



## **Balanced Literacy 4: Building a Community of Writers**

### **EDUO 9201**

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**Please see the Course Instructions below to learn more about your new learning adventure.**

#### **Course Instructions :**

Read the Course **Introduction**.

Open and read the **Syllabus** which includes Objectives and a Grading Rubric.

Checkout the **Supplementary Resources** links.

For each Session 1, 2 and 3 read **Overview** and the **assigned resources** and use them to complete the assignments. **Links to Resources** are located under each session. You will type your assignments offline in a document that you will later upload for grading.

If you want instructor feedback as you go, you may submit the assignments as you complete each session in the **DropBoxes for Sessions One, Two and Three** and **Assessment**. If feedback is not needed, you may simply submit all coursework for grading at one time in the **Completed Coursework DropBox**.

#### **Introduction**

Participants will learn how to create a classroom environment that is conducive to writing and supports effective writing instruction for all learners, including struggling writers and English Language Learners. The continuum of skills that good writers possess will be reviewed. As they experience the writing process, participants will create a piece of their own writing.

This self-guided course is designed for you, as a writer, to have fun and learn to focus on the skills that you will transfer to your students.

#### **Objectives**

**By the end of Session 1, participants will be able to:**

- Build a community of writers.

- A. Create a classroom community that supports writing that is developmentally appropriate and culturally diverse.
- B. Construct a plan using information gained from readings to create a classroom environment that promotes good writing.

**By the end of Session 2, participants will be able to:**

- Explore the stages of writing development.
  - A. Understand the developmental stages of writing.
  - B. Examine the connection between developmental stages of writing and grade level expectations and core learning standards.
  - C. Focus on various strategies for developing writing abilities of all learners, including ELL students and struggling writers.

**By the end of Session 3, participants will be able to:**

- Review the writing process.
  - A. Understand the varying stages in the writing process.
  - B. Plan instruction aimed at meeting these stages.
  - C. Complete the writing process and develop a published piece to use as a model for students.

<b>Exemplary A+-A-</b>	<b>Acceptable B+- B-</b>	<b>Unacceptable F</b>
All response assignments are complete and accurate.	All response assignments are complete and accurate.	Response assignments are incomplete and/or contain inaccurate or inappropriate responses.
All application assignments are reflective, thoughtful, clearly identifiable and	All application assignments are complete, identifiable and relevant.	Application assignments are incomplete and/or irrelevant.

relevant.		
Overall appearance is very well organized and free of spelling and grammatical errors	Overall appearance is generally organized with limited spelling and grammatical errors.	Overall appearance shows little organization and has spelling and grammatical errors.

## Course Materials

### 1. CD-ROM

- Videos:
  - [\*A Morning in a Kindergarten Classroom\*](#)
  - [\*A Literacy Program in a K-1 Classroom\*](#)
  - [\*Balanced Literacy: 2 Hours 10 Minutes in a Second Grade Classroom\*](#)

### 2. Professional Development Materials

- Annotated Content and Essential Questions
- Menu of Key Concepts and Related Resources
- PDF – *Professional Teachers Handbook*, [Chapter 5 – Going Creative with Literacy: Managing Strategies for English Language Learners](#), pages 102-124.

## Session 1: Building a Community of Writers

### Overview

Good writers are good readers. Writing gives voice to our inner thoughts and allows us to share them. As a form of communication, writing can transcend time and is a way to pass stories from generation to generation.

It has been said that the best way to improve anyone's reading is to have them write. Writing focuses students on phonics, comprehension, mechanics, developing their voice or perspective, and communicating this perspective to others. Gone are the days of diagramming sentences. Balanced Literacy focuses on both the reader's and the writer's workshops, developing the many skills that good readers and writers possess, in an authentic method of communication.

Teachers need to create an environment that is safe, encourages risk, and provides the support for learning the skills essential to the craft of writing. Balanced Literacy provides the teacher with many opportunities to model writing for their students, thereby infusing the skills necessary for their students to develop. The first step is always to observe the writer and his or her writing. From there, teachers can comment on success, note a teaching point, guide content, and-for more advanced writers-offer examples of good writing so that the student can apply what is appropriate.

## Assignments:

1. List what you feel are the elements necessary to create a classroom writing community. Cite articles in session one as your sources.
2. Consider your classroom and your list in #1 What do you already have in place?
3. What do you need to work on to foster a classroom writing community?

### **You as a writer. "Your Life in Seven Stories"**

Most people can remember pivotal moments in their lives. The birth of a child, the death of a loved one, your first day teaching, etc. If you had only seven stories with which to tell your life, what would they be? How would these stories reflect your life and define who you are as a person?

Think about your life. Generate a list of ideas that you could write about over the course of this class. There should be seven topics. (Adapted from *Becoming a Literacy Leader*, Jennifer Allen, 2006) *Your Life in Seven Stories*

4-10. Your seven topics

11. How could this activity be used with your students to begin or end the school year?
12. What value do you see in using such an activity with your students?
13. In what ways can this exercise appeal to all learners, including those who are struggling?

## Resources for Session One

### 1. Videos:

- [\*A Morning in a Kindergarten Classroom\*](#)
- [\*A Literacy Program in a K-1 Classroom\*](#)
- [\*Balanced Literacy: 2 Hours 10 Minutes in a Second Grade Classroom\*](#)

### 2. Professional Development Materials:

- **PDF - [Professional Teachers Handbook, Chapter 5](#)** - Going Creative with Literacy: Managing Strategies for English Language Learners, "Utilizing Writing Notebooks in the Classroom", pages 103-106
- **PDF - [Professional Teachers Handbook, Chapter 5](#)** - Going Creative with Literacy: Managing Strategies for English Language Learners, "Strategies for English Language Learners", pages 116-119

### 3. Online Resources:

- **Getting Your Room and Yourself Ready: Launching Writer's Workshop**  
<http://www.davidson.k12.nc.us/education/components/scrapbook/default.php?sectiondetailid=27973&PHPSESSID=67070aa4e610139a8a278f67aa5bac01>

- **Lesson 1: Starting the Writing Workshop I**  
[http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/Planning\\_guides/Literacy/1/1\\_1\\_launching\\_reading\\_writing\\_workshop\\_writing.pdf](http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/Planning_guides/Literacy/1/1_1_launching_reading_writing_workshop_writing.pdf)  
 (pages 1-11)
- **Building a Community of Writers** (Annenberg Video-This is a free video, but you need to create an account to view it. Once registered, click on the video button located on the right side of your screen next to the title of the video.)  
[http://www.learner.org/resources/series205.html?pop=yes&vodid=578133&pid=2204#program\\_descriptions](http://www.learner.org/resources/series205.html?pop=yes&vodid=578133&pid=2204#program_descriptions)

## Session 2: Stages of Writing Development

### Overview

People experience predictable stages of development while gaining skills. Before you learned to drive, you had to learn about the parts of the car, what the gas and brake pedals were for, and how to start the engine. It took much practice-first on empty streets or parking lots, then on quiet roads-before you were ready to drive in traffic.

Language development also occurs in predictable stages. Babies coo, mimic sounds, learn one-word identifiers for what they want, and eventually put it all together to form coherent words and sentences. Similarly, writers begin with scribbles, evolve to picture, and eventually begin to use letters to represent sounds. From these basic skills, they can later create words, sentences, stories -there is no limit.

It is vital for teachers to understand the stages of writing so they can help their students advance to higher levels. It is a rare class that contains students who are all on the same functional level. Balanced literacy allows teachers to bring students to a higher level, no matter where on the continuum they are.

English Language Learners and struggling readers and writers present unique challenges. Success for students for whom English is another language depends greatly on how well they learned their first language. If they went through the appropriate developmental stages in their first language, most can adapt to English by transferring the skills they have already learned. But for those who did not acquire language through appropriate stages, as well as those who are struggling readers, the teacher must be aware of where their students' deficiencies fit on the continuum in order to help them improve. The goals are the same. The instruction must be paced more slowly and with more explicit direction.

### Assignments

#### Developmental Stages of Writing

1. Identify the developmental stages of writing. Cite Session Two readings as your sources.
2. Collect and examine student narrative writing samples in your classroom. Scan one writing sample onto your computer. Discuss the current stage of the student and what you notice about the writing in relation to the developmental stages.
3. Identify the stage each writer is currently in and look for groupings you could create. Discuss your findings.

4. At what stage are most of your classroom writers in?

### **Scope and Sequence**

5. After reading the Scope and Sequence for your grade level, discuss your reaction to it.

6. How can you use this Scope and Sequence as a resource in your classroom?

7. What are your feelings about the expectations for students at your grade level?

### **Stages of Writing Development Continuum**

8. In what ways can you use Stages of Writing Development Continuum information with the parents of your students?

9. In what ways do you think this information might help them at home?

### **Struggling Writer**

10. Reflect on a struggling writer in your class. Where does this student fit on the continuum of writing skills development?

11. What are the student's challenges?

12. Identify the student's strengths.

13. What strategies mentioned in the literature and on the video clips can you implement to help this student?

### **"Your Life in Seven Stories"**

14. Revisit your list of seven stories. Which one of the seven stories will you choose to take through the writing process?

## **Resources for Session Two**

Located online in Moodle course. You must be logged in to view the resources for Session Two.

## **Session 3: The Writing Process**

### **Overview**

The writing process is a cycle repeated many times. **Pre-writing** is the first stage, and this happens consciously or unconsciously. Knowing that you have to compose a document, you will probably mull ideas in your head before you ever set pen to paper. Students may need guidance in formulating ideas, and this stage of the process is designed to stimulate thoughts. This can be an extensive process, sometimes taking more time than the writing.

The **first draft** gets your ideas on paper without much concern for the mechanics. It is the starting point from which all future versions will flow. After looking over your draft or sharing it with another reader, you will begin to **revise** by checking for content, organization, and clarity. The next phase is **editing**, where the mechanics of writing are reviewed. Sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and grammar are considered.

The final phase-**publishing**-prepares the written work to be shared with others. Published authors claim to have created countless drafts, and some feel they never have finished.

## Assignments

### You as a writer. "Your Life in Seven Stories"

1. Think about the story you selected to write about. Get a "snapshot" in your mind, or look at an actual photograph from that time. Zoom in on one moment of this story. Look at it with a narrow focus, like looking through a lens of a camera. Write this portion of your story.

### Classroom Application

Explore the information presented on the various websites.

2. List the stages of a writing workshop.
3. Discuss what you feel is the role of each stage. Be sure to cite information from the articles.
4. Discuss which of the stages you find to be the biggest challenge in your classroom.
5. In light of what you have viewed and read, what do you plan to do to address this challenge?
6. In what ways can your modeled writing improve your students' writing?
7. What role does brainstorming play in stimulating your students' thought processes?
8. Pick one of the stages and share at least three ways you develop a writer in that stage. For example, if you choose pre-writing, list three strategies you teach students in the pre-writing stage.

## Resources for Session Three

### 1. Articles:

- [Using WordleT as a Pre-Writing Tool](#)

### 2. Additional Online Resources:

- **Ideas for Teaching the Writing Process**  
<http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/writing/writingprocess/menu.html>
- **The ABC's of the Writing Process**  
<http://www.angelfire.com/wi/writingprocess/>

- **Tools for Reading, Writing, and Thinking**  
<http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/academics.cfm?subpage=478>

## Assessment Assignment

- Submit the final draft of the story you chose from "Your Life in Seven Stories" list.
- Good leads draw a writer in. Reread your story and see if you can revise the lead. Look for the most powerful line you have in your piece. Lift this line out of the piece and write it at the top of a new sheet of paper. Now rewrite the story starting from that line. Compare it to your original and see how this strategy helped develop your piece.
- Think about the texts you have used in your classroom to teach writing. Go through some of your texts and see if you can find an example of a strong ending. What is it about this ending that was unique? Use this text now as a model to work on your own ending. Revisit your ending and try to rewrite it in a new way.
- Reread your story with its new lead and ending. Can you locate what we call the "hot spot" ? This is the spot where the main action occurs. This would be the climax of your story. Good writers like to slow down the action at this spot. One way to slow down the action is to use description. Revise your piece to slow down the moment. Describe for us how you were feeling at this moment, what you were thinking, what it looked like, smelled like, sounded like, etc.
- Reread your story one last time. Retype the story to submit your final copy that should include the revisions you worked on. Be sure to edit your work for grammar and punctuation. You may make any final changes you feel are necessary to tell the story. You now have a published model to share with your students! Submit this model that you shared with your students.

## Supplementary Resources

### 1. Additional Online Resources:

- **ReadWriteThink.org** (Search lesson plans that incorporate the writing process.)  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/search/?learning\\_objective=31](http://www.readwritethink.org/search/?learning_objective=31)
- **Writing Workshop Curricular Calendar**  
<http://www.middleweb.com/ReadWrkshp/RWdownld/CurrCalendar1.pdf>
- **Launching the Writing Workshop (Lucy Calkins)**  
<http://books.heinemann.com/Shared/onlineresources/E00604/conference.pdf>
- **Differentiated Instruction for Writing**  
[http://www.k8accesscenter.org/training\\_resources/writingdifferentiation.asp](http://www.k8accesscenter.org/training_resources/writingdifferentiation.asp)

### 2. How-To Articles from Teachers Network

- **Teach Early Childhood Literacy**

[Assessing Student Writing](#)

[Author Study: Vera B. Williams](#)

[Breaking the Ice](#)

[Charts in the Classroom \(A Pictorial View\)](#)

[Conduct Parent-Teacher Conferences](#)

[Create a Fall Bulletin Board](#)

[Creating an Interdisciplinary Unit for Elementary School](#)

[Designing Center Activities](#)

[Establishing Productive Record Keeping Practices](#)

[Get to Know Your Students on the First Day](#)

[Getting Started in Early Literacy With Read Aloud](#)

[Getting Started in Writing Workshop](#)

[Getting Started with Literacy Centers](#)

[How to Do a Word Wall](#)

[How to Plan for a Successful End to Your School Year](#)

[Learning Centers in the Early Childhood Classroom](#)

[Make the Home-School Connection at the Beginning of the Year](#)

[Planning Mini-Lessons for Writing Workshops](#)

[Survive That First Day](#)

[Teaching Non-Fiction Reading and Writing](#)

[Teaching Young Learners to Cross Check Using Guess the Covered Word](#)

[The Classroom Library](#)

[The Pros and Cons of Heterogeneous Grouping](#)

[Thinking Through Planning Your Curriculum](#)

[Using Assessment Data](#)

[Using Shared Writing to Teach Writing Skills](#)

- **Teaching Upper Grade Literacy (a gateway leading to many articles on balanced literacy)**

[Assessing Student Writing](#)

[Assessing Your Students' Writing](#)

[Author Study: Vera B. Williams](#)

[Developing Your Classroom Library](#)

[Facilitating Accountable Talk in Your Classroom](#)

[Getting Started in Early Literacy with Read Aloud](#)

[Getting Started in Writing Workshop](#)

[Helping Parents Help Their Children](#)

[How to Assess Small Group Conversation About Text](#)

[How to Confer in Your Writers' Workshop](#)

[How to Make Your Writers' Workshop Work](#)

[How to Set Up a Writing Center](#)

[How to Teach "Hard to Teach" Students](#)

[How to Teach Editing in Your Writers' Workshop](#)

[How to Teach Reading through Conferring in Writing](#)

[How to Use Assessment Data to Meet the Needs of Your Students](#)

[Launch an Oral History Project](#)

[More How to Teach Reading through Conferring in Writing](#)

[Planning Mini-Lessons for Writing Workshops](#)

[Talk the Talk: How to Look At and Learn from Student Writing Work](#)

[Teaching Effectively Using the Workshop Model](#)

[Teaching Non-Fiction Reading and Writing](#)

[Teaching Spelling Within the New Literacy Curriculum](#)

[The Pros and Cons of Heterogeneous Grouping](#)

[The Value of the Balanced Literacy Components](#)

[Understanding the Language of Balanced Literacy](#)

[Understanding the Writers Workshop Component of Balanced Literacy](#)

[Using Shared Writing to Teach Writing Skills](#)

[Using Your Writers' Workshop to Prepare Students for Standardized Tests](#)

[Walk the Walk: How to Look at and Learn from Student Writing Work](#)

[What to Teach in Your Writers' Workshop](#)

### **3. Curriculum Projects Developed by Teachers Network Adaptable For Elementary Balanced Literacy**

#### **[A Peaceful Place is Powerful for the Mind](#)**

Students who follow paths to peace can build powerful places for themselves and their peers. By using real-life situations, they develop self-esteem, self-control, respect for the rights of others, and a sense of responsibility. This approach also encourages students to settle grievances and conflicts through oral and written communication without resorting to confrontation.

#### **[A Perfect Pet? A Research Based Project for Early Childhood Students](#)**

Students are required to complete a research based written report about their pet and to record an audio file of that report. These recorded audio reports will be uploaded to Voice Thread along with a photograph of themselves holding their pet.

#### **[All About Bugs](#)**

During the course of the study the children will be able to distinguish between fiction and non-fiction genres. The children will be able to use reference books to obtain information.

#### **[An Alphabet Journey Through Space](#)**

Students were asked to compile a list of space vocabulary words. They then researched the meaning of each

word using Internet resources and designed a page for each letter of the alphabet, which included the meaning and related graphics which they imported from various Web sites.

### **Animating Aesop's Fables**

Using a variety of print and online resources, students will study the "fable" genre, with specific focus on Aesop's Fables. They will learn that a fable is a short story that teaches a lesson or moral. The second goal of this project is for students to develop technology skills in graphic programming which they will use to produce simple animations of their fables.

### **Authors Alive: Students' Twist on Famous Works**

This curriculum project is a thematic English/Language Arts program that incorporates the use of technology. To reach all components of a balanced literacy unit, various strategies are implemented using books by Eric Carle and Lois Ehlert. Strategies include read-alouds, reading and listening comprehension, sentence structure, sequencing, character development, and setting.

### **Author of the Week**

The purpose of this project is to get young children excited about reading by letting them take the same book (of their choice) home each night to focus on it for one whole week! The project exposes students to a large number of books by the same author, which provides an opportunity for an in-depth study and appreciation of each author

### **Authors and Letters**

This project is designed to support pupils in their work relating to the Year 3 narrative. This unit is designed in three phases, to be covered in three weeks.

### **Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days**

The students participate in activities such as cause and effect, grammar (capitalization, punctuation marks, plural nouns, compound words, past and present verbs, contractions, quotation marks), compare and contrast, word processing and searching the Internet in conjunction with the book Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days by Stephen Manes.

### **Celebrating Traditions: Honoring Our Ancestors**

In this unit the students use the Internet to learn about several cultures' traditions for remembering their dead ancestors. The students then use different technologies to investigate and make a report on one of these traditions.

### **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory**

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is a unit designed to approach an age old story using modern technology methods to help "solve the problems" of the characters. There is a lesson for each academic subject area and activities to help hone technology skills. The unit is geared toward fourth and fifth grade students.

### **Circumference and the Dragon of Pi**

This is a fun unit that ties in literature and mathematics. Using technology and the books Sir Cumference and the First Round Table and Sir Cumference and the Dragon of Pi, students will explore the concepts of circumference and pi.

### **City Of Immigrants: Immigration to New York City**

Lessons in "City of Immigrants" introduce second and third grade ELLs to primary documents, teaching them how to analyze photographs and texts within their historical context. The unit integrates multimedia technology, including interactive websites, digitized oral histories online, and documentary film. As a culminating project, students interview family members to compile their own immigration histories.

### **Claude Monet and his Friends and Followers**

Come and meet Claude Monet and his friends and those who were inspired by his work. Activities, lesson plans, interactive tours, and more will increase knowledge of this period in art.

### **Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs**

The students will explore the types of weather patterns intergrated with a reading lesson of Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs. This unit combines Language Arts & Science as well as technology.

### **Cocoa-Choco-Late**

This unit was created to motivate students with something they love, chocolate! The theme is launched with the reading of the story The Chocolate Touch. Students explore its history, how chocolate is made and how they, as concerned global citizens, can help stop the slavery of cacao plantations and farms.

### **Com-Post With Us?**

The purpose of this unit is to promote recycling of waste in order to make students aware of environmental needs facing our world today. Through the use of technology, field trips, and hands-on activities, students will become proactive in an environmental issue.

### **Diamonte Biography Poems**

Students review the parts of speech and do biography research in order to write diamond-shaped poems about a famous person from history.

### **Dream Houses**

This program is about houses and how people build them, and how they become homes. It explores different types of homes and how the environment effects what types of houses people construct. It uses visuals, repetitive verses, poems, songs, and hands-on projects to involve the students in building vocabulary and exploring the reasons why people in different environments have different needs.

### **English Language Exercises for Special Needs Students**

This unit is aimed at students who have difficulties with English language particularly with expressing themselves in written form and communicating in general. A multisensory approach to both reading and writing is recognized as the best approach for these children in this unit.

### **Everybody Fiesta: A Unit on Hispanic Celebrations**

September 15 to October 15 is National Hispanic Heritage Month. This unit offers a piñata full of activities that will help teachers focus attention on the contributions of people of Hispanic heritage to the history of the United States.

### **Exploring Irish Legends**

Young students can read Irish legends and compare them with Aesop's Fables online, and then write their own legend.

### **Geography Influenced the Development of the Western Hemisphere**

Students spend several weeks studying the geography and physical features of the Western Hemisphere and exploring how the geography shaped the cultures and traditions of the people who lived there. They use maps, short informational texts, folk tales, the Internet, and other classroom resources to make inferences and develop critical thinking skills.

### **Help Save Wilbur**

I wanted my students to think more deeply about how to describe the qualities of the character Wilbur in Charlotte's Web by E.B. White. After reading through Stephen Manes' Be A Perfect Person in Just Three Days lesson plan, I decided to modify his vocabulary lesson (#5).

### **Help! What Is Happening On The Third Rock From The Sun?**

This is an interactive unit that investigates what is happening in our environment and how it is affecting us worldwide. The purpose is to develop strategies for implementing a student-centered approach through hands-on activities in which reading, writing, science and technology are integrated.

### **Henry VIII and his six wives**

In this project students find out about the Tudors through the story of Henry VIII's marriages.

### **If you like it so much why don't you blog about it?**

This unit will engage students in the creation of book reports and book reviews. Students will build comprehension skills as they share their experience, understandings, and opinions of independent reading books. Students will post their reviews to a class blog. The blog posts will serve as way for their reviews to be shared with the world and will give a contextualized meaning to writing book reports and reviews.

### **Instructional Texts**

Over a period of five lessons in one week, students work through the activities and exercises that provide practice in using instructional text, while at the same time, revising verb tenses and using imperative commands.

### **iRead, iWrite, iMovie 2**

With technology as its vehicle iRead, iWrite, iMovie2 is an interdisciplinary project where learners will work collaboratively using project-based learning. This project will enthusiastically embark learners on a journey into the realm of movie making while creating a love for reading and writing at the same time.

### **Isla, the Magical Journey**

The journey inspired by the book called "Isla" written by Arthur Dorros and illustrated by Elisa Kleven has no end. The magical journey in this unit begins with the reading of the story and finding out about life in a tropical island, Puerto Rico.

### **It's A Mystery To Me**

Who doesn't enjoy reading and trying to solve mystery stories! In this WebQuest unit, students become both mystery readers and writers.

### **It's Written in the Stars!**

This unit on astrology attempts to familiarize students of elementary age with the science of astrology. It will explain what astrology is, the mythology associated with each sign, the signs of the Zodiac, the character traits associated with each sign, and related vocabulary. The children will create narrative accounts about their character traits, illustrate the constellation of each sign of the Zodiac, and write and illustrate their own creative myths about an original "Zodiac Sign".

### **Laura Numeroff Author Study**

Students, in cooperative learning groups, read books written by Laura Numeroff and analyze the author's style with the use of a semantic web all while practicing word processing skills.

### **Learn to Read, Read to Learn with Neighborhood Connections**

This project focuses on structured, sequential, multi-sensory reading remediation using rule-based reading software scaffolded by reading to younger children in the neighborhood elementary school. Creating a computer slide show and an Outstanding Readers calendar exposes students to new technology and allows them to reflect on their experience as older Reading Buddies.

### **Learning Partners: LPs for Life**

LPs for Life gives new meaning to long playing learning partners. It is a cross-aged tutoring and mentoring

project where elementary students work with primary students on literacy and other subjects as suggested by curricula needs

### **[Let's Play Scrabble](#)**

In this WebQuest, students develop skills needed to research the history, rules, strategies, and masters of the time-honored game of Scrabble on the Web. As they play the game, they recognize word patterns, improve their spelling skills, and increase their vocabulary as they build words on the board. In addition, students reinforce basic addition skills as they total their word scores for each play and add them to their game scores.

### **[Lewis and Clark Expedition](#)**

The students take a virtual cyber tour to learn about the Lewis and Clark Expedition funded by Congress in 1803. Since this is the two hundredth anniversary of the expedition, the book *Lewis and Clark On The Trail Of Discovery* was read in the classroom.

### **[Life Sized New York City Landmarks](#)**

Students learn about the history of New York City, landmarks and geography. This unit merges literacy, art and Social Studies together to give students an enriching learning experience. The culminating project for this unit requires the students to create life sized New York City Landmarks.

### **[Literacy and Numeracy Resources](#)**

This site contains practical, easy to use resources that can be used to develop literacy and numeracy skills of the emergent learner. This unit contains reproducible resources based on children's actual needs and are easy for teachers to use.

### **[Literacy Leaders: Cross-School Mentoring](#)**

Using the latest technology, high schoolers launch cross-school tutoring by scheduling five Read Aloud sessions with their elementary school Book Buddies. With children as their audience, older students interact in a REAL environment to raise their own learning standards and learn by teaching.

### **[Literacy Lessons for Little Learners Make Sense](#)**

This program consists of a multi-sensory approach to learning the alphabet, letter sounds, and a sight word vocabulary using technology. The curriculum accommodates visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners by appealing to all five senses. Developmentally appropriate hands-on materials engage the children both physically and cognitively.

### **[Little Hands Help the Homeless](#)**

What's it like to be homeless? How can children help? Many inner city schools like Boston's Josiah Quincy are near homeless shelters that may intimidate young children. When they understand the world around them, youngsters discover they can make a difference in that world.

### **[Little Scientists](#)**

This unit provides students the opportunity to investigate, explore and learn about science in fun and meaningful ways and then take this information to create technology rich projects.

### **[Making eBooks](#)**

This project integrates electronic books that can be created with any presentation software. Students produce e-books using themselves to demonstrate their mastery of content standards, such as number sense or color recognition.

### **[Making Science & Literature Connections: El Guero](#)**

The purpose of this program is to make a connection between science and literature. After reading the first three

chapters of the novel *El Guero* by Elizabeth Borton de Trevino, the students use computer technology to do research on the Internet about the gray whale, its physical characteristics, and its route of migration.

### **Man's Best Friend**

This unit is designed to teach elementary students the responsibilities of owning a pet while encouraging students to acquire a greater respect for the intrinsic value and worth of animals.

### **Math Matters**

Students explore mathematical concepts through hands-on activities and real life application. The students will use the internet to transfer, extend, and reinforce their day to day learning. Students meet core content strands within the New York State Math Standards.

### **Miss Nelson is Missing, Miss Nelson is Back**

Students explore the fascinating world of "Miss Nelson Is Missing" and "Miss Nelson Is Back" in this exciting unit. The students participate in activities such as cause and effect, grammar (punctuation marks), compare and contrast, sequencing, comparing characters/recalling details, word processing and searching the Internet.

### **Muggie Maggie**

Students will explore the fascinating world of *Muggie Maggie*, by Beverly Cleary in this exciting unit. Students gain knowledge through the use of computers, the Internet, reading and writing.

### **Museum in the Classroom**

The focus of *Museum in the Classroom* is facilitating fourth-grade students' strategy acquisition to become independent readers, writers, listeners, and researchers. Using balanced literacy methodology along with multi-media sources, the students, over a period of ten weeks, explore the Eastern Woodland Indian culture and display their results for parents, peers, teachers, and administrators as a 'museum in the classroom.'

### **My Country 'Tis of Thee**

Who wrote the Pledge of Allegiance and The Star-Spangled Banner? What do these verses mean? Why do we observe Veterans Day and Flag Day? Youngsters use emerging language, math, and social studies skills to discover answers to these and other questions.

### **My Science Fair**

Students will become proficient at Web-based research as it relates to the scientific method. They will use photography, graphing and charting software, and drawings to produce illustrations of the scientific method and its processes.

### **Non-Fiction Animal Picture Books**

In this unit, students will be studying non-fiction writing, as well as learning how to research a specific animal. By the end of the unit, students will be able to create a non-fiction picture book about their animal and share it with the class.

### **NYC From A to Z**

This unit will engage students in the creation of an ABC book about New York City. Students will build comprehension skills as they research, visit, photograph and document sites of interest and importance in NYC. The ABC book will give a contextualized purpose to field trips, show students the importance and historical significance of places in students' communities and also serve as a motivation for students to read and write.

### **Once Upon a Time**

Sharing stories and reading aloud to children is one of the most significant activities for building knowledge that is essential for achievement in reading. By means of this unit charming pigs, hens, goats, bears, mice, and others will attract your students into the magical world of reading and literature. Students will participate in

engaging activities and will expand their vocabulary. Students will learn how oral sounds and print are associated.

### **Pandas, Flamingos and Blogs**

This science unit gives children an opportunity to observe and record animal behavior using web 2.0 technology through the use of blogs and webcams. Students record observed behavior on a daily basis in a blog. They then conduct research on the animal that they are observing. Finally, they make a digital picture book about their animal.

### **Peter the Butterfly**

Peter the Butterfly is an interdisciplinary unit on caterpillars and butterflies. Students enhance their reading and mathematical skills in symmetry; observe and discuss the stages of a butterfly; enhance their creative thinking and map skills; and identify cardinal directions.

### **Phingertip Phonics**

Phingertip Phonics is designed to help teachers who are teaching basic phonics and word recognition. It is designed to supplement the traditional methods of using flash cards and chalk to teach phonics and word recognition.

### **Primary Math with Eric Carle Books**

The primary goal of this thematic unit is to teach young children how math is used daily in real world situations. All activities are based on Eric Carle books, and centered around Howard Gardner's Eight Multiple Intelligences.

### **Ramona Quimby, Age 8**

Students will explore the fascinating world of Ramona Quimby, Age 8, by Beverly Cleary, in this exciting unit. Students use online resources to create word searches and puzzles using vocabulary words, create spreadsheets and graphs from class surveys, complete grammar and word usage activities and learn how to write and publish a variety of book reports.

### **Read With Mrs.G.**

Mrs. G constructed a wiki, which could be linked to her school website. She added hyperlinks of herself reading stories aloud from Teacher Tube. It allows children to always have access to their teacher reading them stories, particularly if no one else is available to read to them.

### **Sarah, Plain and Tall**

Students go back in time and experience the day and life of Sarah Wheaton, the title character of Sarah, Plain and Tall. This unit integrates language arts, social studies, art and music as well technology. Students really experience what life was like back then using modern technology.

### **Sign of the Beaver**

This unit lets students use animation to display their reading comprehension skills. This is an exciting way to get students motivated about reading. Use this project as the culminating activity for your Sign of the Beaver unit.

### **Spice up the Basal**

Spice Up The Basal is an interdisciplinary unit designed for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in the fifth grade. It engages students in a challenging, yet fun way, in reading, language arts, science, social studies, mathematics and technology.

### **Stories for Year Two**

This unit of work comprises six one-hour lessons which can be taught consecutively or in two sets of three

lessons. These lessons could form part of a longer unit of work on this theme or they could be the introduction to a unit on story writing.

### **Surfing the Net with Authors**

This is a unit involving three components: favorite authors, animal studies and early learning experiences with the computer/Internet. This unit engages primary students into experiencing a broader use of computers and the Internet while learning about identifiable authors and researching animal facts.

### **The ABC's of Math**

The ABCs of Math is an interdisciplinary program that develops children's skills in reading and writing, increases their understanding of basic math concepts, allows for creativity, encourages cooperation, and improves skills in applications of technology.

### **The Great Chocolate Adventure**

Students will gather information about the pros and cons of chocolate, then design their particular campaign leaflet.

### **The Podcasting Project**

This podcasting project unit is a culminating assignment for our five leveled reading groups. Each group is reading chapter books in the fantasy genre. As students finish, they use their notes from reading groups and Internet research to design a reading group web page and an exciting podcast to showcase the book they have completed.

### **The Road to the White House**

As they work in cooperative groups, students will find out who the presidential and vice presidential candidates are, what parties they represent, their biographies, and what issues they stand for. Students will then join the campaign trail and create a persuasive essay, political cartoon, campaign poster and campaign button to boost their candidate. Students will also take part in an online mock election and graph the class's election results.

### **The Things that Make us Tick**

Students use the Internet and a specific website to conduct research on the brain, the heart, and cells. While learning to locate and determine important information in expository text by recognizing signal words, they develop concept skills and think critically through discussions and sharing of information.

### **The Valley of Gardens, A History of the Santa Maria Valley**

The Valley of Gardens is an in-depth unit about the local history of The Santa Maria Valley in California. It can be used as a unifying yearlong theme. A mural that is ever changing and growing serves as a constant review of what has been learned about the local area, as well as a tool for learning new material about the subject.

### **The Wonderful World of Arthur**

This unit is centered around the Arthur series by Marc Brown. This exciting thematic unit teaches young children how to acquire scientific ways of thinking, how to better observe the world, and how to communicate.

### **The World in a Bowl of Soup**

The intent of this project is to develop awareness that culture, geographic location affects the foods, and spices people use to cook at home, while providing useful lessons that allow students to understand the influences of various social values. The project does this through literature, internet access and the integration of multimedia.

### **Things Are Shaping Up**

Using literature, hands-on materials, and the Internet, students discover the characteristics and names of various shapes. This is a good introduction to shapes, where students learn to identify, compare/contrast, and reproduce shapes.

### **Through the Looking Glass: Life in Colonial Times**

Students develop a sense of historical empathy, summarizing the various reasons for settlement in the New World. There are a variety of activities which helps students evaluate the development of civilizations and cultures, as well as understand the interrelationships of people, places and the environment.

### **Touring the World with Tomie dePaola**

Touring The World With Tomie dePaola is an author study created for a third-grade class. Technology helps bring alive the geography and culture of the places the students read about.

### **Tourism in South America**

Students will learn how culture, geography, and the people in various communities of South America represent it as a whole. # They will learn about the geographical features (land, climate, waterways, vegetation, wildlife) and the cultural features (sports, arts, music, food, dress, language, iconic places to see). Students will learn how to collect notes to develop persuasive writing for their brochure.

### **Using Digital Tools and Epals to Improve Descriptive Language**

This unit will use digital imaging, collaboration and e-pals to teach and develop written language skills. Classroom e-pals will be the media used to introduce, develop and/or master simple paragraph and personal letter writing.

### **Weather Reporter**

The aim of this site is to provide a set of teaching resources for geography teachers, focusing on weather symbols, understanding warm and cold fronts, using satellite images, and becoming a weather forecaster.

### **What Makes a Good Friend?**

This program will help children build self-confidence by increasing their vocabulary, giving them an appreciation of fine children's literature, fostering their writing skills, and helping them teach themselves how to be a good friend by setting many examples for them to follow.

### **What's The Story? Library Lessons**

This unit is an integrated curriculum unit that focused on literature and information literacy skills. Students read a wide range of print and non-print material to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the culture of the United States and the world. Various genres, classic and contemporary are used in the lessons.

### **When I Was Young in Brooklyn**

Students read several memoirs, including those by authors Patricia Polacco and Cynthia Rylant, before deciding on a model for their own memoir book. The project enabled the children to take a piece of writing from seed idea through drafting, editing, revising, and finally publishing a book.

### **Who Eats Whom? A Food Chain WebQuest**

Every living thing on Earth depends upon other living things in order to stay alive. Scientists have studied different habitats and found how animals and plants are linked in a "chain" of life. This WebQuest contains a series of activities based on the food chains that exist on an island in the South Pacific.

### **Writing a Book Review**

Children will learn about book reviews, research authors on the Web, then write, edit, publish, and share book reviews of their own. This project enables the children to see what others are writing about books, modeling the format that they will need to follow.

### **Writing Buddies: The Writing/Teaching Life**

When middle schoolers become Writing Buddies to a group of third graders, they learn how to appreciate the

work of young writers while sharpening their own editing skills. Using technology, students exchange writing responses, and engage in thoughtful conversations.

**Instructions for coursework submission:**

When you have completed your assignments, post all coursework either Session by Session or all at one time in the Completed Assignments DropBox(s) at the top of the course. You are allowed 9 months to complete the course. If you have questions, you can reach your instructor at [dfannin@dominicancaonline.com](mailto:dfannin@dominicancaonline.com)

For questions involving your registration or transcript, first check our FAQ section <http://dominicancaonline.com/Dominican-CA-Online-FAQ> or contact Steve Horning ([shorning@dominicancaonline.com](mailto:shorning@dominicancaonline.com)) or Karianne Pulli ([kpulli@dominicancaonline.com](mailto:kpulli@dominicancaonline.com)) for more information.