

**TLL 1209/2209**  
**Reading/Writing Methods 1: Grades 2-4**  
**Spring 2025**

Course instructor: **Katrina Bartow Jacobs, Ph.D.**  
Class: **Mondays & Wednesdays 4:30 – 5:45, Posvar 5401**  
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Office hours: by appointment

**School of Education Mission/Vision Statement**

We ignite learning. We strive for well-being for all. We teach. We commit to student, family, and community success. We commit to educational equity. We advocate. We work for justice. We cultivate relationships. We forge engaged partnerships. We collaborate. We learn with and from communities. We innovate and agitate. We pursue and produce knowledge. We research. We disrupt and transform inequitable educational structures. We approach learning as intertwined with health, wellness, and human development. We address how national, global, social, and technological change impacts learning. We shape practice and policy. We teach with and for dignity. We think. We dream. We lead with integrity. We are the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Course Description**

This course is intended for teacher candidates who are pursuing prek-4 certification. It is the second in a two-course sequence and builds on concepts introduced in reading/writing methods 1. It is also part of set of courses that focus on literacy development and instruction. Other courses in the set include language and literature for the young child, and literacy assessment and instruction for children with disabilities in inclusive settings. Teacher candidates in reading/writing methods 2 will have opportunities to build their knowledge about specific aspects of literacy, including: (a) word study--decoding, spelling, and vocabulary, (b) comprehension, and (d) composition, including handwriting. In addition, candidates will learn about specific instructional approaches and resources for supporting students in developing those aspects of literacy in grades 2-4.

**Course Goals:**

- To begin building an understanding of literacy, how diverse communities take up literacy practices, the many ways children develop as readers and writers and how to support that development along with honoring the ways that families and communities contribute to literacy development (CRSE 3.A, 6.B,8.D)
- To begin learning equitable and multi-tiered ways to assess students' understanding and use of literacy as a way to support literacy learning/teaching (CRSE 4.A)
- To begin learning about culturally relevant and sustaining instructional strategies for early literacy learning (decoding, phonics, spelling, vocabulary, comprehension of text ideas during read alouds and independent reading, and writing)
- (CRSE 4.B, 4.D)

- To study and utilize the PA Common Core standards to understand academic expectations per grade level for ALL learners and develop lessons that meet the standards while engaging all learners in authentic literacy experiences that honor and expand on their funds of knowledge (CRSE 3.A, 3C, 3.F)
- Critically evaluate literacy resources and utilize carefully curated and varied resources to teach literacy that are culturally appropriate and consider student and community backgrounds and funds of knowledge (CRSE 1.D, 2.B, 2.D, 3B, 4D)

### **Required Course Texts:**

Beck, I. & Beck, M. E. (2013). *Making sense of phonics The Hows and the Whys*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2013). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press.

### **Selected chapters provided on Canvas/Perusal from:**

Muhammad, G. (2020). *Cultivating genius: An equity framework for culturally and historically responsive literacy*. New York, NY: Scholastic

Muhammad, G. (2023). *Unearthing joy: A guide to culturally and historically responsive curriculum and instruction*. New York, NY: Scholastic

Tompkins, G. E. (2020). *Literacy in the early grades: A successful start for PreK-4 readers and writers*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Boston, MA: Pearson.

**Additional articles will be provided electronically on Canvas/Perusal**

### **Pennsylvania Department of Education Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Education Program Framework Guidelines:**

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Teachers-Administrators/Certification%20Preparation%20Programs/Framework%20Guidelines%20and%20Rubrics/Culturally-Relevant%20and%20Sustaining%20Education%20Program%20Framework%20Guidelines.pdf>

### **Pennsylvania Department of Education Structured Literacy Competencies:**

<https://www.stateboard.education.pa.gov/Documents/Structured%20Literacy%20Competencies%20Program%20Framework%20Guidelines.pdf>

### **The PA Common Core Standards are available at:**

<http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/PA%20Core%20Standards%20ELA%20PreK-5%20March%202014.pdf>

### **Instructor Bio**

I love teaching this course and work closely with Dr. Sobolak to ensure that the two semesters of literacy methods coursework tie in together. Prior to working at Pitt in teacher education, I was a teacher in public and private settings. I taught kindergarten, first grade, and fourth grade general education. I then went to Penn to get my degree as a reading specialist, followed by completed my PhD there in Reading/Writing/Literacy. While I am proud of my work as a researcher and academic, I identify first as a teacher. That means I also know that I have a lot to learn at every stage of my career. As a white, cisgendered Jewish woman, I bring a wealth of identities, personal and professional experiences into the classroom. But I need to acknowledge and address the biases, blank spots, and personal preferences that I also bring – as a teacher of college students as well as a former teacher of young children. My goal is that we can create a community of learners with diverse perspectives and experiences who are all committed to equitable and exceptional literacy learning for all children.

### **Course Requirements**

This course is an opportunity for you to become part of a community of learners who are committed to learning through reading, writing, discussing, and collaborating. To be a part of that community, you are expected to attend every class meeting and participate thoughtfully in all activities. At the end of this course, I hope that we accomplish the course goals stated above, become a community of learners committed to seeing literacy as an issue of social justice and that you feel better prepared to work collectively with your students to build their literacy skills in ways that honor the assets they bring to the classroom and that invites families and communities as true partners.

### **University of Pittsburgh Teacher Education Attendance Policy**

The teacher education faculty at the University of Pittsburgh view our courses as communities of practice. This means that we gather for collective critical inquiry and reflection that is focused on building shared knowledge over time. To be an active member of our community of practice, it is important to attend face to face courses prepared to engage with the course instructor, course colleagues, and course materials. While we believe course attendance adds value to the community of practice, we also know there may be times when students must miss class to attend to other needs. In these cases, you are afforded up to one absence per course hour. This means that if your course meets three times per week for 50 minutes each session, you are permitted three absences. **If your course meets two times per week for an hour and fifteen minutes each session, you are permitted two absences.** If your class meets once per week for two hours and thirty minutes, you are permitted one absence. Absences should be reserved for illness or unavoidable personal conflicts. Please see individual course syllabi, course instructors, and your program coordinator for additional information regarding attendance or absences that extend beyond this policy.

Final grades **will be** lowered because of absences and lack of participation and collaboration. Each absence beyond two will result in a 10-point loss to the final grade. Arriving to class late and leaving early will count as absences.

Academic honesty and integrity are expected of all students. Any work that you or your team submits must be your own work. Any ideas, information, approaches, or formats that you use based on the work of others must be acknowledged by citing the appropriate sources in APA (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) style.

Course assignments are due on the date indicated. It is the expectation that all assignments will be submitted on time regardless of class attendance. Late assignments will result in a 10% loss of points for each day late (weekends included). Late assignments will not be accepted after three days past the due date and the assignment will be scored zero. However, it is still required that all assignments are completed to pass the class. This assignment policy is strict, but it is because I believe the assignments you will create put what we are learning, talking about and studying into action. The assignments are

meant to be practical and applicable. If you are experiencing an extenuating circumstance, please reach out prior to the due date to discuss a possible extension. **If you ask for an extension at least 48 ahead, I will almost always grant it. Please note that extensions for readings will NOT be granted at any time.** This is good practice for your professional teaching career.

**Redo Policy:** Up to twice this semester, if you receive less than an 80% on an assignment you will have the opportunity to revise the assignment and receive up to an 80% for the final grade. You must email the instructor to set up a deadline for the redone assignment.

Please be respectful of the course instructor and classmates during class by refraining from using electronic devices. Please either turn your cell phone off or to silent mode. If you need to take a call or communicate via your cell phone, please step outside of class. **Text messaging and use of social networking during class is not permitted and students not following this directive will be asked to leave class.**

### **Academic Integrity**

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

### **Disability Services**

It is the intention of this course to support all learners in accessible ways. If you are experiencing or anticipate any challenges accessing course content, assignments or experiences please set up a time to meet with me outside of class. In addition, I strongly encourage each you to consider carefully read and consider the University of Pittsburgh disability services statement below.

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both the instructor and Disability Resources and Services no later than the second week of the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify Disability Resources and Services, call (412) 648-7890 (Voice or TTD) to schedule an appointment. The Disability Resources and Services office is located in 140 William Pitt Union on the Oakland campus.

### **Food/Housing Insecurity**

Many students, both undergraduate and graduate, experience housing and/or food insecurity that can impact their academic work and general health. Please know there are resources available to you that are confidential. Of course, you are welcome to speak with me if you need support in contacting the right people/offices:

**Pitt Pantry** (Food Pantry available to the wider University community)

<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/search/food%20pantry>

**Off-Campus Housing Office:** <http://www.ocl.pitt.edu/>

### **Civility Commitment**

As future teachers, we will operate from a standpoint that everyone believes that all students deserve a quality education in a safe setting. The same can be said for university learning. A university classroom is, by definition, a space where free exchange of ideas must happen, but where consideration for others,

their views and their life experiences is also paramount. When you are uncomfortable with an idea, it is your right to speak up about that. As we learn with and about people with very different life experiences and beliefs from our own, it is imperative that we respect these perspectives and use respectful language in discussing and challenging ideas. Carefully consider your language choices to ensure that all learners feel safe and valued. If at any time, you are uncomfortable please feel free to speak out and/or speak to me privately.

All members of this course have the right to be addressed in accordance with their personal identity. If you identify differently than what the University roster provides, let me know so that I can address you appropriately. Addressing all members appropriately is important, so please correct me if I make a mistake. If at any time, you are uncomfortable please feel free to speak out and/or speak to me privately.

In this course we will speak about dialect and language diversity. In accordance with the course expectations for respect for your students who speak languages other than or in addition to English and/or who use dialects outside of dominant American English (as we all do at times), we also will show respect for the language diversity of each other. Diverse languages and dialects are welcome in this classroom. As we communicate with one another, keep in mind that the reader/listener should work as hard as the writer/speaker in the communication process. This means that we will listen patiently, work to understand one another, seek out clarification when necessary and avoid finishing each other's sentences or correcting grammatical errors unless invited to do so.

#### **Statement on Classroom Recording**

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

**DIL Departmental Grievance Procedures:** The purpose of grievance procedures is to ensure the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students in their relationships with each other. When a student in DIL believes that a faculty member has not met his or her obligations (as an instructor or in another capacity) as described in the Academic Integrity Guidelines, the student should follow this procedure:

1. The student should talk directly to the faculty member to attempt to resolve the matter.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the student should talk to the relevant program coordinator.
3. If the matter remains unresolved, the student should talk to the associate chair of TLL.
4. If needed, the student should next talk to the SOE associate dean of students.
5. If the matter still remains unresolved, the student should file a written statement of charges with the dean's designated Academic Integrity Administrative.

Pennsylvania requires students to take the PECT (Pennsylvania Educator Certification Tests) to become certified. There are three modules to this test. Module 2 deals with language and literacy and social studies. **The reading faculty strongly suggest that you plan to take PECT module 2 immediately after the completion of two reading methods courses. At this time, you will have had both literacy courses and the social studies course, which are needed for module 2.**

Additional information about the PECT test can be found at: [www.pa.nesinc.com/](http://www.pa.nesinc.com/)

I strongly suggest you familiarize yourself with the modules, objectives and practice test. The PECT tests are comprehensive exams that will ask that you draw upon content knowledge, pedagogy and age-appropriate teaching practices and content. Therefore, it is important to be aware of these tests early and prepare throughout your coursework.

### Major Course Assignments/Assessments

Assignment/Assessment	Competencies addressed
<b>Differentiation Assignment 5 pts.</b> Teacher candidates will modify a literacy activity to differentiate for various learning needs and in consideration of student identities. Each lesson objective and the content will be required to reflect: the PA ELA Common Core Standards, PDE Structured Literacy Framework and also the PDE Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Framework.	I.A.1 b-e, h; I.B.1; I.B.2 a-c; I.B.4 a-h; I.B.5 a-h; V.B.; V.I.; V.P.; V.T.
<b>Parent Concern: Online Simulation 10 pts</b> Teacher Candidates will engage in an online simulation that replicates a parent meeting where a teacher discusses curriculum and differentiation.	IV.A.4; IV.B.1; IV.C1-3
<b>Vocabulary 5-day cycle 50 pts</b> Teacher candidates will design a 5-day instructional plan for vocabulary using Tier 2 words from a high-quality text appropriate for 2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> grade students. You should plan to use the same novel for your Integrated Novel Unit.	II.A.3.c; II.B.6; II.B.3.a
<b>Novel Selection 5 pts</b> Complete the novel selection assignment on Canvas.	
<b>Novel Study Unit Plan Draft of Part 1 10 points</b> You will turn in a complete draft of the cover page and the first section of the novel study unit planning template	
<b>Novel Study Unit Plan 100 pts</b> You will create an overview of a class unit based around a specific novel. You will outline the major intellectual work of the unit, which will include assignments previously done for this class.	II.B.5.c i-xiii; IV.B; II.B.3 a-m; II.B.4 a-b
<b>Non-Fiction Text Discussion Plan 20 pts</b> Students will create an instructional discussion guide to support students in engaging with a non-fiction article.	
<b>Syllasearch/Word Study 50 pts</b> In groups, you will use your novel to create a Syllasearch lesson to help students deal with multisyllabic words. Also, you will utilize the Bear et al. text to write a lesson plan for a word study/sort activity using words/concepts from your novel.	II.B.2.c; II.B.4.c, II.B.3.i
<b>Text Discussion/Connected Writing Lesson Plan 20 pts</b> In groups, students will segment a quality piece of literature and insert questioning to support student comprehension of important themes/topics. In addition, each group will	II.B.4.d; II.A.9;

develop a connected writing assignment that directly relates to the literature and challenges students to think deeply.	
<b>Digital Tool Sharing 5 pts</b> Each student will post a quality, instructional digital tool to the class resource list. You may choose an app, instructional tool, or website. The digital tool should be useful in a grade 2-4 language arts classroom. You will be required to think about how this tool supports equity and diversity, or any concerns you have with the tool.	II.B.6.a; II.B.5.a
<b>In-Person Parent Simulation 25 pts</b> Teacher candidates will engage in and reflect upon an in-person simulation of a parent meeting.	II.B.3; I.H.10; II.B.3.1
<b>Reading Checks (2 points each – total of 32 points)</b> Students will be expected to fully read and make 2 meaningful comments on each reading assigned via Perusall (listed on Canvas). <i>PLEASE NOTE: This is the one assignment that cannot be made up later and must be completed by the date assigned.</i>	
<b>TOTAL POINTS: 332</b>	

**Grading scale:**

94-100% = A

90-93 = A-

87-89% = B+

83-86% = B

80-82% = B-

74-79% = C

69-73% = D

**Weekly Course Schedule**  
*Subject to change*

Date	Topic	To prepare for class	Assignment Due
<b>Section 1: Students as Writers</b>			
January 8	Course overview/expectations Review: IL 1208		
January 13	Discuss Novel Selection	<b>Familiarize yourself with Sarah, Plain and Tall</b>	<b>DUE: Sign up for Digital Tool Share Out</b>
January 15	Theories of Learning: What does it mean to be a reader in grades 2-4? What is the purpose of literacy instruction in grades 2- 4?	<b>Read: Serafini article Hobbs article</b>	<b>DUE: Novel Selection</b>
January 20	<b>NO CLASS: MLK Jr Day</b>		
January 22	6 + 1 Traits of Writing	<b>Read: Tompkins Ch.2 60-61 and 64-66</b>	<b>DUE: Differentiation activity</b>
January 27	6+1 Traits of Writing (con't) -memoir map -write vignette	<b>Read: 6+ 1 Traits of Writing handout</b>	
January 29	6 + 1 Traits of Writing (cont.) Writing development and writing workshop	<b>Read: Chapter from Smith &amp; Read— Effective writing instruction</b>	<b>DUE: Parent Meeting Simulation</b>
February 3	-Revision workshop	<b>Read: Thompkins: Ch. 11 pp. 330-334</b>	
<b>Section 2: Word Study and Vocabulary Development</b>			
February 5	Robust vocabulary instruction	<b>Read: Beck et al. <i>Bringing Words to Life</i> Chapters 1-2</b>	
February 10	Robust vocabulary instruction (Con't)	<b>Read: Beck et al. <i>Bringing Words to Life</i> Chapter 3</b>	
February 12	Robust vocabulary instruction and shared reading/read-alouds in older grades	<b>Read: Beck et al. <i>Bringing Words to Life</i> • Chapter 4 and pages 82-93 in Chapter 5</b>	<b>Due: In-Class: Text Discussion/Connected Writing Mini-Lesson</b>
February 17	Supporting Diverse Learners	<b>Read: Lobron &amp; Selman article</b>	
February 19	Utilizing text based discussion of non- fiction texts	<b>Read: Comprehension and Comprehension Instruction</b>	<b>Due: Robust vocabulary instruction 5-day cycle</b>
February 24	In-Person Simulation During Class		



	(between 4:30 and 7:30 pm)		
February 26 Asynchronous	Asynchronous Classwork (Finish Up Simulation Assignment)	<b>Tompkins: Ch. 9</b>	<b>DUE: Simulation Reflection</b>
<b>SPRING BREAK: No Class March 3 &amp; 5</b>			
March 10 Asynchronous	Planning for non-fiction texts	<b>Read: Santoro article OR Fisher article OR Stead article</b>	
March 12	Shared reading with non-fiction texts	<b>Tompkins: Ch. 3 pp. 80-85 Tompkins: Shared Reading p. 391</b>	<b>In class: Nonfiction Article Discussion Guide</b>
March 17	Word Study: Assessment	<b>Read: <i>Words Their Way</i>—Ch. 1-3</b>	<b>DUE: Draft of Novel Study Unit Plan Cover Sheet &amp; Section 1</b>
March 19	Word Study: Instruction	<b>Tompkins: Ch. 5 Tompkins: Word Sorts p. 396</b>	
March 24	Word Study (cont.) Syllasearch	<b>Read: Making Sense of Phonics Ch. 10 and Appendix 3</b>	
March 26	Word Study: Connecting to Comprehension		
<b>Section 3: Assessments, Comprehension, and Unit Planning</b>			
March 31	Common Classroom Assessments	<b>Read: Screening and Assessment</b>	<b>Due: Syllasearch/Word Study assignment</b>
April 2	Assessing a Broader View of Literacy	<b>Read/Review: Muhammad (on Canvas)</b>	
April 7	Comprehension: Assessment and Instruction	<b>Read: Edwards, et al. article</b>	
April 9	Accounting for High-Stakes Testing	<b>Harvey and Goudvis article Tompkins: Ch. 3 pp. 91-94</b>	
April 14	Small group differentiated instruction	<b>Read: Ketch article and Fountas and Pinnell article</b>	<b>Bring: Word study lesson plan to class</b>
April 16	Guided Reading	<b>Tompkins: Ch. 10 pp. 290-293</b>	
April 21	Wrapping Things Up		<b>Due: Novel Study Unit Plan</b>