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Curry School of Education
405 Emmet Street
Charlottesville, VA 22903-2495**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Reading in the Content Areas is a course that explores how students comprehend and learn with text and how teachers can assist them in these processes. Participants will explore the nature and meaning of comprehension and strategic teaching and learning and will examine what it means to learn with texts. The emphasis in the class will be on the development of ways to think about the use of comprehension and content reading strategies within the context of effective instruction. Theoretical and foundational considerations will help frame the exploration, modeling, and practice of a range of strategies. Our practical understanding of comprehension strategies will be based, in part, on the Project CRISS model.

COURSE GOALS

The participants will:

- develop an understanding of student-centered comprehension instruction and what it means to learn with text
- learn to activate students' prior knowledge, actively engage them with text, and promote student reflection on learning
- evaluate a text and determine what makes it easy or difficult to comprehend
- evaluate the objectives and outcomes of instruction before selecting comprehension strategies
- revisit the "why" of lesson planning with regard to strategy selection and use
- learn techniques for promoting student discussion, questioning, writing, and vocabulary acquisition skills
- learn techniques for helping students consolidate and study what they have read
- learn instructional techniques for guiding students' thinking through a text and helping them become independent learners
- reflectively examine, as professionals, our own practice in search both of affirmation and adjustment

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Santa, C., Havens, L., & Maycumber, E. (1996). *Project CRISS: CReating Independence through Student-owned Strategies*, 2nd edition. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

This text is not available to the general public. It is only available to participants in an approved Project CRISS inservice training.

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

Vacca, R., & Vacca, J. (1999). *Content Area Reading*, 6th edition. New York: Longman.

The majority of this text would prove redundant to other course materials and content, but its three relevant chapters are available online in electronic format. If you are willing to make this work for you, the text is not required. Otherwise, you must purchase this text.

Strunk, W., & White, E. (1979). *The Elements of Style*, 3rd edition. New York: Macmillan.

Our final arbiter on questions of grammar, punctuation, sentence construction, and the like.

COURSE WEBSITE

A website has been developed to accompany and supplement this course. Its text mirrors much of what you will find in this printed version of the syllabus, although the website has the advantage of providing links to more information about topics such as the Honor System, APA citation, and common editing errors. You will also use the course website to access the electronic readings (unless you prefer looking them up at a library) and to obtain additional copies of other course handouts.

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ASSIGNMENTS, TASKS, REQUIREMENTS**1. READINGS**

You should complete all required readings and attempt also to read the recommended readings. Please bear in mind that the reading load is heavy and will require significant time outside of class. Strategies for engaged reading vary from task to task; individual assignments for the readings will be provided in class.

2. INITIAL LESSON PLAN

This is an ungraded assignment. Think about a lesson you have taught or might teach that focuses on student engagement in text or, at least, in comprehending new content. Then, commit it to paper. You should present the lesson plan in a three-column format: (1) **section** or **category** of the lesson plan (i.e., “Objectives”); (2) a **generic definition** of what you mean by that category; and (3) **explanation** or **description** or **actual steps**.

3. TEXTBOOK ASSESSMENT

You will conduct a thorough analysis of a textbook you use or think you might use in your classes, based on Chapter 2 in the CRISS text. You will also determine the readability of the text according to one of the informal assessments discussed and demonstrated in class. A complete description of this task will be provided. This paper should be typed, double-spaced, and 2-3 pages.

4. STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

You will try out at least one of our strategies in your classroom and submit documentation of the implementation. A “Strategy Implementation” form will be provided to help you plan and execute the lesson with the planning template introduced in class as your guide. Honor the premises of sound comprehension instruction. Plan for a typical 50-minute period. Examples of student products are encouraged but not required. [Non-classroom Teachers: Your alternative assignment will be explained by the instructor. See him soon.]

5. SHOW — N — TELL

Each student will share an adaptation of a course strategy as you would use or have used it in your classroom. You may base this on the sample lesson plan you draft or on a strategy included in your final project, or on any lesson you have in mind. Some students will present on an alternate topic instead, such as running records, working with diverse students, or creating text sets. Students will sign up in class for these.

6. FINAL JOURNAL

Since the final grade for the course is based on evidence of your success at confronting, grappling with, understanding, and internalizing the central course objectives, the final journal is a crucial and indispensable component of making the case for the grade you should receive. You’ll not argue for a particular grade, but instead you will distill the most significant ideas gained from the readings, class sessions, and projects and use them to (1) assess your own learning and growth, and (2) state your plan of action upon returning to your classroom (in other words, how will you insure that what you learned in this course will find a home in your classroom?) This journal should be typed and double-spaced. No particular length is recommended.

7. FINAL PROJECT

Submit three (3) consecutive lessons using the lesson plan template introduced and discussed in class. These lessons should show how you would use your knowledge of your students in the selection of strategies and activities. They should show a thorough integration of strategic instruction and be grounded in a clear and justifiable framework. You should be explicit in describing how the assessments will measure student behaviors and the attainment of the educational objectives. A cover sheet should be used to briefly describe the topic covered by the lessons, the grade and level of the students, and any strategies used that are not part of this course’s content. You should keep a copy; lesson plan units are not returned.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

We will meet Friday evenings from 5 pm – 8:30 pm and Saturdays from 9 am to 4:30 pm on the following weekends: October 6-7, 27-28; November 10-11; December 1-2, 2000. Saturday's lunch will be one hour and will occur approximately midway through the day.

	FRIDAY P.M.	SATURDAY A.M.	SATURDAY P.M.
Oct 6-7	Introduction & Initiation into Course Current Milieu InClass: Pressley & Harris Comprehension HW: Kincade Bring a Novel (if available)	Commitment Lesson Plan Due Teaching, Learning, Brain Reading to Learn Model of Reading/Fry Graph Declarative, Procedural, Conditional Knowledge	Introduction to Project CRISS Premises of Strategic Instruction Text Assessment/Text Structure HW: Santa Ch 1-2 Vacca Ch 1, 4 Rosenshine (Advances) Paris Lipson Wixson (rec'd)
Oct 27-28	TEXT ASSESSMENT DUE Think Alouds, Power Thinking Selective Underlining Pattern Puzzles/Mystery Pot KWL HW: Santa Ch 3 Vacca 30-53	Lesson Planning Standards of Learning Assessment & Evaluation	Questioning, Discussion, Summarizing, Graphic Organizers HW: Schmitt & Newby Rosenshine (Explicit) Santa Ch 4-5 Pearson & Gallagher (rec'd)
Nov 10-11	STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION DUE Column Notes/Learning Guides Opinion-Proof, Thesis-Proof Problem-Solution Story Maps HW: Santa Ch 6 Hoffman (rec'd)	Lesson Debriefing Writing Vocabulary	Show-N-Tell #1 Paideia Prep HW: Duffy & Roehler Santa Ch 7-9 Vacca 53-68 Asimov
Dec 1-2	FINAL JOURNAL DUE Paideia Session Shown-N-Tell #2 HW: Santa Ch 10	Reciprocal Teaching InClass: Ordeal By Cheque Show-N-Tell #3	FINAL PROJECT DUE Show-N-Tell #4 Barriers and Bridges Evaluation and Wrapup HW: ReadingQuest

Rec'd = "recommended"

PROCEDURAL STIPULATIONS

1. This is a graduate-level course. Students will be challenged and expected to perform at an advanced level.
2. The University of Virginia has a long tradition of honor in conduct and academic endeavors among its students. The Honor System requires that all work must be pledged:
On my honor as a student, I have neither given nor received aid or assistance on this assignment.
Further information regarding the Honor System and expectations of students may be found in the *Graduate Record*.
3. Attendance at all class sessions is required and participation is expected and needed. The grading rubric for the course is based in part on your presence and your contributions to class.
4. Assignments should be submitted in a timely fashion. The grading rubric for the course is based in part on the timeliness and completeness of course tasks, in addition to their quality. The instructor is not obligated to accept work that is late.
5. Some of the required and recommended readings will be available via the University of Virginia library's electronic reserve system. Please make arrangements to access them on the course website via a computer with an internet connection and a web browser such as Netscape or Internet Explorer. A plug-in like the free Adobe Reader is needed.
6. The citation style, when needed, should be accurate, acceptable, and recognizable practice (MLA, Chicago, etc.). The American Psychological Association (APA) style of citation and referencing is preferred. See the course website for additional guidance.

7. Please carefully edit all written assignments. A lack of care in proofreading or composition can negatively affect what might otherwise be a fine score on a task. The course website has a section on particularly troubling errors, but your best guidance will come from *The Elements of Style*.
8. The final grade will be determined based on evidence of proficiency with the assigned tasks. It is expected that all tasks will be undertaken and completed to the best of your ability and in the spirit in which they were intended.
9. The nature and timing of this course mitigate against the granting of a grade of Incomplete. Assigning a grade of Incomplete for any student is both unlikely and at the sole discretion of the instructor.
10. If you are a student with special needs, please let the instructor know as soon as possible, particularly if discussion of special considerations, alterations, or modifications is needed.

TASKS FOR READING ASSIGNMENTS

SANTA, C., HAVENS, L., & MAYCUMBER, E. (1996)

HW THROUGHOUT

Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

There is no regular task or assignment to accompany your readings from the CRISS text. However, you are expected to use post-it notes or flags to mark the cool ideas and strategies you encounter in the chapters. By the end of the course, you should have quite a few dog-eared page markers.

PRESSLEY, M., & HARRIS, K. (1990).

OCT 6 INCLASS

What we really know about strategy instruction. *Educational Leadership*, 48, 31-34.

IN CLASS:

While you read the article, consider as a professional, as part of a schooling enterprise, as a teacher or educator:

- 1) what are we doing now that we ought to do more of?
- 2) what are we doing that we ought to stop doing?
- 3) what are we not doing that we ought to start doing?

What are some key points made by Pressley & Harris that relate to us and the things we do? You'll discuss this in groups, but there must be NO whining, NO "yes, but..." and NO stoppers.

KINCADE, K. (1996).

OCT 6 HW

Improving reading comprehension through strategy instruction. *Reading Psychology*, 17, 273-281.

Notecard: Jot down a question (preferably) or a reaction (especially if it is impassioned). At the top of the notecard, put the author and article title, and put your name on the back of the card.

VACCA, R., & VACCA, J. (1999) – CHAPTER 1

OCT 7 HW

Content Area Reading, 6th edition. New York: Longman.

Notecard: Jot down a question (preferably) or a reaction (especially if it is impassioned). At the top of the notecard, put the author and chapter title, and put your name on the back of the card.

VACCA, R., & VACCA, J. (1999) – CHAPTER 4

OCT 7 HW

Content Area Reading, 6th edition. New York: Longman.

Complete a 3-2-1 on this chapter: 3 things you learned, 2 interesting things, and 1 question you still have.

ROSENSHINE, B. (1997A)

OCT 7 HW

Advances in research on instruction. In J.W. Lloyd, E.J. Kameanui, and D. Chard (Eds.) (1997) *Issues in educating students with disabilities*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Found online at <http://olam.ed.asu.edu/barak/barak.html>

Notecard: Write down a question in response to this article that you think would lead to the most intense, productive, or thorough discussion of its key ideas. At the top of the notecard, put the author and article title. On the back, put your name.

VACCA, R., & VACCA, J. (1999) – CHAPTER 2 [P. 30-53] OCT 27 HW
Content Area Reading, 6th edition. New York: Longman.
 Practice think alouds while you read this part of Chapter 2 in the Vacca and Vacca text. Jot down in the margins examples of think alouds you might say or use if you were using this text to model think alouds for your students.

SCHMITT, M., & NEWBY, T. (1986). OCT 28 HW
 Metacognition: Relevance to instructional design. *Journal of Instructional Development*, 9(4), 29-33.
 Each student will be assigned to a group: A, B, C, or D. After reading the article, write 2 QARs according to your group assignment:
A: right there, author & you
B: right there, on my own
C: think & search, author & you
D: think & search, on my own

ROSENSHINE, B. (1997B) OCT 28 HW
 The case for explicit, teacher-led cognitive strategy instruction. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL, March 24-28, 1997.
 Found online at <http://olam.ed.asu.edu/barak/barak1.html>

Questioning the Author:

1. What is the author trying to tell you?
2. Why is he telling you that?
3. Is it said clearly?
4. Could it have been said more clearly?
5. What would you have wanted to say? What is your reaction?

DUFFY, G., & ROEHLER, L. (1989). NOV 11 HW
 Why strategy instruction is so difficult and what we need to do about it. In McCormick, C., Miller, G., & Pressley, M., ed., *Cognitive strategy research: From basic research to educational applications*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

Pre/Post Notecard:

Before reading the article, answer the following question on one side of a notecard (labeled "PRE"):

Why is strategy instruction so difficult?

Then, read the article, and on the reverse side of the notecard (marked "POST"), use new understandings to further answer why strategy instruction is so difficult.

VACCA, R., & VACCA, J. (1999) – CHAPTER 2 [P. 53-68] NOV 11 HW
Content Area Reading, 6th edition. New York: Longman.
 Based on your reading of this portion of Chapter 2, create a sentence that uses all of the following terms in a way that shows your understanding of them: **comprehension, scaffold, diversity, metacognition, strategy instruction**. Then, use the same words but write a different (second) sentence.

ASIMOV, I. (1957) NOV 11 HW
 The Feeling of Power.

Asimov's short story "The Feeling of Power" will be the text for our Paideia seminar. Read and study the story in anticipation of a thorough and in-depth exploration of its theme, messages, and implications. To prepare you for this experience, you should choose one of the following two tasks:

Character Map

Develop a graphical, visual organizer that shows your understanding of the characters, their traits, and their relationships with one another. Choose one central character to serve as the focal hub of your map.

Double-Entry Journal

PRE-READING: Write down a great invention and why you think it was so valuable to humanity.

POST-READING: What are some "lost arts" you can think of? Why do you consider them lost arts?

GRADING RUBRIC

		COMPLETENESS of TASKS		TIMELINESS of TASKS		ATTENDANCE		PARTICIPATION	
A+	honors spirit of task; exceptional quality and insight; a rare and valuable contribution to our understanding	honors spirit of task 100% complete "model"	100% on time	100%	100%				
A	convincingly on target with the purpose of the task; evidence of growth; the learning is difficult to refute; worthy contribution to our understanding; reader not distracted by errors of grammar, spelling, or punctuation	what's missing may not be missed; accurate; on target with regard to what was to be produced; seamless; a whole product	almost always on time; rare but forgivable tardiness	absent less than 1 session	absent less than 1 session			outstanding; facilitates or promotes conversation focused on group goals	
A-					absent 1 session			well-above average; actively helps move group toward goal	
B+	competent and worthy; provides credible evidence of learning and growth; may not completely honor spirit of task; perhaps an "off-day"; errors of grammar, spelling, punctuation distract the reader	moderate shortcomings; minor elements missing; affects instructor's ability to see the product as a whole	late enough or often enough to attract instructor's notice; not necessarily chronic	absent less than 3 sessions				reliable, steady worker; would inconvenience group if they had to do without you, but they <u>would</u> do without you	
B									
B-	barely passable; only enough to get by; little evidence of proofreading	barely sufficient; least you could do and justify	most tasks late or some excessively late; chronic?						
C	undergraduate level/quality; unsophisticated; exhibits or depends little or none on course content or concepts	evidence of learning or growth insufficient to "convict"	excessively or repeatedly late	absent 3 sessions				weak or minimal participation; passive; sidetracks group; doesn't share roles or responsibilities	
F	unacceptable	difficult to recognize as the assigned task or not turned in at all	missing/not submitted	absent more than 3 sessions				non-participating; counterproductive; destructive; demeaning to others	
	Unquestionably	Definitely	Mostly	Sort Of	Hardly	Definitely Not			

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