

**Title**

Children's Authors on the Web: Online Sites that Motivate Students to Write

**Target Audience**

This course is intended for pre-service and in-service teachers of grades K-6.

**Prerequisites**

To successfully participate and complete the assignments in this course, the learner must:

- Have past experience using the classroom computer.
- Have past experience working with the Internet.
- Be familiar with taking an online course or have completed the PBS “Practice Learning Online with TeacherLine” course.
- Be familiar with elementary educational content.

**Course Description**

Discover the power of author studies to motivate students to read and write, develop students as writers, and immerse them in thoughtful learning tasks. This updated course uses a problem-based approach to teach the techniques of conducting an author study integrating Web 2.0 technology tools and children's literature sites to create immersive activities that engage, develop reading and writing skills, and are meaningfully integrated into the curriculum. This course will help educators learn how to support reading and writing literacy with author studies in the classroom and motivate students to engage with literature. Learners will create an author study to implement in the classroom.

**Instructor/Facilitator**

See instructor/facilitator sheet.

**Credits**

To be determined by college or university

**Goals**

The overall goal of this course is for learners to develop an understanding of how the Internet and technology can be used to conduct author studies and enhance student learning.

By the end of the course, learners will understand and be able to apply the following in their own professional practice:

- Understand the relationship of reading and writing in supporting literacy.



- Develop an author study that supports and develops skill in student reading and writing and will be a meaningful part of the curriculum.
- Develop a plan to implement the author study in the classroom.
- Understand how online web tools can support author studies.
- Learn about the use and integration of technology tools into author studies that support the development of student literacy.

### **Outline of Content and Assignments**

After previewing the documents in the Course Information area, learners will proceed to Course Content to complete the following six sessions, working through each session in order. Throughout the sessions, learners are asked to articulate their ideas in various forms: they are encouraged to reflect on their ideas and experiences in their online journal; the discussions in the discussion forum are designed to allow learners to glean information from other learners' experiences. As a course project, learners will create an author study to use in the classroom, and then reflect on the process of creating the author study. Throughout the course, they will create various sections of the author study through the course assignments, and then will put the completed author study together for the course project.

### **Standards**

This course is designed to address ISTE's *Educational Technology Standards and Performance Indicators for All Teachers*. These standards define the fundamental concepts, knowledge, skills, and attitudes for applying technology in educational settings.

This course specifically addresses the following **ISTE NETS\*T**:

1 (a, c, d); 2 (a, c); 3 (a, b, c, d); 5 (a, c, d)

Visit <http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-teachers.aspx> for a full list of the ISTE's *National Educational Technology Standards (NETS\*T) and Performance Indicators for Teachers* and more information about these standards.

Teachers who implement the activities in this course with students will address a range of curriculum standards, including:

#### **ISTE NETS\*S**

1 (b); 2 (a, b, d); 3 (a, b); 5 (a, b)

Visit <http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-students/nets-student-standards-2007.aspx> for more information on ISTE NETS\*S.

#### **NCTE/IRA The Standards for the English Language Arts**

1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 11, & 12

Visit <http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira> for more information on the NCTE/IRA Standards.

#### **Common Core State Standards Initiative**

English Language Arts Standards K-5 & 6

- Reading: Literature
  - Key Ideas and Details
  - Craft and Structure
  - Integration of knowledge and Ideas
  - Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity



- Writing
  - Text Types and Purposes
  - Production and Distribution of Writing
  - Research to Build and Present Knowledge
  - Range of Writing

Visit <http://www.corestandards.org/> for more information on the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

### Session 1: Motivating Readers

Some teachers find developing thoughtful and motivated readers has become a challenging task due to the ever-present curriculum pressures caused by many testing initiatives and other outside influences. Educators are saying however, that helping students to explore and analyze text deeply is critical to helping them prepare for higher learning, and to developing both background knowledge and critical thinking skills. They feel that bringing literature back into the classroom focus is essential for schools.

Using author studies—explorations of the work and life of writers—is a meaningful and effective way to help students develop a love of reading, critical analysis skills, and a depth to their reading and writing. In this session, after having the opportunity to explore a variety of author studies, learners will examine and evaluate various author and literature Web sites. This will help them identify high quality resources that will be useful for building an author study. It will also expand their knowledge about different authors and literary genres.

Learners will:

- Define their professional goals and expectations for this course.
- Explain their prior knowledge and experiences about integrating author studies into the curriculum.
- Discuss and defend their rationale for implementing an author study in the classroom.
- Create a list of 3-5 authors whom they would like to develop an author study for to use in their classroom and identify 3 resources for each that could be potentially used to study the author.
- Reflect on the selection of authors they have chosen to potentially study.

Read

- "Can Reading Be Saved?"
- "'Book Whisperer' Discusses How to Encourage Young Readers"
- Independent Lens: The Political Dr. Seuss
- Author Focus: Jan Brett and Jane Yolen
- Children's Literature Recommended Links
- Masterpiece Theatre: Pollyanna
- Masterpiece Theatre: The Railway Children
- Maurice Sendak: Imagination and Art

View Videos

- Webloggs

Write in Online Journal



- Reflect on expectations for the course.
- Reflect on prior knowledge and experiences related to the use and creation of author studies.
- Reflect on selecting authors for author studies.

#### Participate in Online Discussions

- Introduce themselves to other learners.
- Discuss the rationale for implementing an author study in the classroom.

#### Complete Assignments

- Exploring Author and Literature Web Sites Assignment

### Session 2: Developing Writers

Reading great literature supports students in developing as writers. Besides helping children become thoughtful readers, learn to love books, and develop higher-order thinking skills, author studies provide children with a positive writing model. As learners narrow down the focus of their author study, they should begin to think about the type of writing skills they want students to develop as a result of the author study.

In this session, learners will consider the authors they identified in Session 1 in relationship to their curriculum and their students' interests and needs, and the kinds of skills they would like to have students focus on in their writing. They will also have an opportunity to look at curriculum and technology standards, and think about how they can be integrated into their author study. They will then choose the author for their study that they determine to be best for their students and their curriculum.

#### Learners will:

- Discuss ways that literature inspires, influences, and instructs young writers by providing the examples needed for effective learning.
- Determine the author they will build an author study around and provide a rationale that includes the reason they chose this author and how the author study will fit into their curriculum.
- Identify how they will take their students' interests and writing abilities into account in selecting an author study and what standards will be addressed by the study.

#### Read

- "Author to Author: How Text Influences Young Writers"
- "NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts"

#### Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on differentiating learning in author studies and identifying standards to incorporate into an author study.

#### Participate in Online Discussions

- Discuss learning, writing, and author studies and how literature inspires by providing the examples needed for effective learning.

#### Complete Activities and Assignments

- Using the Standards to Develop a Writing Plan Activity (not required)



- Select Your Author Assignment

### Session 3: Building an Immersive Classroom Environment

Creating an engaging environment—both off- and online—and developing stimulating activities make learning exciting and meaningful. In this session, learners will read about ways to use literature to support writing as well as use writing to support reading development. They will also explore resources about building an immersive physical and virtual environment for author studies through the development of various activities and the creation of displays that support learning and curriculum goals.

Having chosen an author to study and identified some quality Web resources, they will begin planning the classroom environment and selecting activities to peak student interest, motivate them to learn about the author, develop writing and reading skills, and encourage students to do their own writing.

Learners will:

- Develop potential activities for an author study and provide a rationale for their use.
- Discuss how an author study can help create an immersive classroom environment.
- Reflect on the considerations needed to be able to incorporate author study activities into the curriculum successfully.

Read

- "Challenges Ahead"
- "Better Reading Through Writing"
- "What is Digital Writing and Why Does it Matter?"
- "Teaching Sisyphus to Juggle"
- NOW with Bill Moyers: Maurice Sendak
- Sagwa: Amy Tan Interview
- NewsHour: Interview with Holes author Louis Sachar
- NewsHour: Interview with author Kate DiCamillo
- Berenstain Bears: Let's Collaborate!
- Arthur: Publishing and Sharing Stories
- Themes and Subject Area Connections by Author Carol Hurst
- Books and Authors in Your Classroom
- Authors and Illustrators Who Visit Schools

View Videos

- "Meeting Eric Carle and Learning his Process"
- "Using Eric Carle's FAQ Page"
- "Using Eric Carle's Biography Page"
- Video Interviews with Renowned Children's Book Authors and Illustrators

Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on classroom considerations for successful incorporation of activities.

Participate in Online Discussions

- Discuss author studies and immersive classroom environments.

Complete Activities and Assignments



- Author Study Activities Assignment

#### Session 4: Engaging Learners with Authentic Activities

Involving students in meaningful learning, providing them with excellent models to follow, helping them to find their voice and develop their own style of writing, and immersing them in a technology rich environment empowers and engages them. In this session, learners will continue to work on the activities they developed in Session 3 by organizing, developing, and enhancing the activities that they will incorporate into their author study.

First, they will complete peer reviews of activities developed by fellow learners and then they will explore additional resources that they may wish to incorporate into their author study.

Learners will:

- Discuss ways that lesson plans and activities developed through author studies can help students "own" their writing.
- Review the author study activities developed by two other learners.
- Develop three detailed activities as part of an author study.

Read

- "Growing Writers: Considering Talk, Time, Models, and Purpose"
- "Dancing with the Authors"
- Lesson Plans, Lesson Plan Formats and Lesson Plan Ideas
- 10 Steps to Developing a Quality Lesson Plan
- Five Common Mistakes in Writing Lesson Plans (and how to avoid them)
- "Successful EdTech: First the Verbs, then the Nouns"
- "Blogging? It's Elementary, My Dear Watson!"
- "Four Web 2.0 Collaborative-Writing Tools"

Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on keeping learners engaged.

Participate in Online Discussions

- Discuss helping students learn to own writing.

Complete Activities and Assignments

- Peer Review of Author Study Activities
- Final Author Study Activities Assignment (by the end of Session 5)

#### Session 5: Working in the Classroom

In the previous sessions, learners selected and developed activities for an author study. In this session, they will plan for implementing the study into their classroom. They will also have the opportunity to review a classroom Web 2.0 technology tool that may be incorporated into an author study.

Learners will:

- Explore, analyze, and review a free, online graphic organizer tool.
- Develop three detailed activities as part of an author study.



- Create a plan for implementing an author study.

#### Read

- Teachers, Start Your Engines: Management Tips from the Pit Crew
- Classroom Management
- Tip Sheet: Strategies for Managing Students on One Computer or a Limited Number of Computers

#### Complete Assignments

- Classroom Web 2.0 Tool Review Assignment (post to discussion forum)
- Final Author Study Activities Assignment (assigned in Session 4)
- Author Study Implementation Plan Assignment

### Session 6: Putting Your Author Study Together

In the previous sessions of this course, learners created various sections of an author study to use in your classroom that develops reading and writing skills. In this session, they will put their author study together and reflect on the process.

#### Learners will:

- Discuss how to develop confidence in students' ability to read and write about literature and what the emphasis of a literacy program should be.
- Create an Author Study and write a reflection describing the study. (Course Project)
- Assess their learning in this course by comparing prior knowledge and acquired knowledge.
- Analyze the learning experience in this course by reflecting about professional goals and expectations.

#### Read

- "Crash! The Currency Crisis in American Culture"

#### Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on acquired knowledge.
- Reflect on professional goals and expectations.

#### Participate in Online Discussions

- Discuss developing confidence to read and write about literature.

#### Complete Activities and Assignments

- Course Project: Completed Author Study and Reflection (Solution)
- Post-Course Evaluation Survey

### Schedule

This course is scheduled to take approximately 30 hours to complete. The number of hours identified for each course reflects time spent online, but does not reflect the total time spent completing offline coursework and assignments. All learners are different and learners will likely spend double the indicated number of hours completing all coursework depending on learning styles and work habits.



**Requirements**

Learners are expected to:

- Complete all assignments.
- Maintain an online journal in a Word document.
- Participate and actively engage in discussions with fellow learners while contributing to the social construction of knowledge.
- Be self-directed and self-motivated.
- Ask for assistance when they need it.

**Materials (hardware, software, plug-ins)****Technical Requirements**

- Word processor
- Internet service provider
- E-mail

**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

To be inserted by university institution only

**Evaluation**

This course is evaluated on a letter grade basis, and may be available for graduate credit. See graduate credit details pertaining to specific graduate credit institutions.

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