



Professional Development Institute

Flex Course Syllabus

Comprehension: The Key to Successful Reading (K-3)

PDI Course Number: 70T02

UCSD Course Number: EDUC41474

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

Do you have students in K-3 who read all the words correctly and then have no idea what they just read? This online course focuses on improving students' comprehension skills. The course begins by offering four different options for assessing comprehension, including retelling, cloze procedure, maze procedure, and miscue analysis. Then, teachers are introduced to a wealth of strategies that can improve and support a reader's comprehension. Strategies presented include strengthening pre-reading background knowledge, using anticipation guides to understand students' current level of understanding of a topic, DRTA to help guide students through an entire reading, and helping students understand question levels. Students will also be taught about text structure to help them better approach and comprehend the type of text they are engaged with. Additionally guided reading and reciprocal teaching techniques will be explored. Teachers will also learn how to effectively formulate comprehension questions across a variety of different levels. Finally, teachers will understand how vocabulary affects comprehension. Of course, suggestions for using literature to engage and inspire young readers will be shared. By the end of the course, teachers will have gained many strategies to support student comprehension.

Educational Outcomes

1. Teachers will learn how to assess students' comprehension skills using three different techniques.
2. Teachers will be introduced to the Common Core Standards for Reading.
3. Teachers will learn the different levels of comprehension.
4. Teachers will learn effective pre-reading strategies that help set a purpose for reading.
5. Teachers will learn how to use DRTA.
6. Teachers will learn how to ask questions at various levels of comprehension.
7. Teachers will learn how to develop and teach a guided reading lesson.
8. Teachers will learn how to use reciprocal teaching methods.
9. Teacher will learn how vocabulary affects student comprehension.
10. Teachers will learn how to use the cloze procedure and maze technique.
11. Teachers will learn about text structure and patterns of organization.
12. Teachers will learn how to help students comprehend nonfiction text.
13. Teachers will learn how to help students monitor their own comprehension.
14. Teachers will learn what reciprocal teaching is.
15. Teachers will learn how to use the into-through-beyond approach.
16. Teachers will learn how to implement a guided reading program.
17. Teachers will learn how to use quality literature to inspire readers.

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: Write Two DRTA Lessons (20% of final grade)
- Culminating Practicum (20% of final grade)

Topical Outline

Unit One

- Focus on Comprehension: Putting Research into Action
- Levels of Comprehension
- Introduction to the Common Core Reading Standards
- **Assignment #1**
Write an autobiography including information about yourself, your grade level and what you specifically hope to learn about improving student comprehension. Your autobiography should be a minimum of three paragraphs.
- **Test #1**

Unit Two

- Assessment Through Retelling
- Cloze Procedure and Maze Technique
- Miscue Analysis
- **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/or video that are relevant to the specific course content. Read the article and then write an essay with your thoughts.
- **Test #2**

Unit Three

- Pre-Reading Strategies
- Directed Reading Thinking Activity
- Questioning Levels and Techniques
- **Assignment #3**
Online Discussion Board Participation/Engagement: Please post a tip, strategy, or idea that specifically relates to improving student comprehension and will 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 easily follow. 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

- Anticipation Guides
- Text Structure
- How Vocabulary Affects Comprehension

- **Test #4**

Unit Five

- Early Readers
- Struggling Readers
- Guided Reading
- **Test #5**

Unit Six

- Focus on Nonfiction Literature
- Reciprocal Teaching
- Using Literature to Engage and Inspire Young Readers
- **Assignment #4**

Plan two different lessons using the DRTA strategy, one using a fiction text/chapter and one using a nonfiction content-area text/chapter. For each of the two lessons, include at least five pre-reading questions that are geared toward making predictions based upon clues before the reading takes place. Be sure to also include at least ten questions that you plan to ask throughout the chapter or book. These questions should use what was learned from the text to make and/or modify further predictions and comprehension.

After the reading is finished, include at least three final questions about the story that are geared to get students to metacognitively think about the story, including how their predictions changed throughout the story and why. Strive to use higher-level thinking questions. For each lesson, post the title of each book/chapter you will be using, as well as the author's name. Include a brief synopsis of the plot of the fiction story or what the nonfiction text is about. The text needs to be appropriate to the K-3 grade level. Follow the example given in Assignment 4. Keep in mind that this assignment is a cumulative project and therefore, you are expected to demonstrate the knowledge you gained from the course and your ability to apply what you have learned in a practical setting.

- **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.

Bibliography

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