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Bringing Literature to Life

Through Reconstruction of Experience,
Forming Inferences, Making Predictions,
and Extending Patterns

EDUO 9224

1-3 Semester Credit(s)/Unit(s)

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Note: This is a Public syllabus of the course. For a full detailed syllabus please email the instructor.

Course Overview

You must be currently teaching students to successfully complete this course.

Bringing Literature to Life puts the student in the *author's* place, reconstructing the sequence of events/activities that led to the writing of the original material; or puts the student in the *main character's* place and encourages them to find new possibilities or solutions based on inferences and making predictions. Some of the activities are related to math or science concepts embedded in the story content. Students will be engaged in creative writing, inventive spelling, illustrating, scale model building, measuring, mapping, brainstorming, etc. These activities are consistent with the common core standards for literature and range in difficulty from third grade through eighth grade. These experiences are designed to involve the students in the higher level thinking skills described by Benjamin Bloom, particularly application, analysis, and synthesis; with peer evaluation occurring as students assess each other's solutions to problems.

Course Objectives: The teacher will:

- Collect materials needed for interactive activities (particularly model building and art projects).
- Locate specific books needed for each literature exploration.
- Provide opportunities (time and space) for students to engage in concrete explorations.
- Lead students in open-ended brainstorming sessions.

Course Assignments

Staff Training Component

There are two illustrated sections to read and questions to answer when finished:

Levels of Difficulty in Thinking Skills, and *The Importance of Reconstruction of Experience*

Literature Activities for Students

There are seventeen selections of children's literature with multiple activities to complete for each one. There are more selections presented than are needed to meet the requirements for this course. Choose the selections that are most appropriate for you and your students in the amount needed to meet the requirements for the number of units you are taking. You will need to document participation in each selection with several photographs: one of students working and another showing examples of completed student projects. (Check with your administrator concerning regulations about

photographing children.) For a number of the selections you will need to write a paragraph reflecting on your experience in teaching the activities.

The requirements listed below define what is necessary for earning one, two, or three credit(s)/unit(s). Each selection’s activities will take approximately 4½ hours to complete. It will take about ½ hour to write each reflection. The staff training component is about an hour of reading and responding to the questions and is required in each case for one, two, or three credit(s)/unit(s).

Units	One (15 hours)	Two (30 hours)	Three (45 hours)
Literature Selections	3 (13½ hours)	6 (27 hours)	9 (40½ hours)
Reflective Paragraph(s)	1 (½ hour)	4 (2 hours)	7 (3½ hours)

Note: The least expensive way to engage students in these explorations is to read each selection aloud to the class, fifteen to twenty minutes each day with the students taking notes or keeping lists of items mentioned in the story needed for the activity to follow later. (You may prefer to do the listing as a large group activity, creating a class list on the wall.) Instead of reading aloud to the class you may wish to obtain class sets of paperback books by earning “bonus points” through student purchases in a commercial book club (e.g., *Scholastic Reading Club*, formerly the Scholastic Book Club). You may prefer a combination of both methods. When feasible, specific titles may be checked out of local libraries. Some activities are more successful when you read aloud to the class (e.g., *The Cave of Time*, where the students vote on choices and record the results on class chart).

Sample Activities

Construct a Borrower’s Room in a Shoebox (*The Borrowers*) – The students have to solve the same problems as the Borrowers did and construct a room in a shoebox turned on its side using “found” items at home. (The Borrowers lived at doll-house scale: one inch equals one foot.) A dining table may be constructed from a wooden spool and a lid from a mayonnaise jar. An empty sardine can would make a cozy bed for a child. When the “rooms” are completed they can be stacked one upon the other, forming a “Borrowers condominium.”

Beginning a Hundred Penny “Box” (*The Hundred Penny Box*) – A young boy has to give up his bedroom when his one-hundred year old great aunt Dew comes to live with his family. One of great aunt Dew’s possessions is a cigar box containing one-hundred pennies. The date on the oldest penny is the year she was born. There is a penny in the box dated for each year of her life. After reading the story the students will each begin a hundred-penny box, first finding a penny with their birth year on it and then searching for additional pennies dated for each year of their life.

Constructing and Using a Homemade Sextant (*Carry On Mr. Bowditch*) – Nathaniel Bowditch was a young sailor who served as a navigator aboard ship. He used a sextant to help determine the ship’s latitude by finding the angle of a star above the horizon line. Using a plastic protractor, a soda straw, a piece of string, and a metal washer as a weight students will each construct a sextant and practice “shooting” the angle of the top of a tree. (Caution: do not look at the sun with the sextant.) Students could go out at night and shoot the angle of Polaris.

Course Assessment Rubric

A to A-	B+ to B-	Unacceptable/Resubmit
All assignments completed with good evidence of presented lessons	Assignments completed	Assignments missing and/or incomplete
Clear, relevant, detailed, and thoughtful reflections	Relevant reflections, but lacking detail and insight	Irrelevant or unclear reflections
Followed directions for organization of submission	Poor organization of submission	Unorganized submission – did not follow directions