



PUTTING READING FIRST IN YOUR CLASSROOM GRADES K-2

Course Description

Putting Reading First In Your Classroom is an interactive, online, and in-person professional development course designed for all teachers of grades K–2. The seven online sessions focus on understanding the role of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension in early reading instruction.

- Session 1, the Course Introduction, includes a Course Keynote by the lead faculty who talks about the importance of beginning reading. A Self-Assessment follows the keynote.
- Session 2 focuses on the building blocks of reading—phonemic awareness and alphabet recognition. These two skill areas, cited by research as the two best predictors of early reading success, are essential for laying a strong reading foundation. In addition, the Stages of Reading Development are outlined in order to provide a framework in which all course learning can be placed.
- Session 3 focuses on the basics of phonics and decoding. Key characteristics of effective phonics instruction—such as using an appropriate scope and sequence, providing frequent blending models, using decodable text, and linking phonics to spelling—are defined and applied to classroom practices.
- Session 4 focuses on how to assess fluency, build fluency, and incorporate independent and small-group fluency-building activities into classroom routines. Techniques for helping children to master sight words are also included.
- Session 5 focuses on the role of vocabulary in early reading instruction. Attention is paid to building children’s oral vocabularies, fostering word consciousness, and teaching important story words and academic language before and during reading.
- Session 6 focuses on comprehension, the ultimate goal of all reading instruction. Topics covered include teaching children techniques for previewing text, building and activating background knowledge, self-monitoring while reading, asking questions about text, and constructing oral and written retellings of text.
- Session 7 addresses the appropriate use of various genres in meeting instruction goals. Big Books, Read Alouds, decodable text, and trade books are all part of the reading instruction. This session discusses how to match children to appropriately-leveled text for independent reading and how to check children’s comprehension from their written and oral retellings.

Lesson plans and classroom resources support all online sessions. The plans and resource support ensure that the course content can be seamlessly integrated into classroom reading programs or subject-specific curriculum. Also available with this course is a boxed kit containing fluency-building materials for children and professional resources for teachers.

Course Objectives

On completing this course, you will be able to:

- **understand** the role of alphabet recognition and phonemic awareness in laying the foundation for early reading growth and learn research-based classroom techniques for teaching both.
- **identify** the key characteristics of effective phonics instruction and apply them in your classroom.

- **assess** children's oral reading fluency and develop whole-group, small-group, and independent instructional activities for building fluency and mastering sight word vocabulary.
- **use** effective vocabulary learning strategies to build children's oral language and foster word consciousness, directly teach vocabulary before and during reading, and encourage wide reading.
- **recognize** the role of comprehension instruction in early reading and use techniques to teach children how to preview text, activate background knowledge, identify story elements, self-monitor their reading, ask questions about text, and construct oral and written retellings of reading materials.
- **match** children to text and use appropriate literature for specific instructional goals, such as using Big Books to teach concepts of print, Read Alouds to build vocabulary, decodable text to apply phonics skills, and leveled books for independent reading.

Course Outline

1. Course Introduction

- 1.1 Your Course Keynote
Self-Assessment

2. Building Blocks of Reading: Alphabet Recognition and Phonemic Awareness

- 2.1 The Foundations of Reading
- 2.2 Stages of Reading Development
- 2.3 Alphabet Recognition
- 2.4 Phonemic Awareness: Oral Blending and Segmentation
- 2.5 Phonemic Awareness: Phonemic Manipulation

3. The Basics of Phonics and Decoding

- 3.1 Characteristics of Effective Phonics Instruction
- 3.2 Scope and Sequence: Making It Work
- 3.3 Using Phonics Blending
- 3.4 Using Decodable Text
- 3.5 Linking Phonics to Spelling: Dictation

4. Building Toward Fluency

- 4.1 Characteristics of Fluency at K–2
- 4.2 Assessing Reading Fluency
- 4.3 Fluency: The Teacher's Role
- 4.4 Increasing High-Frequency Word Knowledge
- 4.5 Student Practice Activities and the Fluency Corner

5. Role of Vocabulary-Building

- 5.1 Reading and Vocabulary: The Link
- 5.2 Building Children's Oral Language
- 5.3 Preteaching Words
- 5.4 Using Context
- 5.5 Using Word Parts

6. comprehension is Taught, Not Caught

- 6.1 The Role of Comprehension in Early Reading
- 6.2 Previewing Text and Building Background
- 6.3 Teaching Major Story Elements
- 6.4 Active Reading and Self-Monitoring: Nonfiction
- 6.5 Oral and Written Retellings

7. Using Books in the Classroom

- 7.1 Developing Life Long Readers
- 7.2 Using Big Books and Read Alouds
- 7.3 How to Match Children to Books
- 7.4 Responding to Literature Through Writing
- 7.5 How to Put Reading First in Your Classroom