

Reading Like a Writer: Using Children's Books as Models for Writing

Longwood University
Professional Studies *Non-Credit* Class

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Class Description:

Learning how to write by studying the work of excellent writers is fun, engaging, and extremely effective. Writers learn what they need to know about writing from reading and examining how authors use words and structures to convey meaning, images, and senses effectively. Elements of grammar, parts of speech, and even punctuation make sense when taught in the context of quality children's books. This is a non-credit bearing class and will not be reflected on a Longwood transcript. We recommend that it is equivalent in content and scope to a one credit graduate class or 30 recertification points.

Class Overview:

Teaching writing can be a challenging, time-consuming, and draining process but it does not have to be-- and you do not need to teach alone! In this class we will discuss what it means to read like a writer, examine numerous examples of writer's craft through focused, children's book text sets, and develop learning experiences that will help both teacher and student separate what a book is about from how it is written. This class will use children's literature as a model, but any well-written text will work-- from web pages to magazine articles to excerpts from novels, short stories, and nonfiction.

This class is designed to be self-paced and does not require participants complete the work at the same time or participate in activities or discussions at the same time. However, reviewing what your fellow participants post and initiating discussions with them will greatly enhance your learning and overall experience.

Text:

No text is required for this class. Readings will be posted online. Students are encouraged to spend book funds on copies of children's books for their classroom instruction and on professional books shared as resources.

Goals & Objectives:

Identify the reasons why studying the way writers use words is important to teaching writing.

Explain the differences between reading like a reader and reading like a writer. Write objectives that clearly reflect an understanding of that difference.

Select children’s books or other texts relevant to your grade level that effectively demonstrate how authors accomplish various writing techniques, types of genre, and the use of parts of speech, grammar, and punctuation.

Plan lessons that preserve the integrity of the story, but allow students to learn and explore writing through close analysis.

Participate in course activities from the perspective of a student to better understand and apply those activities to your own lessons

SCHEDULE		
Dates	Topics	Assignments
Module 1 Week 1	Introduction What is ‘reading like a writer’?	Readings & activities
Module 2 Week 2	Understanding text sets and topics Exploring how to help your students read like writers	Readings and activities Quiz to practice objectives
Module 3 Week 3	Exploring Wondrous Words: author’s word choice	Text set Readings and activities
Module 4 Week 4	Exploring Author’s Craft, Writing Techniques	Instructional Outline Anonymous Class Survey

Class Assignments: Instructions are provided for all assignments within the online class modules. These are general descriptions of the expectations.

Participate in Class Activities:

Each module will have at least one activity that you will be asked to complete, post your results, and reflect upon. These activities are assigned so you will have hands-on experience with potential lesson ideas you can use with your own students.

Text Set:

Wondrous Words/Word Choice or Author’s Craft/Writing Techniques: 5 texts

Your text set will include a carefully written objective specific to reading like a writer, annotations for each text, and samples directly from the text showing how it is a good model for the topic. You will find detailed instructions in Canvas.

Find at least 5 texts that model the topic effectively—look for high quality, clear models, that show variations in the element or genre. **Complete** an annotated bibliography using APA style. Include an example from each text in italics. **CLEARLY** and **SPECIFICALLY** explain how each text is a high quality model for your focus in your annotation. **Post** for the class.

Instructional Outline:

Using Brian Cambourne’s Conditions of Learning, outline the ways you will make sure each

condition exists in your classroom to support writing for each of your students. Additional instructions in Canvas.

Class Grading:

Participation in Class Activities	80 points
Text Set	85 points
Instructional Outline	<u>35 points</u>
TOTAL	200 points

Grading Scale

Non-credit classes are Pass/Fail. If you earn 160 points (80%), you receive a Pass for the class.

CLASS POLICIES

Student Responsibility:

It is your responsibility to inform yourself of, and to observe, all regulations and procedures required by the university. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because students plead ignorance of the regulation or assert that they were not informed of the regulation by an advisor or other authority.

Communication Policy:

The instructor will respond to student messages within 24-48 hours, generally through email. For all assignments, feedback will be delivered within one week of the due date.

Attendance & Participation Policy:

Attendance for online courses is determined by how many times and for how long you access the Canvas course (this information is available for each student to the instructor), your participation in the assignments, and your timeliness in submitting requested work or response. Online courses can get away from you if not carefully scheduled. Take the time to review your online commitments, schedule regular and consistent time to be online, and stick to the schedule. You are expected to participate in all Canvas activities. Failure to participate in Canvas activities may impair academic performance and result in a lower grade. You must assume full responsibility for an online presence.

Technical Assistance:

Please contact your instructor for assistance with Canvas.

Class Evaluation:

At the conclusion of the course, each student will have the opportunity to evaluate the class and instructor. Your feedback is important to us. Please take the time to complete the online evaluation.