CONTENT AREA LITERACY: AN ONLINE COMPRESSED FORMAT

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

Content Area Literacy is a three-hour, online, seven-week compressed graduate course. The course is required for students who have undergraduate degrees outside of the College of Education and who are seeking initial teacher licensure in elementary or secondary education through a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree. The University of Memphis has offered the course in a variety of formats for over 30 years and typically enrolls 80 students a year. Ten years ago it was redesigned as an online offering to accommodate our total online Masters Programs and two years ago we modified it as an online compressed course. A 12-hour content area field placement in a K-12 classroom is also completed as part of this course.

Literacy skills are essential to gaining content knowledge and acquiring content-specific abilities; therefore, it is important to build connections between literacy and content area courses (Fang, 2014). Embracing this approach, this course provides future K-12 teachers with knowledge, strategies, and practices for embedding literacy instruction in subject areas. Specifically, this process includes learning to use reading, writing, thinking strategies and techniques to teach subject matter across the curriculum (Vacca, Vacca, & Mraz, 2013).

ONLINE COMPRESSED FORMAT

National conversations in higher education have focused recently on student recruitment and retention, and the need to expand online programs and courses to better engage and meet learners’ needs (Allen & Seaman, 2013; Kim & Bonk, 2006). Addressing these concerns along with embracing the findings of other researchers (Davies, 2006; Daniel, 2000; Fayne, 2014; Johnson, 2009), two years ago we piloted the online Content Area Literacy class as a seven-week compressed class. In this article, along with a description of the course details, we share lessons learned from our instructional experiences and from student data collected from three semesters of implementing the compressed-format course.

COURSE DETAILS

This seven-week class is divided into 14 modules, with two modules occurring each week. The first module includes reading and discussing the textbook material, and the second requires implementing a project-based mini field experience assignment in a K-12 classroom. By alternating within each week between theory and practice, we strive to create an authentic learning environment; not only do students research and read about teaching methods, they have opportunities to practice these strategies and techniques through the mini field experience assignments. Embracing a social constructivist paradigm (Vygotsky, 1986), we also provide opportunities for students to collaborate with one another by giving and receiving peer feedback through online discussions related to the text and blog postings about their mini field
experiences. Our online course platform features a homepage news section onto which we post weekly lectures about the instructors’ thoughts and views on the current class topic.

As in any course, we believe it is essential to be clear about student expectations and learning outcomes. Therefore, our syllabus includes course objectives and links to professional standards along with a rationale for all assignments. Points are assigned twice weekly, once for the discussions and once for the mini field experiences. This is to encourage students from procrastinating, a behavior that can quickly equate to failure in a compressed-format course. In addition, we require a midterm and final exam that is taken directly from the required class text test bank. Our intent with requiring objective exams is to not only encourage students to read and discuss the text, grasping a firm foundation of teaching literacy, but to also delineate advantages and disadvantages with this form of assessment, which is most commonly used in current K-12 content area classrooms. We do not accept late work; however, we do offer extra credit points at the end of the course.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT ONLINE COMPRESSED COURSES

We place great importance on providing students with opportunities to give us feedback on the course, which in turn allows us to make improvements each semester. During the last module of the class, students are asked to complete course evaluations using a “three stars and a wish” format; they indicate three things they liked about the course and one thing that needs improvement. For extra credit students can also complete a survey about their experience with the seven-week course format. The survey allows students to share their perceptions of what works and does not work regarding the class. We have gathered this student data from three courses and compared the grades of these courses to three years of grades from a regular semester format taught by the same instructor to generate 12 lessons learned about teaching an online compressed course.

1. Students’ grades are not significantly different in a seven-week online condensed course as in a regular semester; therefore, instructors who experience uncertainty about this format can feel confident about student performance in this learning environment.

2. Students embrace the shortened timeframe even though they experience a heavier workload because they immerse themselves in the content, leading to deeper and more focused learning.

3. A compressed course has its own “groove” and once students understand this rhythm, the course is less stressful and they are more successful; thus, when designing a course, strive to create a repetitive structure for assignments such as read/discuss in one module followed by a mini-assignment in the next to help students acclimate to the quick pace of course assignments.

4. Partner work can be frustrating and problematic in the seven-week class; therefore, it is preferable to eliminate a partner response and instead request students post to any peer’s work while being mindful of students to whom no one has responded.

5. Instructors can have a purposeful and meaningful mindset toward using course design and assignments in ways that require students to participate similarly to what their future work will require.

6. Multiple forums for student communication regarding clarity of assignments and logistical issues are especially critical in a compressed course and can be met by having
an issues/concerns discussion board, one email venue dedicated to instructor/student communication, and a homepage news area.

7. Students benefit by getting a jumpstart on a compressed-format course, which can be accomplished by emailing students the syllabus and first homepage message a few weeks prior to class beginning.

8. Students’ course evaluations give high marks to using digital tools such as blogging, video/audio multimedia use, and Internet searches.

9. Tenets of good teaching such as engaging students, providing clear, timely and meaningful feedback/grading, and adhering to effective course design were all noted by students as important components of a successful online condensed format.

10. Syllabus rationales for assignments give students additional insight and understanding about the relevance and purpose of completing the tasks and thus are important for motivating students’ engagement and learning.

11. Students appreciate extra credit opportunities as deadlines move quickly in a condensed format, and it gives hope to some students, preventing them from giving up and/or dropping the course.

12. Compressed-format offerings are expected to expand due to wide student endorsement for meeting scheduling needs and learning styles.

SYLLABUS: CONTENT AREA LITERACY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This three-hour, online, seven-week compressed-format course examines the methods, materials, and organizational patterns by which K-12 literacy skills are developed and improved through integration with teaching strategies in content areas such as science, social studies, and math.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course objectives are aligned with the International Reading Association Standards (2010) and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Anchor Standards for College and Career Readiness in Reading (2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANDIDATES WILL BE ABLE TO:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify and explain the literacy needs in elementary, middle, and secondary classrooms. (IRA 1) (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R1-3)</td>
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<td>2. Characterize the traits of effective content area teachers. (IRA 2 &amp; 3) (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R1-3)</td>
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<td>3. Evaluate textbooks both quantitatively and qualitatively. (IRA 5) (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R7-9)</td>
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4. Apply readability formulas for selecting appropriate text materials. (IRA 2 & 4) (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R7-9)

5. Identify and be able to develop informal assessment instruments. (IRA 3)

6. Determine strengths and weaknesses in student performance based on assessments. (IRA 3)

7. Structure lessons and classroom activities to actively involve students in learning. (IRA 1, 2, 4, & 5) CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8

8. Promote higher order thinking through patterns of questions and structure of learning activities. (IRA 2) (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R1-9)

9. Construct and promote learning activities that are collaborative in nature. (IRA 2) (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4 & 6)

10. Select and modify materials and strategies for students with diverse needs and ability levels. (IRA 4) (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R10)

11. Integrate technology into the content area literacy curriculum. (IRA 2) (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.6 & 8)

### Student Evaluation

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Course Points Offered</th>
<th>100 points (+5 points extra credit)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Discussions</td>
<td>18 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini Field Experience Assignments</td>
<td>30 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Assessment &amp; Final Reflection</td>
<td>2 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extra Credit</td>
<td>5 points</td>
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**PERCENTAGE GRADE BREAKDOWN**

A     (93% - 100%)
B     (85% - 92%)
C     (76% - 84%)
D     (70% - 75%)
F     (0% - 69%)
**Content**

- **Required text.** Vacca, R.T., Vacca, J.L., & Mraz, M. (2013). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum*, 11th ed., Pearson. The rationale for text selection: Vacca & Vacca is noted to be one, if not the most, seminal textbook in the field on content area reading as evidenced by the current text being the 11th edition.
- **Recommended text.** The companion website at www.mylabschool.com provides access to video clips, a lesson and portfolio builder, and resource library.
- **PowerPoints.** PowerPoints associated with each chapter are posted in corresponding online modules.
- **Lectures.** The instructors’ mini lectures are posted on the News Page each day that a new module begins.
- **Blog.** Directions are included in Module 1 for establishing a KidBlog account where all mini field experience assignments are published and peer responses should be posted.

### Course Outline with Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic and Associated Standards</th>
<th>Required Reading Assignments/Due Dates</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1</strong></td>
<td>Topic: Course Introduction, Course Goals, &amp; Understanding Content Area Literacy in the 21st Century Standards: IRA 1; CCRA. R1-3; IRI 1; CCRA. R1-3</td>
<td>1. Review all materials in module. 2. Introduce yourself and post course goals. 3. Respond to 1 classmate’s goals. 4. Log into your KidBlog account. 5. Read Vacca, Vacca &amp; Mraz, Chapters 1 &amp; 2 for the online discussion in this module. 6. Post by 11:59 pm Thursday. 7. Respond ONCE by 11:59 pm Friday.</td>
<td>3 points</td>
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<td><strong>Module 2</strong></td>
<td>Topic: Blogging &amp; New Literacies Standards: IRA 1; CCRA. R1-3</td>
<td>Post Mini Assignment 1 on your blog by 11:59 pm Sunday &amp; respond to a classmate’s blog post by 11:59 pm Monday.</td>
<td>6 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Module 3</strong></td>
<td>Topic: New Literacies &amp; Assessment Standards: IRA 3 &amp; 4; CCRA. R1-3; CCRA.R10</td>
<td>1. Read Vacca, Vacca &amp; Mraz, Chapters 3 &amp; 4 for the online discussion in this module. 2. Post by 11:59 pm Thursday and respond ONCE by 11:59 pm Friday.</td>
<td>3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>Topic: New Literacies &amp; YouTube</td>
<td>IRA 1, 2, 4 &amp; 5; CCRA. W.8</td>
<td>Post Mini Assignment 2 on your blog by 11:59 pm Sunday &amp; respond to your classmate’s blog 11:59 pm Monday.</td>
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| Module 5 | Topic: Planning Instruction & Activating Prior Knowledge | IRA 1, 2, 4, & 5; CCRA. W.8 | 1. Read Vacca, Vacca & Mraz, Chapters 5 & 6 for the online discussion in this module.  
2. Post ONCE by 11:59 pm Thursday.  
3. Respond ONCE by 11:59 pm Friday. | 3 points |
| Module 6 | Chapters 1 – 6 | IRA 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5; CCRA. R1-3 & 10; CCRA. W.8 | Midterm Exam  
Refer to the directions in this Module.  
Available 12:01 a.m. Saturday through 11:59 pm Monday. | 25 points |
| Module 7 | Topic: Textbooks | IRA 2, 4, & 5; CCRA.R7-9 | Post Mini Assignment 3 on your blog by 11:59 pm Thursday & respond to a classmate’s blog by 11:59 pm Friday. | 6 points |
| Module 8 | Topic: Reading Comprehension & Vocabulary | IRA 2; CCRA. R1-9 | 1. Read Vacca, Vacca & Mraz, Chapters 7 & 8 for the online discussion in this module.  
2. Post by 11:59 pm Sunday.  
3. Respond ONCE by 11:59 Monday. | 3 points |
| Module 9 | Topics: Common Core State Standards & Unit Plans  
Standards: IRA 2, 4 & 6; CCRA. R10 | Post Mini Assignment 4 on your blog by 11:59 pm Thursday & respond to a classmate’s blog by 11:59 pm Friday. | 6 points |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Module 10 | Topic: Writing Across the Curriculum  
Standards: IRA 2; CCRA. R1-9; CCRA. W.6 & 8 | 1. Read Vacca, Vacca & Mraz, Chapters 9 & 10 for the online discussion in this module.  
2. Post by 11:59 pm Sunday.  
3. Respond ONCE by 11:59 pm Monday. | 3 points |
| Module 11 | Topic: Writing  
Standards: IRA 2; CCRA. W.4, 6 & 8 | Post Mini Assignment 5 on your blog by 11:59 pm Thursday & respond to a classmate’s blog by 11:59 pm Friday. | 6 points |
| Module 12 | Topics: Trade Books & Literacy Coaching  
Standards: IRA 2 & 3; CCRA. R1-3 | 1. Read Vacca, Vacca & Mraz, Chapters 11 & 12 for the online discussion in this module.  
2. Post by 11:59 pm Sunday.  
3. Respond ONCE by 11:59 pm Monday. | 3 points |
| Module 13 | Chapters 7-12  
Standards: IRA 1, 2 & 5; CCRA. R1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9 & 10; CCRA. W.4, 6 & 8 | Final Exam: Refer to the directions in this module. Available 12:01 am Tuesday through 11:59 pm Friday. | 25 points |
| Module 14 | Topic: Self-reflection  
Standards: IRA 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5; CCRA. R1-3; CCRA.W.8 | 1. Submit Self-Assessment & Final Reflections on Learning in Dropbox link provided in this module by 11:59 pm Friday.  
2. Submit Course Feedback in Dropbox by 11:59 pm Friday. | 2 points |
ASSIGNMENTS

ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

Weekly you are required to read specified chapters of the text and discuss your reactions online. Discussions allow us to explore and analyze strategies, technologies, and classroom environments. They also allow us to consider others' experiences. You will find the discussion questions posted online in specified modules and listed below in the discussion prompts section of this syllabus. Additionally, your midterm and final exams will be related to the course text, and thus, online discussions should also help you prepare for these exams.

1. Minimum discussion requirements include:
   - (POST ONCE): One quality posting related to our text readings by 11:59 pm on the assigned due date.
   - (RESPOND ONCE): One response to a classmate’s posting to our text readings (respond by 11:59 pm on the assigned due date).
   - Late submissions will not be accepted.

2. Quality discussions include:
   - Thoughtful responses to discussion prompts, special projects listed at the end of our text chapters, or the corresponding videos to our text;
   - Reading others’ responses before adding your own;
   - Avoiding repeating others’ responses;
   - Personal experiences that are supported with facts, theories or statistics from readings;
   - Personal experiences that contrast or disagree with positions stated in readings;
   - Using additional information from further research that extends required readings;
   - Using proper English, correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and avoidance of abbreviations.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did not post OR respond</th>
<th>Did NOT post but DID respond</th>
<th>Post but no response to peer</th>
<th>Posting AND Response to 1 peer</th>
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<tr>
<td>0 points</td>
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<td>2 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
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ONLINE DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Module 1 online discussion prompt (chapters 1 & 2). What do you want your future content area classroom to look like? Specifically, how will literacy practices be woven into your content area instruction? How is this different from what your supervising teacher is currently doing? It is very important that you are able to articulate this vision to your students, principal, parents, and teaching colleagues. One part of your vision entails understanding what it means to be literate in the 21st century. Discuss this topic or any other topic of interest from Chapters 1 & 2.

Module 3 online discussion prompt (chapters 3 & 4). Another part of your content area classroom vision entails knowing who your students are, knowing how well they are performing, and knowing how to connect students with the appropriate materials. How does your supervising teacher do this in the
classroom? How will you do this in the future? Discuss this or any other topic of interest from Chapters 3 & 4.

**Module 5 online discussion prompt (chapters 5 & 6).** Research tells us that great teachers know how to plan and adapt instruction to meet the needs of readers and writers. Additionally, great teachers use strategies to activate prior knowledge and interest. Describe how your supervising teacher does this in the classroom, specifically in your licensure area. How will you do this differently in the future?

**Module 8 online discussion prompt (chapters 7 & 8).** At the heart of your vision is the strategic position you will take in making a difference in the way your students approach learning. Specifically discuss how you will teach comprehension and vocabulary in your content area classroom. What thoughts do you have for teaching it differently in the future?

**Module 10 online discussion prompt (chapters 9 & 10).** Your classroom vision should also include process writing and writing across the curriculum strategies. In this module, discuss how your supervising teacher teaches students to write, and how in your future classroom you will use writing as a tool for learning and help your students study their text. What have you learned from our class that has helped you become more knowledgeable about effective teaching in this area?

**Module 12 online discussion prompt (chapters 11 & 12).** Great teachers not only use their textbooks but they also use trade books at all levels in creative ways. Great teachers also engage in ongoing professional development with literacy coaches currently contributing new opportunities in this area. How does your supervising teacher currently use trade books in the classroom? In the future, how will you select and evaluate texts according to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)? How will you capitalize on Internet resources? What professional development opportunities would interest you? How will you address these issues in your future classroom?

**MINI FIELD EXPERIENCE ASSIGNMENTS**

You have five individual mini field experience assignments that need to be implemented in your assigned field placement. You will post your results on your KidBlog site for five points maximum, and you will respond to a classmate’s blog for one point, receiving a total of six points possible for each assignment.

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<tr>
<th>Mini Field Experience Posting Assignment Rubric</th>
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<tr>
<td>No post (or late)</td>
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<td>0 points</td>
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Mini Field Experience Response Assignment Rubric

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<th>No response to peer (or late)</th>
<th>Response to peer</th>
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<tr>
<td>0 points</td>
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**Module 2 Mini Field Experience Assignment 1: Blogging**

**Blogging mini assignment 1 rationale.** Blogs are growing in popularity with students and teachers. Essentially a blog is an online journal that can be used for many purposes. It can be a site for: 1) you to communicate to parents, students and colleagues, 2) you to keep a professional teacher journal, 3) students to use for journaling, 4) students to use for writing, 5) students to use for discussing course content with students in other locations, etc. As a teacher, there are challenges associated with blogs. From the literature we know if someone does not read and respond to students’ journals then, guess what, they do not do them. The same may hold true for blogs. Also, do you grade blogs? Do you give students feedback on their thoughts? Do you give them credit for completing?

**Blogging mini assignment 1 directions.**
1. Conduct a blog search by typing “class blogs” in your Internet search engine.
2. Review a minimum of eight examples of classroom teachers who are blogging with their students.
3. Create your own blog for our class, using KidBlog (see directions in Module 1).
4. Make a post on your KidBlog for this class that includes:
   - a minimum of four favorite ways you learned that elementary, middle, or high school content area teachers are using blogs with their students
5. Create a blog with your classroom students (with KidBlog or any other site of your choice) and post on your UofM KidBlog site to include:
   - the purpose of your classroom blog
   - the directions you provided your students
   - the URL address to the site you are using with your classroom
   - how you will know if your classroom blogging is effective with your students
6. Post to your blog by 11:59 pm on date assigned.
7. Respond to one classmate’s mini assignment blog post by 11:59 pm on date assigned.

**Module 4 Mini Field Experience Assignment 2: YouTube or Podcast**

**YouTube or podcast mini assignment 2 rationale.** As educators, we are always attempting to adapt our teaching to meet the needs of the students in our classes. As the learning environment changes and the tools for learning become more digital in nature, it is important to move away from a totally textbook-centered curriculum. Teachers today and tomorrow will need to embrace, integrate, and promote the use of instructional media technology. Students as young as kindergarten are already blogging and tweeting as you read this. On the other hand, some secondary classrooms do not look much different than they did when YOU were in high school. Thus, students lose interest, do not try or even dropout because of the disconnection between their out-of-school lives and the mundane nature of their in-school classes. It is your responsibility to experiment and utilize digital technologies to promote interest and learning in what you teach. If you do not, you may not be viewed as a successful teacher.
**YouTube or podcast mini assignment 2 directions.**

1. For Module 4, you should post your response on your blog to parts a-c below.
   a. View the following YouTube video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_A-ZVcjWF8
      React to what you see and hear by using the lead-in sentence: “After viewing this video, I think…”
   b. Post a YouTube or Podcast link on your blog you integrated into a lesson you taught in your classroom. Explain in detail how you used the video with your students.
   c. Go to: http://digitalyouth.ischool.berkeley.edu/files/report/digitalyouth-WhitePaper.pdf and review this white paper about youth and their use of digital technologies and the implications for educators. Respond to: “How does this information inform your teaching? What are steps that you need to take to make your classroom an engaging learning environment?”

2. Post on your blog by 11:59 pm on date assigned. Respond to one classmate’s mini assignment blog by 11:59 pm on date assigned.

**Module 7 mini field experience assignment 3: Textbook evaluation**

**Textbook evaluation mini assignment 3 rationale.** The adopted textbook for the class you are teaching serves as the basic curriculum for the students in your classroom. The expectation of the school’s administration is that you utilize the textbook with all of your students. Having said that, it is clear textbooks do not match up well with many students’ reading skills, and thus the need for differentiation. However, it is imperative teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of adopted textbooks. For this assignment, you will need to use a Teacher’s Edition of a textbook in your licensure area.

**Textbook mini assignment 3 directions.**

1. Determine the readability level of the textbook as described on pages 126–127 of your textbook. Post three 100-word passages (scanned or typed) and all computations you used for estimating the text’s difficulty level to your KidBlog.
2. Identify the three most positive features of the text and the three most negative features of the text (do not use the table of contents, glossary or index as part of your response), and explain why you chose the ones you did.
3. Post the mini assignment on your blog by date assigned. Provide feedback to one classmate’s mini assignment post by date assigned.

**Module 9 mini field experience assignment 4: Common Core State Standards and Unit Plans**

**Common Core State Standards & unit plans mini assignment 4 rationale.** As teachers we need to understand how to develop and implement unit plans. Although the directions for developing units may vary between school districts, essentially they all require you to develop a series of lesson plans around a “big idea,” topic, or theme which correlates with the Common Core State Standards (http://www.corestandards.org). One of the best ways to learn how to develop and implement an innovative unit plan is to view what other great teachers are doing. The ReadWriteThink (http://www.readwritethink.org) website is one quality location to review units. Also, state departments of education and schools districts often post examples.

**Common Core State Standards and unit plans mini assignment 4 directions.** Look at the ReadWriteThink website (click on: Classroom Resources; Lesson Plans; on this page you will see Units; click on See All Units) or a state department of education or school districts’ websites. Review at least three unit plans from the
sources cited and post the following information in this module by 11:59 pm on date assigned and respond to a classmate’s mini assignment blog by 11:59 pm on date assigned:

1. Provide the web addresses for the three unit plans reviewed.
2. Which unit plan most effectively integrated technology and how?
3. Which unit is most effective in promoting student learning and why?
4. Which unit is most effective in meeting the diverse needs of students and why?
5. Which unit plan incorporated the Common Core State Standards most effectively and how?
6. What was your favorite form of authentic assessment used in the units and why?
7. Select one of the three units to teach with a group of your students. What did you modify and why?
8. What are five key points that you would present at a faculty meeting about aligning Common Core State Standards with unit plans?

**MODULE 11 MINI FIELD EXPERIENCE ASSIGNMENT 5: WRITING IN THE CONTENT AREAS**

**Writing in the content areas mini assignment 5 rationale.** Great content area teachers are skilled in teaching their students how to write. These teachers use proven strategies; they do not just “assign students to write.” First, they know how to teach students how to write for an outside audience. They do this by leading students through the process approach, including: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing stages. Secondly, content area teachers teach numerous writing strategies that help students learn content, such as: taking notes, writing in a journal, brainstorming, completing a learning log, or writing a quick-write.

**Writing in the content areas mini assignment 5 directions.** This year your school principal wants to support and emphasize writing at your school and plans to sponsor a school-wide Writing Celebration Contest. Each content area will select a specific genre for students to write. For instance, math teachers might have their students write a letter to the local paper about the importance of math, science teachers might have their students write science fiction stories, language arts teachers might have students write poetry, social studies teachers might have their students publish a children’s book on a social issue. Each student will take a piece of writing through the writing process and enter it in the contest. Outside community jurors will be invited to read and select the winners of the contest. The winners will be announced at a Family Night Celebration.

For this assignment, you will prepare your students to participate in the writing contest and submit the following: 1) the type of writing your content area students will write, 2) the directions to be given to your students, 3) one strategy you will use to help guide your students during the writing process, and 4) the rubric to be used to evaluate the students writing. Post the mini assignment on your blog by date assigned. Provide feedback to one classmate’s mini assignment post by date assigned.

**MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS**

There is an online midterm exam which covers the first half of the text and a final exam which covers the second half. Questions are randomly selected from the text test bank. Each exam is worth 25 points. An example of a test question:

*Which of the following is NOT considered an authentic assessment?*

a. observation  
b. timed test  
c. anecdotal record  
d. interview
Answer: b. timed test

**SELF-ASSESSMENT & FINAL REFLECTIONS**

You will write a self-assessment and final reflection on the class. You will include the grade that you think you earned and the rationale for the grade. You will discuss what you think you learned about your teaching, students, literacy, assessment, and anything else related to the class. This assignment is worth two points.

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<td>Rationale Not Provided</td>
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**Course feedback.** You will have the opportunity to give feedback on the course. You will use the model, “three stars and a wish.” What are three things you liked about the course? What is one thing that you would change about the course? Please submit your course feedback in the Dropbox folder.

**Extra credit.** You can earn five extra credit points by completing a survey about the seven-week online course format located in the last module of the class.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

All written work submitted must be your original work and conform to the guidelines of the *American Psychological Association* (APA) available online and via their publications. This means that any substantive ideas, phrases, sentences, and/or any published ideas must be properly referenced to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism. It is your responsibility to know all relevant university policies concerning plagiarism. Any documented cases of plagiarism can and will result in dismissal from the course with a failing grade, and may result in other more serious sanctions by the College of Education.

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Your professional interactions in this class need to meet the expectations outlined by the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation and Professional Growth which states that professionalism takes such forms as: the ability to collaborate with colleagues and appropriate others, demonstrate productive leadership or team membership skills that facilitate the development of mutually beneficial goals, maintain accurate and up-to-date records, complete assigned tasks on schedule, maintain punctuality and attendance, follow applicable policies and procedures, maintain confidentiality and fulfill responsibilities, provide evidence of performance levels, and articulate strengths and priorities for growth.

**OTHER PERTINANT COURSE INFORMATION**

- A grade below a C will require repeating the course since it is required for licensure.
● You will not receive a passing grade unless you successfully complete the associated field experience mini assignments which are required field-hours for this class.

● Please note that our class is designed by modules. A module begins at **12:01 am** on the corresponding start date listed in the chart and ends at **11:59 pm** on the corresponding end date.

● Late submissions will NOT be accepted. Professional behavior consists of **contacting your instructor in advance** to make up any lost time or assignments. Failure to do so could lead to a reduction in your grade and/or failure in the course. This policy is consistent with expectations you will need to meet as a prospective professional educator.
REFERENCES


