

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Early Childhood Education

ECED 812.001 Early Writing: Cognition, Language, and Literacy
3 Credits, Fall 2019
8/26 – 12/18, Tuesday/ 4:30 – 7:10 pm
Innovation Hall 328, Fairfax Campus

Faculty

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Prerequisite(s): Admission to the PhD in Education program or advanced-master's status with approval of course instructor.

Course Description

Examines early writing research and practice related to cognition, language, and literacy in the early education of diverse learners, including special education and multicultural/multilingual education.

Course Delivery Method

This course utilizes a seminar format. Seminars will include instructor- and student-led discussions, reflective activities, and student presentations that will take place during class meetings as well as online. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session so as to engage in active dialogue and sharing of ideas. Learning activities will also include independent research and study.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Describe developmental, social, cultural, affective, and cognitive factors that play a role in early language and literacy development.
2. Analyze, synthesize, and share current research on environments and approaches that promote language and literacy for children, including children with disabilities and those from multicultural and multilingual backgrounds.
3. Design a research proposal based on current research on cognition, language, and literacy.
4. Engage in activities that promote the development of others' as well as their own professional writing.

Professional Standards

This seminar is for students in a number of disciplinary concentrations such as early childhood education, early childhood special education, educational psychology, literacy, multicultural/multilingual education, and special education. Study includes the age range of birth through 8 years old. Research is examined across areas of early childhood education, early childhood special education, bilingual/ESL education, multicultural education, and international perspectives on early childhood education.

Required Texts

- American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- McCarthy, C. A., Graham, S., & Fitzgerald, J. (2016). *Handbook of Writing Research* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Required Readings

- Aram, D., Korat, O., Saiegh-Haddad, E., Arafat, S. H., Khoury, R., & Elhija, J. A. (2013). Early Literacy among Arabic-speaking kindergartners: The role of socioeconomic status, home literacy environment and maternal mediation of writing. *Cognitive Development, 28*, 193-208. doi: 10.1016/j.cogdev.2012.10.003
- Boyle, B., & Charles, M. (2010). Using socio-dramatic play to support a beginning writer: 'Daniel, the doctor, and the bleeding ball.' *International Journal of Early Years Education, 18*, 213-225.
- Buell, M. J., Burns, M. S., Casbergue, R., & Love, A. Que Mas le Va a Decir? Preschoolers who are dual language learners write a letter with a parent. *Literacy and Social Responsibility, 4*, 8-37.
- Burns, M. S., & Kidd, J. K. (2016). Play and early writing. In D. Couchenour and J. K. Chrisman (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Early Childhood Education*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Burns, M. S., Kidd, J. K., & Genarro, T. (2010). Writing: Underutilized for young children with disabilities? *Advances in Learning and Behavioral Disabilities, 23*, 175-204. doi: 10.1108/S0735-004X(2010)0000023009
- Burns, M. S., Love, A., Buell, M. J., & Casbergue, R. (2012). What do you wanna write to Grandma? Richness and variety in shared writing of prekindergarten children and parents. *Literacy and Social Responsibility, 5*(1), 177-212.
- Cutler, L., & Graham, S. (2008). Primary grade writing instruction: A national survey. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 100*, 907-919. doi: 10.1037/a0012656
- Diamond, K. E., Gerde, H. K., & Powell, D. R. (2008). Development in early literacy skills during the pre-kindergarten year in Head Start: Relations between growth in children's writing and understanding letters. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 23*, (467-478). doi: 10.1016/j.ecresq.2008.05.002
- Dinehart, L. (2014). Handwriting in early childhood education: Current research and future implications. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 15*, 97-118.
- Dyson, A. H. (2008). Staying in the (curricular) lines: Practice constraints and possibilities in childhood writing. *Written Communication, 25*, 119-159. doi: 10.1177/0741088307309552

- Gerde, H. K., Bingham, G. E., & Wasik, B. A. (2012). Writing in early childhood classrooms: Guidance for best practices. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, (40)6, 351-359. doi: 10.1007/s10643-012-0531-z
- Graham, S., Bollinger, A., Olson, C. B., D'Aoust, C., MacArthur, C., McCutchen, D., Olinghouse, N. (2018). Teaching elementary school students to be effective writers: A practice guide: Revised October 2018 (NCEE 2012-4058). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications_reviews.aspx#pubsearch.
- Graham, S., Gillespie, A., & McKeown, D. (2013). Writing: Importance, development, and instruction. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 26, 1-15. doi: 10.1007/s11145-012-9395-2
- Graham, S., McKeown, D., Kiuahara, S., & Harris, K. R. (2012). A meta-analysis of writing instruction for students in the elementary grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104, 879-896. doi: 10.1037/a0029185
- Hall, E. (2009). Mixed messages: The role and value of drawing in early education. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 17(3), 179-190. doi: 10.1080/09669760903424507
- Hall, A. H., Simpson, A., Guo, Y., & Wang, S. (2015). Examining the effects of preschool writing instruction on emergent literacy skills: A systematic review of the literature. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 54, 115-134. doi:10.1080/19388071.2014.991883
- Harward, S., Peterson, N., North, B., Wimmer, J., Wilcox, B., Morrison, T., Black, S., Simmerman, S., & Pierce, L. (2014). Writing instruction in elementary classrooms: Why teachers engage or do not engage students in writing. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 53, 205-224. doi: 10.1080/19388071.2014.896959
- Hopperstad, M. H. (2010). Studying meaning in children's drawing. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 10, 430-452. doi: 10.1177/1468798410383251
- Jones, C. D. (2015). Effects of writing instruction on kindergarten students' writing achievement: An experimental study. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 108, 35- 44. doi: 10.1080/00220671.2013.836466
- Kidd, J. K., Burns, M. S., La Croix, L., & Cossa, N. L. (2014). Prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers in high poverty schools speak about young children's authoring (and we need to listen). *Literacy and Social Responsibility*, 7(1), 50-71.
- Kissel, B., Hansen, J., Tower, H., & Lawrence, J. (2011). The influential interactions of pre-kindergarten writers. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 11, 425-452. doi: 10.1177/1468798411416580
- McCloskey, E. (2011). Inclusion as an instructional approach: Fostering inclusive writing communities in preschool classrooms. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 12, 46-67.
- Puranik, C. S., & Lonigan, C. J. (2011). From scribbles to scrabble: Preschool children's developing knowledge of written language. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 24, 567-589. doi: 10.1007/s11145-009-9220-8
- Rowe, D. W., & Neitzel, C. (2010). Interest and agency in 2- and 3-year-old's participation in emergent writing. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 45, 169-195.
- Rowe, D. W., & Wilson, S. J. (2015). The development of a descriptive measure of early childhood writing: Results from the Write Start! Writing assessment. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 47, 245-292. doi: 10.1177/1086296X15619723
- Wohlwend, K. (2008). Play as a literacy of possibilities: Expanding meanings in practices,

materials, and spaces. *Language Arts*, 86, 127-136.

Wollman-Bonilla, J. E. (2000). Teaching science to first graders: “Genre learning and reconceptualization.” *Research in the Teaching of English*, 35, 35-65.

Zhang, C., & Cook, J. C. (2019). A reflective professional development intervention model of early writing instruction. *Journal of early childhood teacher education*, 40, 177-196.

Recommended Readings

Ball, A. (2006). Teaching writing in culturally diverse classrooms. In C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Handbook of writing research* (pp. 293-310). New York, NY: Guilford.

Bissex, G. L. (1980). *GNYS AT WRK: A child learns to write and read*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Clay, M. (1975). *What did I write? Beginning writing behavior*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Dyson, A. H. (2013). *ReWRITING the basics: Literacy learning in children's cultures*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Fitzgerald, J. (2006). Multilingual writing in preschool through 12th grade: The last 15 years. In C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Handbook of writing research* (pp. 337-354). New York, NY: Guilford.

Powell, D. R., & Diamond, K. E. (2012). Promoting early literacy and language development. In R. D. Pianta (Ed.), *Handbook of early childhood education* (pp. 194-216). New York, NY: Guilford.

Schrader, C. T. (1990). Symbolic play as a curricular tool for early literacy development. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 5, 79-103.

Steward, E. P. (1995). *Beginning writers in the zone of proximal development*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard (Bb), Tk20, hard copy).

| Assignments | Due Dates | Points |
|--|--------------------------------|--------|
| Attendance & Participation | Ongoing | 25 |
| Annotated Bibliography | October 22 | 25 |
| Research Article Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All slide shows due on November 12 ○ Presentations take place on November 12 and 19 | November 12 November 12, 19 | 15 |
| Research Proposal | December 11 | 35 |
| TOTAL | | 100 |

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Annotated Bibliography (25 points)

Students will develop an annotated bibliography that includes at least 10 research articles on an approved topic of their choice related to young children's writing. Each entry will be approximately one single-spaced pages in length and will include the following:

- accurate bibliographic information presented in APA style
- a summary of
 - o the purpose of the study,
 - o the argument or thesis,
 - o key points made in the review of the literature,
 - o the methods (i.e., participants and setting, data sources and collection, data analyses),
 - o the results/findings, and
 - o the implications and conclusions
- a statement of the potential relevance of the article to your study

Research Article Presentation (15 points)

Students will select an article from their annotated bibliography to present to their classmates. They will present a 20-minute conference-style talk using a slide presentation that includes the following:

- Bibliographic information presented in APA style
- Purpose of the study
- The argument or thesis
- Theoretical perspectives and key research studies that support the study
- Research questions
- The methods, including participants and setting, data sources and collection, and data analyses
- The results/findings
- Discussion
- Implications and conclusions

Early Writing Research Proposal (35 points)

Students will select an early writing topic of interest. proposed research questions, the proposed method, and anticipated results. The conceptual/theoretical framework and proposal will be 15 to 20 double- spaced pages in length. Students will submit completed proposals on Blackboard.

Students will write a research proposal focused on a topic of interest related to young children's writing. They will write a fully developed conceptual/theoretical framework that synthesizes research related to the topic and develops an argument for the proposed research. This framework will be the basis for the research proposal that will include the following:

- an introduction that provides the background and argument for the study,
- a review of the literature,
- a discussion of the conceptual/theoretical framework
- research questions,

- an overview of the proposed methods (potential participants and setting, data sources and collection, data analyses),
 - anticipated results or findings, and
 - potential limitations of the study.
- **Other Requirements**

Attendance and Participation (25 points)

Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in in-class and online activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students use laptops and personal devices are to be used for instructional purposes only.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Students are actively involved in in-class and online learning experiences as evidenced by (a) participating in all activities, (b) engaging in small- and large-group discussions, (c) completing written work related to the activities, and (d) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.
- Students display professional dispositions at all times while interacting with the instructor and other students.
- Students complete participation activities across the semester that complement the scheduled course topic. Instructors will periodically collect artifacts from the activities. Students in attendance and who actively engage in the learning experience will receive credit for their efforts. Graded participation activities are not announced and are implemented at the discretion of the instructor.

Written Assignments

All formal written assignments will be evaluated for content and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the Mason library website at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/content.php?pid=39979>. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will do the following:

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)

4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.
5. Type the paper with double spacing, indented paragraphs, 1-inch margins all around, and 12-point Times New Roman font.

- **Grading**

A = 95-100 A- = 90-94 B+ = 87-89 B = 80-86 C = 70-79 F = < 70

Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are passing a course but who may be unable to complete scheduled coursework for a cause beyond reasonable control.

All CEHD students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the current catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.gmu.edu>.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>.

Class Schedule

| Date | Topic | Readings & Assignments Due |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Week 1 Aug 27 | Course overview Teachers' voices and perspectives on young children's writing | Cutler & Graham (2008) Harward et al. (2014) Kidd et al. (2014) |
| Week 2 Sept 3 | Instruction Theories and models of writing: Sociocultural, Cognitive, & New Literacies | Gerde et al. (2012) Graham et al. (2013) MacArthur et al. (2016): Chapters 1, 2, 3 |
| Week 3 Sept 10 | Sociocultural perspectives: Home and community influences on young children's writing | Aram et al. (2013) Buell et al. (2011) Burns et al. (2012) MacArthur et al. (2016): Chapter 6 |
| Week 4 Sept 17 | Sociocultural perspectives: Influences of social practices within school writing communities | Dyson (2008) Kissel et al. (2011) McCloskey (2011) Zhang & Cook (2019) |

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| Week 5 Sept 24 | Early writing development: Play, drawing, and multimodal representations | Boyle (2010) Burns & Kidd (2016) Hall (2009) Hopperstad (2010) Rowe & Neitzel (2010) Wohlwend (2008) |
| Week 6 Oct 1 | Development of written language from preschool through the primary grades | MacArthur et al. (2016): Chapters 8, 9, 10 Puranik & Lonigan (2009) Rowe & Wilson (2015) |
| Week 7 Oct 8 | Relationships between reading and writing development in young children | Diamond et al. (2008) MacArthur et al. (2016): Chapter 13 Matera (2011) |
| Oct 15 | FALL BREAK | |
| Week 8 Oct 22 | Brown Lecture-In person on Oct 24 or watch online | Annotated Bibliography - submit to Blackboard by 4:30 pm |
| Week 9 Oct 29 | Evidence-based writing instruction for young children | Burns et al. (2010) Graham et al. (2018) Hall et al. (2015) MacArthur et al. (2016): Chapter 1 |
| Week 10 Nov 5 | Self-regulation and writing in the primary grades | MacArthur et al. (2016): Chapter 12 Select one article on self-regulation and writing (to be decided in an earlier class) |
| Week 11 Nov 12 | Evidence-based writing instruction <i>Research article presentations</i> | Jones (2015) Submit Research Article Slide Presentation to Blackboard by 4:30 pm in a discussion board forum |
| Week 12 Nov 19 | Writing across the curriculum | Wollman-Bonilla (2000) |

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|-------------------|--|--|
| | <i>Research article presentations</i> | |
| Week 13 Nov 26 | Future directions for early writing research and instruction | Graham, Bollinger, et al. (2012) <i>Bring outline of writing research proposal and be prepared to discuss with a critical friend</i> |
| Week 14 Dec 3 | ONLINE | Draft of proposal due to critical friend for discussion. |
| Dec 11 | Research Proposal Due to Bb by 7:15 pm Dec 11 | |

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.