run as a workshop/seminar so participants will serve as resources for, collaborators with, and teachers of each other.

I am suggesting that teachers of every discipline might ask students to think and write as scientists, historians, mathematicians, literary critics do—to use writing-as-process to discover meaning, just as scholars do when they go about the real messy business of thinking on paper.

REQUIRED READING:


Dornan, Reade; Rosen, Lois; Wilson, Marilyn; Multiple Voices, Multiple Texts, Boynton/Cook, 1997.

Tovani, Kris, Do I Really Have to Teach Reading?, Stenhouse, 2004.


Other selected readings provided by the instructor.
COURSE COMPONENTS

1. **Student Booklet**  
   20 points
   - You will be creating a booklet about yourself. You will be peer conferencing in small groups to assist in your revisions and editing of your piece. Your booklet will be shared in small groups on the evening it is due.
   - You will need to design a cover that reflects you. Consider a collage of magazine pictures, a poem, an illustration, graphic art, or photographs. Anything goes!
   - Your booklet needs to include a complete reading history as explained below and any THREE of the remaining components.

**READING HISTORY: REQUIRED COMPONENT**

- Write a complete reading history, including how you remember learning to read, some favorite books, when and where you like to read, how you became a reader, and what type of exposure you have had to reading. Include positive and/or negative experiences. The events may or may not be school related.

Choose any THREE of the following essay topics to include in your booklet.

- How do you view the subject of ______ (math, science, social studies, English)? Has this subject traditionally been easy or difficult for you? Are you interested in learning a specific area of the subject? What experiences have you had that influenced your attitude toward this subject?
- Write a short autobiography, including interesting experiences, anecdotes, and recollections from you past, or write a chronological outline of your life so far. Have someone include a paragraph about what kind of kid you were, if you like.
- Write about your future, your short-term and long-term plans for a job or career, your leisure time activities, and your hobbies.
- Create a list along with an explanation of twenty-five things you don’t think you could live without. Be specific and add details by way of explanation.
- Describe in detail your family members and/or best friends, including specifically what you like about each of them. Include pictures if you wish. Give examples of each person’s behavior and characteristics.
- Write about a person or people who have shaped your life so far. These might be personal friends, mentors, family members, or famous people who have influenced you from afar.
- Write a personal essay about an experience you’ve had that is especially funny, unique, sad, embarrassing, or memorable.
- Write about a pet peeve you have or a philosophy you have developed about life.

**CONCLUSION:**

Your booklet needs to conclude with a reflective conclusion. The conclusion should be a thoughtful discussion about the implications of past experiences for future practice. You may consider the following questions when writing your conclusion:
• What have you learned about yourself that will impact your future teaching?
  Be specific about what might or might not work in your classroom based
  upon you past experiences.
• What does it imply about learning and teaching literacy?
• What makes teaching effective, reading and writing powerful and learning
  memorable?

DRAFT OF READING HISTORY: SEPTEMBER 13
DRAFT OF ENTIRE BOOKLET: SEPTEMBER 20
FINAL COPY/SHARING DUE DATE: SEPTEMBER 27

CF: 1,4
MTS: 1,3

2. **Nonfiction Text Set**  **20 points**

To assist in supplementing textbooks used in the classroom, you will prepare an
annotated text set of nonfiction books. The text set will include at least 5 high-quality
texts on a topic of your choice. Prepare an annotated bibliography of these books for
distribution in our class.

The handout should include the following information:

- **An introduction to the text set** - The topic, and the grade level for its intended
  use, and how it fits into the curriculum.

- **A reflection on your learning.**
  - First, why did you choose to explore the topic you chose?
  - Second, describe what you found out. For example, if you collected a text
    set on cowboys to supplement a social studies unit on the Westward
    Movement, explain what was most interesting, puzzling, shocking, or
    enlightening? In short, what did you learn that you didn’t know before
    you read the text set?

  Limit this reflection to a single page.

- **Requirements for each title in the text set:**
  - 5 high quality nonfiction texts concentrating on a central theme
  - bibliographical information included for each text
  - enrichment/follow-up activities are given for each book
  - access features are noted for each text
  - summary of each text
  - reading levels are indicated
  - Maine Learning Results or Canadian Standards are noted
  - information is presented in an easy to read format
  - contains variety of reading levels within the text set

- **We will share these text sets, books included, in small groups.**

DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 8

CF: 2,3
MTS: 1,5
3. **Lesson Plans using Text Set**  15 points
   Using the texts from your nonfiction text set, you will design 3 lesson plans. The plans will include an instructional activity/lesson intended to promote students’ understanding **before, during,** and **after** reading. The lesson plans should be appropriate to the level you intend to be teaching. Organizers and handouts will need to be included with the lesson plans.
   **DUE DATE: DECEMBER 6**
   CF: 1,2
   MTS: 2,3,4

4. **Class Attendance**  10 points
   Since we meet once a week, attendance is crucial for your learning. Points will be deducted for classes missed. Missing more than 3 classes will result in having to take an incomplete or failing the class. The instructor will make this decision.
   CF: 4
   MTS: 9

5. **Reading Responses**  10 points
   We will experiment with a variety of response techniques to accompany our readings including one-page responses, dialogue journals, reading logs, literature circle roles, double-and triple-entry journals, etc. An explanation of each type of response will be provided in advance. All reading responses will need to be typed unless otherwise noted.

   Also, part of the reading responses is our reading and discussion of Sharon Creech’s *Walk Two Moons*. You will be required to record “talking points” while reading the text. Talking points are simply jotting down (they do not have to be typed) questions, reactions, criticisms, predictions, etc, that you record before, during, and after reading. People find that Post-it notes are a useful way to capture “in the moment” reactions to what you’re reading, and by placing the Post-its directly on the page, it’s easier to find the passage you plan to discuss. We will also experiment with Harvey Daniel’s literature circles. As part of literature circles, you will complete role sheets to assist in a group discussion of the text.
   CF: 1,4
   MTS: 1

6. **Blackboard Discussions**  15 points
   As part of our class, you will be reading various articles, chapters, journals, etc. and responding to them with a **one-page response** on Blackboard. In addition to your response, you will need to read and reply to at least two other responses posted by fellow classmates. You are required to have your response posted by Friday of the week we have class. Your reply to your classmate’s responses will need to be completed by midnight the day before class.
   CF: 3,4
   MTS: 5
7. **Final Exam 10 points**

The final examination will consist of 6 questions of which you will choose 4 to answer. Each question will be answered in a narrative format. Your responses to the questions will be a reflective essay about your learning throughout the class.

CF: 1,4  
MTS: 1,5,8

**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Assignments will be evaluated using points. If you do not earn at least half of the points for the assignment, I will ask you to reconsider it and average the points for your first and second drafts. “B” work will address the assignment requirements in a satisfactory way and demonstrate a solid understanding of course concepts, while “A” work will be characterized by further attention to detail, thoroughness, nuance, and insight. Rewrites will not be accepted unless I specifically ask for them, although I will be happy to confer with you or examine drafts before assignments are due. Late work will be evaluated according to the following schema:

- **ONE WEEK LATE**: minus 5 points from the total point value for the assignment
- **TWO WEEKS LATE**: minus 10 points from the total point value for the assignment
- **MORE THAN TWO WEEKS LATE**: minus 15 points from the total point value for the assignment

**GRADING SCALE**

Accumulated points from assignments

- A = 100 - 90 points
- B = 89 - 80 points
- C = 79 - 70 points
- D = 69 - 60 points
- F = 59 - below

**Disability Services**: Students with disabilities needing accommodations or assistance with coursework or testing should contact Mary Kate Barbosa, Director of Student Support Services, at 768-9613. Please note that disabled students must present current and complete documentation to receive accommodations.

**Tutoring**: Student Support Services offers tutoring to all students via experienced professional and peer tutors. If you are interested in receiving tutoring, please contact Helen Findlen, Tutor Coordinator, at 768-9614.

**Writing Center**: Located on the first floor of South Hall, the writing center offers one-on-one consultations for writers at all levels of course work, at all stages of the writing process. Call 768-9615 or stop by to set up an appointment. For more information you can also check out our web page:  
http://www.umpi.edu/programs/cas/english/writing-center