Teaching the Foundation for Skillful Writing: Word Choice Selection

EDUO 9219 2 Graduate-Level Credits/Units

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Section A Part 1 – Introduction

Welcome to **Word Choice Selection,** a one-unit course that is part of the **Teaching the Foundation for Skillful Writing Series** designed for Dominican University of California, Division of Continuing Education. This course supports the implementation of the Common Core Anchor Standards for Writing.

This course guides the participant through meaningful exercises, to be able to skillfully teach the trait of **word choice**, using known strategies. The participant will develop useful, targeted student-based activities that can be used in the classroom, a cache of writing prompts, a targeted rubric or scoring guide, and an individualized lesson plan that conforms to Common Core standards.

This course is part of a larger series, **Teaching the Foundation for Skillful Writing**, which lays out a systematic approach to the teaching of writing, one aspect at a time, using six traits of writing vocabulary.

Before taking this course, **Word Choice Selection**, you must have completed the prerequisite course **Assessing the Traits of Writing**. It lays the foundation for the series and introduces all the traits. The four follow-on courses are:

- EDUO 9218 Ideas and Organization (2 units)
- EDUO 9207 Assessing the Traits of Writing (3 units)
- EDUO 9220 Finding Your Voice (2 unit)
- EDUO 9221 Creating Sentence Fluency (2 unit)

The traits of **Conventions and Presentation** are woven into all the courses, and will be demonstrated by you in the quality of the coursework that you submit.

Using the traits of writing helps make the most of the opportunities to practice writing. In today's standards-based educational environment, with much emphasis on preparing for

annual testing, teachers must carefully choose their focus. Helping students to hone one trait at a time gives developing writers time to review and assess their work in more depth, with the meaningful intention of improving their writing.

This course aligns with Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing. It especially supports CCR #4, Producing Clear and Coherent Writing, and CCR #5, Developing and Strengthening Writing. Using the traits of writing promotes writing to learn, higher-order thinking, problem solving and critical thinking, analysis and discussion that the Common Core requires.

The following book is essential to completing the course(s):
Creating Writers Through 6-Trait Writing Assessment and Instruction by Vicki Spandel, Pearson Allyn & Bacon, 5th Edition. (ISBN 020561910X)

Please note: specific page numbers in the assignments are referenced for the 5th edition and will not match any of other editions.

Section A Part 2- General Instructions and Clarifications

Before starting the course assignments in Section B, do the following:

- Read the Course Objectives – Section A Part 3
- Read all Assignments
- Read Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – Section A Part 4
- Complete all parts of Assignments
- Save copies of all coursework that you submitted for your records.

You will receive an official complimentary transcript from Dominican University of California within thirty days of submitting satisfactory coursework. The transcript will be mailed to the address that we have on file when you enrolled. For questions regarding transcripts call 800-626-5080. Go to www.DominicanCAonlne.com/ for information about the other courses in the series.

Section A Part 3 – Course Objectives/Standards/Grading Rubric

By the end of this course the participant be able to:

- clearly define the trait of *Word Choice*
- skillfully teach the trait of *Word Choice* using known strategies
- create student-based activities for teaching the trait of *Word Choice*

- use a cache of writing prompts developed during the course, for teaching and assessing the trait of *Word Choice*

- develop and utilize a rubric, or scoring guide, to assess *Word Choice*

- develop a Common Core standards-aligned lesson plan to teach *Word Choice*

COMMON CORE ALIGNMENT AND SUPPORT

The specific Common Core grade level standards correspond to the Anchor Standards by number. The overarching Anchor Standards are broad. The corresponding grade level standards target the specific skills and understanding that students will work on at each grade level.

(Grades K-5, Grades 6-8, and High School) correspond to these anchor standards by number. The CCS Anchor Standards and the grade-specific standards are complementary. The former provide broad standards, while the latter provides specific skill and understandings that students must demonstrate at a grade level.

To find the specific writing skills and understandings targeted for your own grade level, look at the Common Core Standards for Writing, by number, for your grade level. The CCS can be found in many places on the Internet. One site for the complete standards is: http://www.scoe.net/castandards/agenda/2010/ela_ccs_recommendations.pdf/.However, you might find it quicker and more useful to target the search for your own grade level standards.

This course supports the following Common Score Anchor Standards for Writing:

Category: Text Types and Purposes

CCR 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCR 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCR 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Category: Production and Distribution of Writing

CCR 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCR 5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

CCR 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Category: Research to Build and Present Knowledge

CCR 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCR 8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCR 9. Draw evidence from literary and or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Category: Range of Writing

CCR 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

This class aligns with the following Standards for the Teaching Profession

(These are a sampling only and not intended to be a complete list.)

Standard I: ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING ALL STUDENTS IN LEARNING:

- Engage all students in a variety of learning experiences that accommodate the different ways they learn.
- Apply strategies that make the writing process understandable to all students.
- Provide opportunities for all students to learn and practice skills in a meaningful context.
- Vary instructional strategies to increase students' active participation in learning.
- Use the classroom environment to provide opportunities for both independent and collaborative learning.

Standard II: CREATING AND MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING:

- Create a classroom environment that reflects and promotes student learning, by understanding how to simplify writing instruction.

- Maintain a learning environment in which all students are treated fairly and respectfully as they assume responsibility for themselves and one another.

- Help all students accept and respect different experiences, ideas, backgrounds, feelings, and points of view as reflected in the writing process.

- Encourage, support, and recognize the writing process achievements and contributions of all students.

Standard III: UNDERSTANDING AND ORGANIZING SUBJECT MATTER FOR STUDENT LEARNING:

- Identify and understand the key concepts and underlying themes and relationships in the subject area to be taught.
- Use subject matter knowledge to organize and sequence the curriculum to increase student understanding.

- Choose materials and resources to make subject matter accessible to all students.
- Select and use instructional materials and resources that promote students' understanding of subject matter.

Standard IV: PLANNING INSTRUCTION AND DESIGNING LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR ALL STUDENTS:

- Simplify a complex process by breaking it down into understandable chunks for students.

- Develop and use a repertoire of instructional strategies well suited to teaching a particular subject matter.

- Develop rubrics that enable each student to recognize the goal or trait they are working toward.

- Design lessons which challenge students at their own developmental levels.

- Modify instructional plans to adjust for student needs.

Standard V: ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING:

- Develop rubrics that enable the teacher to assess student progress toward a goal.

- Use assessment to guide planning and adjust instruction while teaching.

- Ensure that goals for learning are appropriate to student development.

- Provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate and reflect on their learning inside and outside of the classroom.

Standard VI: DEVELOPING AS A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR:

- Use professional literature, school district, and other professional development opportunities to increase understanding of teaching and learning.

- Continue to seek out and refine approaches that make the curriculum accessible to every student.
- Expand knowledge of new instructional methods and technologies.

- Maintain an attitude of lifelong learning.

Grading Rubric for *Word Choice Selection*

Participant is required to do all required coursework in each section.

Exemplary, Above Graduate Level Standards Exceeds Expectations **A+** to **A-**	**Done to Graduate Level Standards** Meets Expectations **B+** to **B-**	**Below Graduate Level Standards, Unacceptable** Needs Improvement, **Must be resubmitted**.
Reflective, in depth and thoughtful ideas and comments relevant to the assignments are clearly stated and demonstrate that the participant **thoroughly** understands the trait of **Word Choice** and how they will affect teaching and learning to write.	Presents **adequate** and relevant ideas and connections to the trait of **Word Choice**, and the connection to good teaching and learning are **adequately** evident.	**Few relevant** ideas and connections to the trait of **Word Choice,** and the assignments have **little to no** connection to good teaching and learning.

Reflective piece covers broadbased learning of the trait of **Word Choice**, and how to translate the trait into classroom instruction, as covered in the course text. • Analysis and exploration of teaching and learning the concept of the traits show **clear understanding** of problems faced in teaching writing. • Practice exercises for learning the traits are **thoroughly** carried out and show **clear understanding** of the trait of **Word Choice**. • Effective teaching practices **clearly** form the base for planning how to transfer knowledge of the traits of writing. • Rubrics, scoring guides, and lesson plans created by the participant are **professionally written** and clearly state participant's intentions to teach the trait addressed.	Reflective piece covers **adequate** learning of the trait of **Word Choice**, and how to translate the traits into classroom instruction **adequately,** as covered in the course text. • Analysis and exploration of teaching and learning the concept of the traits show **adequate** understanding of problems faced in teaching writing. • Practice exercises for learning the traits are **adequately** carried out and show **adequate understanding** of the trait of **Word Choice**. • Effective teaching practices **adequately** form the base for planning how to transfer knowledge of the traits of writing. • Rubrics, scoring guides, and lesson plans created by the participant are **adequately written** and clearly states participant's intentions relating to assessing the trait addressed.	Reflective piece **does not show adequate** learning of the trait of **Word Choice**, and how to translate the traits into classroom instruction adequately**,** as covered in the course text. • Analysis and exploration of teaching and learning the concept of the traits **do not show adequate** understanding of problems faced in teaching writing. • Practice exercises for learning the traits are **not adequately** carried out and **do not show clear understanding** of the trait of **Word Choice**. • Effective teaching practices **do not adequately** form the base for planning how to transfer knowledge of the traits of writing. • Rubrics, scoring guides, and lesson plans created by the participant are **not adequately written** and do not clearly state participant's intentions to teach the traits addressed.
Free of spelling and grammatical errors. Assignments are word-processed using standard 12pt font. Presentation is neat with good use of white space and margins.	Contains **some** spelling or grammatical errors. Assignments are word-processed using standard 12pt font. Presentation is neat with good use of white space and margins.	Contains **spelling** or **grammatical** errors. Assignments are **not** word-processed and/or **not** using standard 12pt font. Presentation is **not** neat and lacks good white space and margins.
Organized **very** well. Supporting material **easy** to locate, **clearly** labeled and related to the corresponding assignment.	Organized **fairly** well. Supporting material **somewhat hard** to locate and **loosely** related to corresponding assignment. Is **generally** organized and labeled.	Organized **poorly**. Supporting material **difficult** to locate or **not** present and/or **not** related to corresponding assignment. Shows little or no organization and assignments are **poorly** labeled.

Reflective, thoughtful ideas relevant to the assignment are clearly stated.	Presents some relevant ideas and connections to the assignment.	Ideas are not clear or relevant.
Reflective pieces cover numerous facts and specific details of the learning experience.	Some facts and specific details of learning experiences are included.	Few or no facts or specific details of the learning experience are included.

Section A Part 4 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q. For questions about the content of this course, where do I get help?

A. E-mail questions to: mlvarni@dominicanCAonline.com

Q. Are there other useful books on the traits of writing beyond the required text, Creating Writers Through 6-Trait Writing Assessment and Instruction? **A. Yes. The following books are quite useful:**

Elementary Grades:

Books, Lessons, Ideas for Teaching the Six Traits Writing in the Elementary and Middle Grades (ISBN 0-669-48174-2), Compiled and Annotated by Vicki Spandel, Great Source Education Group, Inc.

6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades by Ruth Culham (ISBN 0439574129)

6 + 1 Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide, Grades 3 and Up by Ruth Culham (ISBN 0439280389)

Middle/High School:

Books, Lessons, Ideas for Teaching the Six Traits of Writing at Middle and High School (ISBN 0-669-48175-0) Compiled and Annotated by Vicki Spandel, Great Source Education Group Inc;

All Levels:

Picture Books, An Annotated Bibliography with Activities for Teaching 6-Trait Writing by Ruth Culham, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory; 101 SW Main Street, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204

If You're Trying To Teach Kids How To Write…You've Gotta Have This Book! by Marjorie Frank; Incentive Publications (ISBN 0-86530-317-7)

Q. Can I use the 4th edition of the textbook instead of the 5th?

A. No. This course is aligned with the improved 5th edition. Assignment page numbers will not match for the 4th or any earlier edition. In some cases, new material has been added. Using another edition will cause much confusion.

Q. How much time do I have to complete this course?
A. You have nine months from the time of registration to complete all coursework.

Q. What do I do if an emergency occurs and I cannot complete my coursework in nine months?
A. **E-mail support@dominicanCAonlinelcom or call (800) 626-5080 to request an extension. *If one is granted, it is final.***

Q. What if I change my name or address during this time?
E-mail support@dominicanCAonlinelcom or call (800) 626-5080 to update your information.

Q. Is there a required sequence for taking courses in the **Teaching the Foundations for Skillful Writing** series?
A. Yes. You must first take Assessing the Traits of Writing. The remaining courses may be taken in any order.

**** Please note: Assignments must be typed in standard 12-point font.**

Section B – Specific Assignments

Please note:
- Place each completed assignment on a separate page with appropriate label at the top.
- Submit all assignments once completed as directed by the course directions.
- Submit the assignments in order as directed (B1, B2, B3 etc.)

B1 Understanding the Trait of Word Choice

Create two different requests that your students return to their seats; using words that convey two different methods listed below:

- State very explicitly when and why they will return.
- Communicate that it is going to be exciting to return.
- Convey that when they get there something unusual is going to happen.
- Give a unique request in your own style - one of a kind.
- Give a humorous request.
- Your choice - something other than the five above.

Assignment B1a: Request #1:
Assignment B1b: Request #2:

Label these responses B1a & b – Understanding the Trait of Word Choice.

B2 Teaching Your Students the Concept of Word Choice

Read pages 153 - 170.

Your students will need to understand the concept of Word Choice. How will you teach them to write using words to create a mood or impression, as you did in Assignment B1? What will you have them do to show their understanding? (This section is about student understanding of the trait of Word Choice. A later section will address more specific assignments to develop this writing trait more deeply.)

Assignment B2a
List and explain five strategies you will use to teach the concept of this trait, **specific to your grade level or area of teaching**. Label this section **B2a– Teaching Your Students the Concept of Word Choice.**

Assignment B2b
Find and list five or more literature books appropriate for your students that could be used to teach the trait of Word Choice. After each book, list examples of language that stands out as excellent examples of word choice. Label this section **B2b – Teaching Your Students the Concept of Word Choice.**

B3a & b Developing Writing Prompts

Read pages 26-30 and do the following activities:

Develop writing prompts, specific to your grade level or area of teaching**,** that will enable students to illustrate the trait of ***Word Choice***, using mood creation and vivid impression. Label these **B3a & b - Writing Prompts.**

Assignment B3a: Writing prompts for **mood creation** using **Word Choice:**
1.
2.

Assignment B3b: Writing prompts for **vivid impression** using **Word Choice:**
1.
2.

B4a & b Developing Strategies Into Student Activities

Read pages 187-190 and 226-229.

Assignment B4a: List ten classroom activities that will support teaching the trait of ***Word Choice*** to your students.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Assignment B4b:
Write a detailed description of two of the activities listed in B4a. Create and attach of copies of support materials used in these activities such as charts, posters, overhead transparencies, excerpts from readings or hard copies of computer assignments, PowerPoint presentations, etc.

Put each activity in a separate section labeled **B4b-1 and B4b-2**.

B5 Teaching Students To Revise Their Own Writing

Read pages 4-13, 32-35, 137-152 and 244.

An important part of learning to write more in depth is to be able to assess and revise one's own work. Students need targeted practice to hone their revision skills.

Assignment B5:
As a base, use one of the activities that you described in detail in assignment B4b. Describe an activity or strategy you could use that would teach your students how to assess and revise this writing. Label this section **B5.**

B6 Integrating *Conventions*

The trait of ***Conventions*** is most effectively taught when used as an on-going process while learning or practicing the other writing traits.

Read pages 197-205 and 233.

Assignment B6.
Create a student assignment related to B5 that reinforces the trait of *Conventions*. Label this section **B6.**

B7a-c Scoring Systems

Read Chapters 3 and 4 about using rubrics, writing guides, writing scales, and other scoring systems.

Assignment B7a:
How will you engage your students in scoring systems that help them learn the trait of *Word Choice***.** Label **B7a.**

Read Chapter 13, then study the Student Six-Point Informational Writing Guide for Ideas and Organization on page 274.

Assignment B7b:
Create a writing guide for the trait of *Word Choice*. It should be student friendly and written for the age level you teach. Label **B7b.**

Assignment B7c:
If your school uses a conventional grading system (A-F system), how will you convert the writing guide results to grades you can use?
If your school uses a standards-based reporting system, or other system, how does your writing guide relate to that system? Label **B7c.**

B8 Standards and Proficiencies

Identify the specific standards that are met by the revisions activity in B5 and the *Conventions* strategies in B6. The standards may be Common Core, district, or state content standards.

Assignment B8:
Attach to this form a copy of the specific standards met by the revisions and conventions activities in B5 and B6. **Clearly mark or highlight the specific standards.** Label **B8.**

B9 Create a Lesson Plan You Can Use

Read Chapter 10.

Assignment B9:
Create a detailed lesson plan for teaching the trait of *Word Choice*. Design it for use with your class or grade level. You my **not** include in the lesson plan any of the same materials you have developed through out this course.

The lesson plan should contain strategies and/or activities for teaching the specific trait of Word Choice. It should include activities that also address revisions and conventions. Submit the rubrics or writing guides you will use for this lesson, and a list of the standards addressed. Include copies of any handouts such as practice activities, graphic organizers, charts or excerpts from readings. **Label B9**.

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION OF THIS COURSE

In narrative form, summarize and evaluate your experience taking this course. How will your students benefit from your efforts? Was this an effective learning experience for you?