Syllabus

Course: *Common Core State Standards in Literacy, Grades 3-8*

Presenters: Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey

Credits: 3

Required Text: *Common Core English Language Arts in a PLC at Work™, Grades 3 – 5*, Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey, Solution Tree Press, 2013. (Note teachers of grades 6 – 8 will be provided with material appropriate to their grade level.)

Course Overview

States across the union are adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which (in the language of their developers) “provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them.” Through workshop footage, classroom footage, and interviews, this course, focused on the CCSS for English Language Arts, will prepare educators to satisfy the standards’ main goals by selecting appropriate texts for their students, developing lesson plans focused on close reading and text-based discussion, mastering the art of checking for understanding through a variety of tasks, and linking assessments with instruction. Educators will learn how to render their students increasingly and effectively responsible for their learning and how to differentiate instruction even as they align their instruction and assessment to the standards.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, educators will know:

- The Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts
- How to align instruction and assessment to the Standards

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, educators will apply the following skills:

- Identify the major goals of the CCSS in English Language Arts
- Gradually release responsibility to students to foster their learning
- Develop lesson plans based on close reading and text-based discussions
- Check for understanding using oral language, questions, writing, projects, performances, and tests
- Link formative and summative assessments with instruction
Units

1. Introduction

In this unit, presenters Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey introduce participants to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English and Language Arts. Teachers and administrators weigh in on the promise of the standards and the challenges of implementation. Dr. Frey briefly describes the history of the CCSS. A video tour highlights key features and organization.

Text: Introduction and Chapter 1: Using Collaborative Teams for English Language Arts

Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The reasons for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- How the CCSS are organized

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Locate the standards specific to their grade level or discipline

2. What to Teach: Anchor Standards

In this unit, Fisher and Frey look closely at the four standard types: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. We visit two classrooms to see how teachers address Reading and Speaking and Listening Standards with their eighth-grade students.

Text: Chapter 2: Implementing the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Text: Chapter 3: Implementing the Common Core State Standards for Writing

Text: Chapter 4: Implementing the Common Core State Standards for Speaking and Listening and for Language

Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The components of the ELA Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language

Learning Outcomes
After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Consider modifications to their ELA instruction to align with the CCSS

3. **Gradual Release of Responsibility**

In this unit, Fisher, Frey, and the workshop participants explore how to purposefully and systematically shift responsibility for learning from teacher to student. They discuss the essential sequence from articulating the purpose of a lesson by aligning with the CCSS, modeling the cognitive work, and embedding guided instruction, to providing opportunities for students’ cooperative and independent learning. We visit a third-grade classroom to watch how the teacher models a Think-Aloud strategy and gradually releases responsibility to her students.

**Objectives**

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Strategies that shift the responsibility for learning from teacher to student

**Learning Outcomes**

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Phrase a lesson’s purpose in relation to the CCSS
- Model cognitive work and provide guided instruction
- Embed opportunities for collaborative and independent learning

4. **The Instructional Planning Process**

In this unit, Fisher and Frey delve into the issues of curriculum and instructional planning. They consider such issues as how to facilitate students’ investigation, how to assess their progress and process, and how to address text complexity. They also examine how to design interrelated lessons and determine appropriate groups for collaborative work.

**Objectives**

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Components of the CCSS that affect curriculum and instructional planning
- Assessment and grouping strategies
- The relevance of text complexity to the CCSS

**Learning Outcomes**

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:
• Use the CCSS to modify and extend their curriculum and instructional planning
• Assess students’ progress and process
• Group students purposefully
• Select texts of appropriate complexity

5. Sample 4th Grade Lesson

In this unit, presenter Frey models an ELA lesson plans for 4th graders. She and the workshop participants examine the role of read-alouds, how to model and facilitate rereading, how to determine an author’s point of view, and the role of text-dependent questions and their different types. They also delve into the planning process, the purpose of co-planning, how to develop appropriate culminating tasks, and how to facilitate close reading at any grade level.

Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

• ELA strategies for textual analysis

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

• Model read-alouds
• Facilitate rereading
• Engage in various literary analysis strategies
• Plan and co-plan
• Design effective culminating tasks

6. Sample 8th Grade Lesson

Overview

In this unit, presenter Fisher models an ELA lesson plans for 8th graders, respectively. He and the workshop participants examine the role of read-alouds, how to model and facilitate rereading, how to determine an author’s point of view, and the role of text-dependent questions and their different types. They also delve into the planning process, the purpose of co-planning, how to develop appropriate culminating tasks, and how to facilitate close reading at any grade level.

Objectives
After completing this unit, educators will know:

- ELA strategies for textual analysis

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Model read-alouds
- Facilitate rereading
- Engage in various literary analysis strategies
- Plan and co-plan
- Design effective culminating tasks

7. Checking for Understanding

In this unit, Fisher, Frey, and the workshop participants scrutinize different strategies for checking for understanding through oral language, questioning, writing, and projects and performances. Participants will investigate how to teach students “accountable talk”; ask elicitation, elaboration, and clarification questions; and facilitate multiple writing projects, casual and formal—all to discern what students are understanding, what they need to re-teach, and how to do so.

Text: Chapter 5: Implementing Formative Assessments to Guide Instruction and Intervention

Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Strategies for checking for understanding

Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Assess students’ understanding through oral language, questioning, writing, and projects and performances

Presenters’ Bios
Doug Fisher—whose awards include the Innovation Award from the Academy of Educational Publishers, the Elva Knight Research Award from the International Reading Association, and the Farmer Award for Excellent in Writing from the National Council of Teachers of English, among many others—is a professor of Educational Leadership at San Diego State University. In addition to teaching on the college and high school levels, Fisher has been a co-director at the Center for the Advancement of Reading and policy fellow at the National Association of State Boards of Education. Fisher is the author of numerous articles (many with co-presenter Nancy Frey) for such publications as Principal Leadership, Educational Leadership, and Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy. He is also author, co-author, and/or editor of multiple books, including, with Frey, Teaching Students to Read Like Detectives: Comprehending, Analyzing, and Discussing Text (Solution Tree), The Purposeful Classroom: How to Structure Lessons with Learning Goals in Mind (ASCD), and, with D. Lapp, Handbook of researching on teaching the English Language Arts (Taylor & Francis). He has also participated in plentiful funded projects all relevant to education and literacy.

Nancy Frey, Ph.D., is a Professor of Literacy in the School of Teacher Education at San Diego State University. She is the recipient of the 2008 Early Career Achievement Award from the National Reading Conference, as well as a co-recipient of the Christa McAuliffe award for excellence in teacher education from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. In addition to publishing with her colleague, Doug Fisher, she teaches a variety of courses in SDSU’s teacher-credentialing and reading specialist programs on elementary and secondary reading instruction, literacy in content areas, and supporting students with diverse learning needs. Nancy is a credentialed special educator and reading specialist in California, and is co-editor of the NCTE journal, Voices from the Middle. She is privileged to learn with and from students and teachers at Health Sciences High and Middle College every day.

**Methods of Instruction:**

- Videos (presentations consisting of lecture, interviews, and classroom footage)
- Text (units based on required reading)
- Reflection questions (open-ended questions at intervals throughout the video presentations where participants are asked to reflect on the course content, their own practice, and their intentions for their practice)
- Quizzes (selected-response quizzes to assess understanding of the video presentations and eBook content)
- Discussion forum (prompts after each unit that engage participants in online dialogue with their cohorts)
- Midterm (a project intended to get teachers to begin to develop their practice by putting to work in the classroom what they have learned)
- Final (a project that enables educators to reflect on their practice and assess their students’ work through the lens of what they have learned)
All steps listed under each topic must be completed to receive credit for the course. No partial credit is given.