

Title

Supporting ELLs: Writing Development in Grades PreK-3

Target Audience

This course is intended to enable pre-service and in-service teachers, grades PreK-3, to understand and facilitate the writing development of English language learners (ELLs.)

Prerequisites

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

- A familiarity with taking an online course or have gone through the TeacherLine Practice Learning Online course.
- Have some experience in grades PreK-3 classrooms.
- Past experience on using the classroom computer, email, and the Internet.
- Word processing software such as Microsoft Word or multimedia presentation software such as Microsoft PowerPoint.

Course Description

One of the most difficult skills for English language learners (ELLs) to master is writing. Students who are not native English speakers often exhibit a limited English vocabulary, poor grammar and spelling, and sometimes a strong reluctance in sharing their work because it may not exactly express what they are trying to convey. Because of this, educators working with these students find it challenging to monitor and gauge concepts and skills their ELLs understand. In the mainstream classroom, however, there are specific considerations that teachers can make and strategies they can use to support ELLs in their writing development, which in turn, will benefit their students' overall literacy development.

This course helps learners answer the question: "What classroom practices best promote ELLs' writing development?" Session 1 will focus on developing an understanding and identifying the specific needs of ELLs in writing, by integrating research on how writing and language develops in ELLs with an understanding of the considerations that need to be made for ELLs. These considerations include state, national, and local standards and the use of assessment as a tool for informing instruction. Session 2 will focus on strategies to support ELLs' writing development, including group lessons in which writing and spelling are modeled for students, programs found to be effective for ELLs, and the use of technology. Throughout the sessions, learners will be working towards the completion of a course project. The course project enables learners to synthesize the information they have learned in the course in the form of an e-article that they will post to an educational blog or a multimedia presentation as part of an online presentation tool. They will have the opportunity to explore many additional resources and complete a variety of activities that will help them direct their course of study as they explore the development of writing in ELLs.

If you would like more information on teaching writing and implementing writing workshops in your classroom, please see the following courses: "Effective Writing Instruction (Grades PreK-K)" and "Effective Writing Instruction (Grades 1-3)," which can be found in the PBS TeacherLine course catalog.

This course is part of a series of courses on English language learners in grades PreK-3. The first course in the series, "Supporting English Language Learners: Oral Language Development" provides educators with a general overview of the challenges of supporting oral language development, including information on required learning standards that need to be addressed and the strategies for supporting oral language development. For information on this course and other courses in the series, see the PBS TeacherLine course catalog.

Instructor/Facilitator

See instructor/facilitator sheet.

Credits

To be determined by college or university.

Goals

By the end of the course learners will appreciate, understand, and be able to use the following in their classroom:

- An understanding of the considerations that need to be made for ELLs in their writing development.
- Strategies and resources for assessing and facilitating writing development in ELLs.
- Knowledge of effective writing programs that support ELLs.
- An understanding of ways technology can support the instruction and development of writing for ELLs.

Course Objectives

Learners completing Supporting ELLs: Writing Development in Grades PreK-3 will be able to:

- Reflect on previous experiences when working with English Language Learners and concerns about meeting the needs of these learners.
- Reflect on how to determine what writing concepts to teach based on specific considerations of the young ELL student.
- Reflect on how to use the writing standards to improve the writing skills of ELL students.
- Identify two essential questions on the topic of supporting the writing development of ELLs.
- Analyze and discuss how to encourage ELLs to produce text that "encourages conscious attention to the ways in which language conveys meaning".
- Analyze student work samples using assessment guidelines to find evidence of writing abilities.
- Reflect on strategies, ideas, and techniques for teaching ELL students that would be most effective in developing writing skills.
- Reflect on the implementation of ideas, lessons, and strategies on writing development to assist the ELL student.
- Analyze the types of technology which support writing development and their specific use in the ELL classroom.
- Create an e-article or multimedia presentation on ELL writing development that includes

the rationale for the way they facilitate writing development of English language learners.

Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

Local stations can complete this section.

Outline of Content and Assignments

After previewing the documents in the Course Information, learners will proceed to the Course Content to complete the two sessions of the course, working through each session in order. Essential information pertaining to the topic is presented within each session. Throughout the sessions, learners are also asked to articulate their ideas in various forms; for example, they will reflect on their ideas and experiences. The two-week long discussion in the discussion forum is designed to allow learners to glean information from other learners' experiences with strategies both prior to and following the completion of the weekly assignments. The learners will complete a course project where they are asked to create a presentation describing ways to support English language learner (ELL) writing development. The presentation will be in the form of an educational blog or a multimedia presentation they will post to a free online Web tool. This presentation will be based on the current population of ELLs with whom they work and will include information on specific considerations that need to be made for ELLs, implications the standards have on writing development for ELLs, assessments that inform instruction, and effective strategies for working with ELLs in writing development (including the use of technology.)

This course is designed to address the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and International Reading Association (IRA) *Standards for the English Language Arts* that were developed to serve as a guide for teachers in developing curriculum and instruction that foster students' literacy development. The course specifically addresses Standards for the English Language Arts 4, 9, 10, and 12. Additionally, this course addresses several of the ISTE NETS*^T for teachers: I (A, B); III (B); IV (A); V (A, C, D).

Session 1: Considering and Identifying the Needs of ELL Writers

Objectives

By the end of this session, the learner will be able to:

- Identify two essential questions on the topic of supporting the writing development of ELLs.
- Reflect on previous experiences when working with English Language Learners and concerns you have about meeting the needs of these learners.
- Reflect on how to determine what writing concepts to teach based on specific considerations of the young ELL student.
- Reflect on how to use the writing standards to improve the writing skills of ELL students.
- Analyze and discuss instructional practices that promote the development of writing and English language proficiency in ELLs.
- Analyze student work samples using assessment guidelines to find evidence of writing abilities.

Read

- "Considerations for ELLs"
- "Tips for Teaching ELLs to Write" by J. Hanes
- "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children" (pages 324-325)



- “English Language Learners and the Five Essential Components of Reading Instruction” from Reading Rockets
- “Standards-based Writing for ELLs” by Colorín Colorado
- “NCTE/IRA Standards” by ISTE
- State/local district standards
- Select one:
 - “Preschoolers as Writers” by E.C. Venn & M.D. Jahn
 - “NCEE’s Kindergarten Writing Standards” by New Standards Primary Literacy Committee
 - “NCEE’s Reading and Writing Grade by Grade: Grade 1” by New Standards Primary Literacy Committee
 - “NCEE’s Reading and Writing Grade by Grade: Grade 2” by New Standards Primary Literacy Committee
 - “NCEE’s Reading and Writing Grade by Grade: Grade 3” by New Standards Primary Literacy Committee
- Using Informal Assessments for English Language Learners” by Colorín Colorado
- “Teaching Diverse Learners: Ongoing Assessment of Language, Literacy, and Content Learning” sections 5 and 6 from Education Alliance at Brown University

Participate in online discussions

- Introduce themselves to other learners.
- Discuss the following: In what ways can you encourage ELLs to produce text that “encourages conscious attention to the ways in which language conveys meaning?”

Complete assignments

- Essential Questions Assignment
- Formative Assessment of Writing Samples Analysis Assignment

Additional readings and resources (not required)

- “Characteristics for Writing Essential Questions” from Technology for Learning Consortium.
- “COACHING HABITS OF MIND: Pursuing the Essential Questions in the Classroom” from Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) National Web site
- “Framing Essential Questions” from *From Now On*
- “From Trivial Pursuit to Essential Questions and Standard-based Learning” from *From Now On*
- A Questioning Tool Kit from *From Now On*
- Inquiry-based Learning from Thirteen EdOnline
- “Child Development Tracker: Literacy from Age 4 to 5” from PBS Parents
- “Emergent Writing: Developing Emergent Writing Skills in the Early Childhood Classroom” from PBS Teachers
- “Getting Writing to Look Like Writing” from the National Association for the Education of Young Children
- “Learning that Alphabet Letters Represent Speech at the Phoneme Level” from the National Association for the Education of Young Children
- “Mirror of Language: The Debate on Bilingualism” by K. Hakuta
- “Building on the Sound System Of Spanish: Insights from the Alphabetic Spellings of English-Language Learners.” By L.A. Helman from *The Reading Teacher*
- Supporting English Language Learners” by L. Calkins in *The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching Writing* (pp.70-74)
- Reading, Writing and Learning in ESL by S. Peregoy & O. Boyle
- “Chapter 6: English Learners and Process Writing” from the companion Web site for Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL

- “Effective Reading Instruction for Struggling Spanish-Speaking Readers: A Combination of Two Literatures” from LD Online
- Dot’s Story Factory from PBS Kids
- Arthur: Games: Letter Writer Helper from PBS Kids
- Haiku from PBS Parents
- “National Educational Technology Standards for Students: The Next Generation” from ISTE
- “Profiles for Technology (ICT) Literate Students” from ISTE
- Rubistar from 4 Teachers.org
- “Assessing Young Children” from PBS Teachers
- “Ten Pointers on Evaluating a Young Child’s Writing” from Reading Rockets
- Stop and Go from PBS Kids
- “Student Friendly Scoring Guides” by R. Culham

Complete Activities (not required)

- Using the Standards to Develop a Writing Plan
- Participate in the following discussion: Write about an assessment strategy for writing that you have effectively used in the classroom and briefly explain how it can be used to support your ELLs. Then, review the strategies posted by other learners. How could you adapt one of the assessment strategies in order to work with your own ELL population?
- Reflect on the ELLs with whom you work and review a recent writing sample. Based on the information you read about in this session, what are the one or two skills you would teach the students?

Respond to reflection questions

- Reflect on prior experiences in helping to develop writing in both native English speakers and ELLs. Include any specific strategies used to work with these students and the challenges and successes experienced.
- Reflect on how to determine what writing concepts to teach based on specific considerations of the young ELL student.
- Reflect on how to use the writing standards to improve the writing skills of ELL students.

Session 2: Effectively Supporting Writing Development

Objectives

By the end of this session, the learner will be able to:

- Reflect on strategies, ideas, and techniques for teaching ELL students that would be most effective in developing writing skills.
- Reflect on the implementation of ideas, lessons, and strategies on writing development to assist the ELL student.
- Analyze the types of technology which support writing development and their specific use in the ELL classroom.
- Analyze and discuss instructional practices that promote the development of writing and English language proficiency in ELLs.
- Create an e-article or multimedia presentation on ELL writing development that includes the rationale for the way you facilitate writing development of English language learners.

Read

- “Strategies”
- “How to Develop a Lesson Plan that Includes ELLs” by Colorín Colorado
- “Educating English Language Learners: Implementing Instructional Practices” chapter 3 (pp. 21-27,) chapter 4 (pp. 20-32,) and chapter 4 (select two instructional strategies from pp. 32-59) by J. Vialpando & J. Yedlin
- “Increasing Academic Language Knowledge For English Language Learners Success”
- “Improving Writing Skills—ELLs and the Joy of Writing” by Colorín Colorado
- “To Triumph in This Country/Triunfar en Este País” by J. Minkel
- “Using Assistive Technology to Support Writing” by Center for Implementing Technology in Education

View

- "Morning Message"
- "What Makes Your Friends Happy?"
- "Interactive Writing: Part 1"
- "Interactive Writing: Part 2"
- "Teacher Reflections"
- "Support for Independent Writing"
- "Signing In"
- "Kerry and Jalen"

Participate in an online discussion

- Continue discussing ways to encourage ELLs to produce text that “encourages conscious attention to the ways in which language conveys meaning.”

Complete assignments

- Course Project: ELL Writing Presentation
- Post-Course Evaluation Survey

Additional readings and resources (not required)

- “English Language Learners with Special Needs: Effective Instructional Strategies” from LD OnLine
- Understanding and Recognizing: Writing Disabilities” from PBS Parents
- “Spelling and Students with Learning Disabilities” from LD OnLine
- “Learning Disabilities in English Language Learners” from LD OnLine
- "Writing: Teaching Children to Compose Informational Text" by D. McLurkin
- Kidspiration® and Inspiration® software
- Reading Rockets: Writing
- "Is Process Writing the 'Write Stuff'?" by K.W. Ray, K. W. from The Writing Workshop: Working Through the Hard Parts (and they're all hard parts).
- "Work, Space, and Time" by K.W. Ray, K. W. from The Writing Workshop: Working Through the Hard Parts (and they're all hard parts).
- Launching Young Readers: Episode 4 - Writing and Spelling from Reading Rockets
- Online Writing Lab (OWL) Perdue University
- Web sites recommended for Literacy by Colorín Colorado
- “Teachers Gain Skills, Confidence” from National Writing Project
- "Writing: Teaching Children to Compose Informational Text" by K.W. Ray, K. W. from The Writing Workshop: Working Through the Hard Parts (and they're all hard parts).
- “Spanish-Speaking American Children” and “Asian American Children” from the book Patterns of Narrative Discourse: A Multicultural, Life Span Approach
- Classrooms that Work by P. M. Cunningham & R. C. Allington

- “From the Heart: Writing—The Other Side of Literacy” from Colorín Colorado
- “Inventing Super Heroes and Writing about their Adventures” from Colorín Colorado
- “Worlds Beneath the Words: Writing Workshop with Second Language Learners” by Hubbard
- “Narrative Writing Works Magic in the ELD Classroom” from the National Writing Project
- Creating Your Own Classroom Newsletter from Colorín Colorado
- “Writing and Spelling Ideas to Use with Kids” from Colorín Colorado
- “Bright Ideas That Work” from Colorín Colorado
- “Minilessons” from Writing Workshop: The Essential Guide by Ralph Fletcher and JoAnn Portalupi
- Interactive: “Word Wall”

Complete activities (not required)

- Mini-lesson Review

Respond to reflection questions

- Reflect on strategies, ideas, and techniques for teaching ELL students that would be most effective in developing writing skills.
- Reflect on the implementation of ideas, lessons, and strategies on writing development to assist the ELL student.
- Analyze the types of technology which support writing development and their specific use in the ELL classroom.

Course Project

The course project will require learners to synthesize what they have learned in order to create a presentation describing ways to support English language learner (ELL) writing development. The presentation will be in the form of an educational blog or a multimedia presentation they will post to a free online Web tool. This presentation will be based on the current population of ELLs with whom they work and will include information on specific considerations that need to be made for ELLs, implications the standards have on writing development for ELLs, assessments that inform instruction, and effective strategies for working with ELLs in writing development (including the use of technology.)

For Option A, the creation of an e-article posted to an educational blog, learners will read “What Exactly is a Blog, Anyway?” from PBS Teachers Learning.Now, select a blog from the blog sites below, and then write a 1000-word e-article on ELL writing development.

- PBS Teachers: Learning.Now
- PBS Teachers: Media Infusion
- Education Week: Blogs
- TESOL: In the News Blog
- Infinite Thinking Machine
- Scholastic Community: All Teacher Blogs

For Option B, a multi-media presentation posted to a free online tool, learners will read “One Story, 50 Tools, Infinite Possibilities” from PBS Teachers Learning.Now, choose a free multi-media presentation Web site from the article or the sites below, and then create and post a 10-minute multi-media presentation on ELL writing development.

- Slideshare
- Zoho Show

- SlideRocket

Schedule

This course is scheduled to take approximately 15 hours to complete readings, activities, videos, assignments, and project.

Requirements

Learners are expected to:

- Complete all assignments.
- Participate regularly in Discussion Boards.
- Submit the course assignments in a timely fashion (determined by the facilitator).

Materials

Technical Requirements

- Word processor
- Internet service provider
- E-mail
- TeacherLine required plug-ins

Academic Dishonesty Policy

To be inserted by institution

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.