Professional Development Institute

Flex Course Syllabus

Powerful Interventions to Guide Struggling Readers (K-3)

PDI Course Number: 122T02

UCSD Course Number: EDUC40389

If you would like information about receiving post-baccalaureate (graduate) credit for completing this course, please click here.

Course Timeline

Participants have one year to complete the course. Participants must spend a minimum of three weeks in this course.

Course Description

Are you wondering what the phrase the "Big Five" means and how it relates to your students' literacy development? Perhaps you've heard the term before but are unaware of all that it entails? This online course is designed to take K-3 teachers through an intensive step-by-step approach to reading interventions as they pertain to the five areas of literacy. This course begins by discussing why students may struggle with reading and then goes right into the basics of intervention as well as tiers of intervention. Next, teachers are introduced to the role that phonemic awareness plays as a foundation for students' later literacy skills. As teachers progress through the course, they will take a deep dive into each of the five areas of literacy and will learn specific intervention strategies for addressing student deficits in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Teachers will learn how to effectively implement each of the discussed strategies within their own literacy programs, and they will learn how to successfully implement and use assessment to diagnose students' reading deficits, as well as how to set data-driven goals for student success. By the end of this course, teachers will feel more confident and successful in their quest to implement research-based reading interventions into their own teaching practices.

Educational Outcomes

1. Teachers will learn about the five key areas of effective reading instruction including what is known as the "Big Five" (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension).
2. Teachers will learn that in addition to the underdevelopment of the "Big Five," other important factors affect students' language acquisition, such as time, academic language, and purposeful talk.
3. Teachers will learn what an intervention is and how it relates to the three tiers which comprise the Response to Intervention (RtI) framework.
4. Teachers will understand why interventions work, and they will be introduced to the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model of lesson planning.
5. Teachers will learn about the seven stages of phonemic awareness.
6. Teachers will be introduced to three different assessment methods for addressing phonemic awareness deficits.
7. Teachers will learn how to use specific assessment tools to benchmark and progress monitor students as it relates to phonemic awareness.
8. Teachers will learn how to create data-driven goals as it relates to phonemic awareness challenges.
9. Teachers will learn specific strategies for addressing student needs in each of the seven areas of phonemic awareness development.
10. Teachers will learn several intensive strategies for Tier 3 students as they relate to phonemic awareness deficits.
11. Teachers will understand the role that sound-symbol relationships play in terms of phonics instruction.
12. Teachers will learn about some of the common problems associated with phonics.
13. Teachers will be introduced to three different assessment methods for addressing phonics deficits.
14. Teachers will learn how to use specific assessment tools to benchmark and progress monitor students as it relates to phonics.
15. Teachers will learn how to create data-driven goals as it relates to phonics challenges.
16. Teachers will learn specific intervention strategies for addressing student needs in the areas of decoding and encoding.
17. Teachers will learn about the three tiers of words as they relate to vocabulary.
18. Teachers will learn how vocabulary impacts comprehension and will be introduced to some of the common problems associated with the learning of vocabulary.
19. Teachers will learn the difference between sight words and high frequency words.
20. Teachers will be introduced to three different assessment methods for addressing vocabulary deficits.
21. Teachers will learn how to use specific assessment tools to benchmark and progress monitor students as it relates to vocabulary.
22. Teachers will learn how to create data-driven goals as it relates to vocabulary challenges.
23. Teachers will learn specific intervention strategies for addressing vocabulary in each of the three tiers.
24. Teachers will understand what fluency is and why it is important to the reading process.

25. Teachers will understand the connection between reading and writing and why written fluency matters to literacy.
26. Teachers will be introduced to three different assessment methods for addressing fluency deficits.
27. Teachers will learn how to use specific assessment tools to benchmark and progress monitor students as it relates to fluency.
28. Teachers will learn how to create data-driven goals as it relates to fluency challenges.
29. Teachers will learn specific intervention strategies for addressing fluency in each of the six dimensions of fluency (pausing, phrasing, stress, intonation, rate, and integration).
30. Teachers will learn the difference between literal, inferential, and applied comprehension.
31. Teachers will be introduced to different assessment methods for addressing comprehension deficits.
32. Teachers will learn how to use specific assessment tools to benchmark and progress monitor students as it relates to comprehension.
33. Teachers will learn how to take and score a running record as a means of assessment, as well as how to use the retell portion as an effective assessment tool for comprehension.
34. Teachers will learn how to create data-driven goals as it relates to comprehension challenges.
35. Teachers will learn specific intervention strategies for addressing comprehension challenges in each of the three levels (literal, inferential, and applied).

Instructional Media

- Online Discussions
- Online Engagement
- Online Collaboration
- Instructor Feedback
- Instructor Interaction
- Online Resources and Websites
- Supplemental Instructional Materials
- Printable Classroom Resources

Evaluation

- Test #1 (5% of final grade)
- Test #2 (5% of final grade)
- Test #3 (5% of final grade)
- Test #4 (5% of final grade)
- Test #5 (5% of final grade)
- Autobiography and Goals for the Course (10% of final grade)
- Article/Video Reflection (15% of final grade)
- Course Collaboration/Share Ideas with the Class (10% of final grade)
- Cumulative Assignment/Project: Design Three Lesson Plans (20% of final grade)
- Culminating Practicum (20% of final grade)

Topical Outline

Unit One

- Why Students Struggle
- Tiers of Intervention
- Why Interventions Work
- **Assignment #1**
  Write an autobiography including information about yourself, your grade level and what you specifically hope to learn about how to make your own teaching practices more effective so that you can reach your struggling readers. Your autobiography should be a minimum of three paragraphs.
- **Test #1**

Unit Two

- Stages of Phonemic Awareness
- Using Assessment as a Diagnostic Tool for Phonemic Awareness
- Interventions for Common Phonemic Awareness Challenges
- **Assignment #2**
  As an educator, it is important to be aware of the research, studies, and professional work done in the field. In the course, you will find an article and video that are relevant to the specific course content. Read the article and then write an essay with your thoughts.
- **Test #2**

Unit Three

- Understanding Sound-Symbol Relationships
- Using Assessment as a Diagnostic Tool for Phonics
- Interventions for Common Phonics Challenges
- **Assignment #3**
  Online Discussion Board Participation/Engagement: Please post a tip, strategy, or idea that specifically relates to effectively helping struggling readers within the K-3 classroom. The tip, strategy, or idea that you share needs to make a difference to other teachers in their own classrooms. Your assignment should be a minimum of three paragraphs and detailed enough for another teacher to follow easily. This is a great opportunity to share and collaborate with other teachers at your grade level around the country. Take time to review and respond to other postings that are relevant to your classroom population in order to gain effective ideas to use immediately in your classroom
- **Test #3**

Unit Four

- Three Tiers of Words
- Using Assessment as a Diagnostic Tool for Vocabulary
- Interventions for Common Vocabulary Challenges
- **Test #4**

Unit Five

- The Importance of Fluency in Literacy
- Using Assessment as a Diagnostic Tool for Fluency
- Interventions for Common Fluency Challenges
- **Test #5**

Unit Six

- Levels of Comprehension
- Using Assessment as a Diagnostic Tool for Comprehension
- Interventions for Common Comprehension Challenges
- **Assignment #4**
- *Create a lesson plan for three different areas of the "Big Five" that can be specifically used as an intervention for a struggling reader. Each lesson plan should provide enough detail so that another teacher can easily use it. For each lesson, be sure to also include a plan for assessment (e.g., rubric, explanation of how the activity will be assessed, either through formal or informal assessment, etc.). The lessons should be applicable to the K-3 level.*
- **Assignment #5**
  The culminating practicum is a three-step process. (1) In the first assignment, you were asked what goals you had and what you hoped to learn from the course. Think back to your original goals for this course. Write a minimum two-paragraph reflection specifically describing how what you learned can be used to help you reach those goal(s). (2) Next, write a minimum three-paragraph plan that specifically describes the ways in which you intend to implement a particular strategy you learned in this course into your own teaching situation. (3) Last, write a minimum two-paragraph reflection describing a student you have or have had in the past. Then, discuss how the strategies you learned in this course will specifically benefit that student as you put your plan into action.

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