This course supports the assessment for ELA4. The course covers 12 competencies and represents 3 competency units.

Introduction

Overview
The following are all valid questions that this course will address:

- What are you doing here?
- Why do you need to know this information?
- What is the best way to teach reading?
- Do children just learn to read naturally on their own?
- How are you supposed to know how to teach students to read and write when you are not even in the classroom yet?

These are all valid questions, and you are not alone in asking them. Teaching a child to become a successful reader and writer is serious business—after all, reading is the foundational building block of learning in every subject. If a child struggles in reading, he or she will very likely also struggle in science, social studies, math, and other subjects. In other words, your role as an elementary teacher is extremely important, and you will begin to develop a solid knowledge base in reading/literacy as you work through this course.

You will build upon what you have learned previously in other courses of study; you have already laid a solid foundation of knowledge in the areas of educational theory and instructional design that you are now ready to tap into and put to good use. What you will learn will help you advance your goal of becoming a caring, competent elementary teacher.

Competencies
This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 12 competencies:

- **Competency 602.4.1: Teaching Methods: Language Concept Development**
  The graduate identifies the basic language concepts important for young students to learn and teaches these concepts.

- **Competency 602.4.3: Teaching Methods: Emergent Literacy**
  The graduate understands the nature of concepts about print and how parents can work with children at home to help develop that skill.

- **Competency 602.4.4: Phonemic Awareness**
  The graduate understands and teaches phonemic awareness skills, and (2) the graduate understands the role that phonics plays in learning to read and provides effective research-based phonics instruction.

- **Competency 602.4.5: Teaching Methods: Decoding and Word Recognition**
  The graduate understands the role that phonics plays in learning to read and provides research-based phonics instruction.

- **Competency 602.4.6: Oral Reading Fluency**
  The graduate understands the nature of oral reading fluency, describes its role in
reading comprehension, and demonstrates effective research-based teaching practices that promote fluency.

- **Competency 602.4.7: Teaching Methods: Vocabulary**
  The graduate understands the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension, and teaches vocabulary in isolation and in context.

- **Competency 602.4.8: Narrative Text Analysis**
  The graduate understands the differences in type and genre, and can analyze texts for structural devices, perspective, bias, stereotyping, and grade-level appropriateness.

- **Competency 602.4.9: Teaching Methods: Children’s Literature**
  The graduate describes, evaluates, selects, and uses children's literature for a variety of purposes across the curriculum.

- **Competency 602.4.10: Teaching Methods: Reading Comprehension**
  The graduate understands the role of comprehension in learning to read and teaches comprehension skills.

- **Competency 602.4.12: Teaching Methods: Writing**
  The graduate provides systematic and explicit instruction in writing.

- **Competency 602.4.13: Teaching Methods: Spelling**
  The graduate provides systematic and explicit instruction in spelling.

- **Competency 602.4.14: Teaching Methods: Handwriting/Penmanship**
  The graduate provides systematic and explicit instruction in handwriting/penmanship.

**Teaching Dispositions Statement**

Please review the [WGU Statement of Teaching Dispositions](#).

**Course Instructor Assistance**

As you prepare to successfully demonstrate competency in this subject, remember that course instructors stand ready to help you reach your educational goals. As subject matter experts, mentors enjoy and take pride in helping students become reflective learners, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. Course instructors are excited to hear from you and eager to work with you.

Successful students report that working with a course instructor is the key to their success. Course instructors are able to share tips on approaches, tools, and skills that can help you apply the content you're studying. They also provide guidance in assessment preparation strategies and troubleshoot areas of deficiency. Even if things don’t work out on your first try, course instructors act as a support system to guide you through the revision process. You should expect to work with course instructors for the duration of your coursework, and you are encouraged to contact them as soon as you begin. Course instructors are fully committed to your success!

**Preparing for Success**

The information in this section is provided to detail the resources available for you to use as you complete this course.

**Learning Resources**

The learning resources listed in this section are required to complete the activities in this course. For many resources, WGU has provided automatic access through the course. However, you
may need to manually enroll in or independently acquire other resources. Read the full instructions provided to ensure that you have access to all of your resources in a timely manner.

In the following resources, you may read about No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Please be aware that as of December 2015, President Barack Obama replaced NCLB with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This new act reauthorizes the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the nation's national education law and longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students. Although not required for this course, you are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the new act. For additional information, please visit the following links from the U.S. Department of Education:

- Webinar recording
- Read the ESEA now referred to as the ESSA
- Fact sheet on ESSA
- Transition Letter

Automatically Enrolled Learning Resources

You will be automatically enrolled at the activity level for the following learning resources. Simply click on the links provided in the activities to access the learning materials.

VitalSource E-Texts
The following textbooks are available to you as e-texts within this course. You will be directly linked to the specific readings required within the activities that follow.


Note: These e-texts are available to you as part of your program tuition and fees, but you may purchase hard copies at your own expense through a retailer of your choice. If you choose to do so, please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition.

Teachscape
You will access video modules from Teachscape at the activity level within this course. The Teachscape modules include video lectures, exercises, and interactive elements.

Pearson MyEducationLab
You will use these videos and exercises embedded at the activity level throughout your Study Plan.

Enroll in Resources

You will need to enroll in or subscribe to additional learning resources as a part of this course of study.
You may already have enrolled in these resources for other courses. Please check the “Learning Resources” tab and verify that you have access to the following learning resources. If you do not currently have access, please enroll or renew your enrollment at this time.

*Note: For instructions on how to enroll or subscribe through the “Learning Resources” tab, please see the “Acquiring Your Learning Resources” page.*

**E-Brary Text**


**Handwriting Correspondence Course**

Please contact your mentor to receive directions for enrolling in the handwriting correspondence course.

- "Handwriting correspondence course" should appear as a learning resource.

Materials for the handwriting correspondence course will be sent to your home address.

*Note: A physical mailing address must be provided; UPS cannot deliver to a P.O. Box.*

*Note: The handwriting course can take up to three months to complete, so you should begin working on the course as soon as you receive it. See ELA 602.4.14-01.*

**Other Learning Resources**

You will use the following learning resources for this course.

**Lesson Planning Best Practices**

For this course, you will submit lesson plans to Taskstream. The *Lesson Planning Best Practices* resource is available to assist you in developing this important skill.

Please use this resource for this course and throughout the remainder of the program.

**Pacing Guide**

The pacing guide suggests a weekly structure to pace your completion of learning activities. It is provided as a suggestion and does not represent a mandatory schedule. Follow the pacing guide carefully to complete the course in the suggested timeframe.

- *Pacing Guide:Specific Teaching Practices: Reading, Writing, and Spelling*

*Note: This pacing guide does not replace the course. Please continue to refer to the course for...*
Language Concept Development

Current research states that oral language development is a key indicator for reading success. As a classroom teacher, your understanding of oral language development, and recognizing developmental delays in this area, will help you to better meet the needs of children in your classroom.

You will learn about the following topics: language concept development, influence of environment on language development, impact of linguistic development on curriculum decisions, and risk factors for reading difficulty.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- describe how the early social and instructional language environment affects subsequent language development,
- teach a lesson that requires concept development in a content area, and
- describe how to integrate literacy and mathematics into content area instruction.

Influence of Environment on Language Development

The International Reading Association (IRA) is an organization (based on membership) that holds conferences, publishes literature, and works with teachers from kindergarten through college in an attempt to improve reading/literacy education. If you are not already a member, you are encouraged to become one. State and national standards in reading/literacy are based on IRA's positions.

After completing this topic, you should be able to discuss the influence of the environment on language development. This includes questions such as the following:

- What is language concept development, and when does it begin?
- What can an elementary teacher do to promote language concept development in the classroom?
- What advice would you offer to parents or other caregivers of young children to promote language concept development at home?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.1: Teaching Methods: Language Concept Development**
  The graduate identifies the basic language concepts important for young students to learn and teaches these concepts.

Nature of Literacy and Today's Students

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 1 ("The Nature of Literacy")
Take notes over this chapter and reflect on the characteristics of an effective reading/literacy teacher.

**Fostering Emergent and Early Literacy**

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 4 ("Fostering Emergent/Early Literacy")

Reflect on the following:

- What emergent literacy knowledge, Skills, and behaviors need to be monitored in order to promote language development?
- How is the language of school different from the language of the home?

Try making a list of at least five things you need to watch for as an elementary teacher in order to help students develop critical emergent and early literacy skills.

**Language Development and Scientific Inquiry**

Read the following pages in *Language Arts: Integrating Skills for Classroom Teaching*:

- pages 14–26 of chapter 1 ("Language and the English Language")

After reading the information in chapter 1, identify two ways that visual representation and view can be supported in the language arts classroom.

Read the following pages in *Language Arts: Integrating Skills for Classroom Teaching*:

- pages 32–52 of chapter 2 ("Children as Language Learners and Thinkers")

After reading the information in chapter 2, return to page 32 and answer the questions in the anticipatory set. Explain your reasoning for each answer.

**Diversity in the Literacy Classroom**

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 2 ("Literacy for All: NCLB, RTI, and Diversity in the Literacy Program")

Maintain a bibliography of books and other materials that you might use to teach students who have special needs. Also maintain a bibliography of multicultural literature that would be appropriate for the age level that you plan to teach.

In a journal response to the following question:

- How does linguistic development impact curricular and instructional decisions at an early childhood level?

**Concept Development**
Read the following in *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*:

- **chapter 7 ("The Effective Lesson")** (paying particular attention to pages 216-220)

According to the *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* text, "Graphic organizers are semantic maps, pictorial maps, webs, and other devices that allow students to view and construct relationships among words" (p. 264).

Using a graphic organizer in conjunction with Slavin's recommendations, explain the steps for teaching concepts. Share these steps with a family member, friend, or WGU peer. Request feedback from that person and respond to any questions the person has.

**Risk Factors for Reading Difficulty**

Review the following in the *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* text:

- **chapter 1 ("The Nature of Literacy")**
- **chapter 2 ("Literacy for all NCLB, RTI, and Diversity in the Literacy Program")**

Then participate in the following:

- Interview an elementary teacher in person or a reading expert online.
- After reading chapter 2, pose questions to your interviewee about risk factors for reading difficulty.
- Develop a list of at least six risk factors for reading difficulty.

Complete the Module:

- **Accessing the General Education Curriculum: Inclusion Considerations for Students with Disabilities.**

**Complete: Task 602.4.1-05 Performance Assessment**

Complete the following task in Taskstream:

- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.1-05

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

**Emergent Literacy, Part 1**

Do you remember when you first learned to read? What an exciting time that was. Emergent literacy focuses on basic elements of the process of "learning to read". Skills learned at this stage of development are essential for helping students attain skills that they will use later on. It is important to understand how children develop skills and attitudes necessary to become proficient readers and writers.

After completing these activities, you should be able to
• explain what emergent literacy is, particularly as it relates to print awareness, and
• talk about basic principles of reading instruction associated with emergent literacy.

**Developmental Patterns of Emergent Literacy**

Emergent literacy builds on language concept development and focuses on the beginning stages of reading/writing. The following are some guiding questions to consider:

- If a principal asked you to define the term *emergent literacy* in a job interview, what would you say?
- At what ages do students progress in various early reading/literacy skills?
- What is a print-rich learning environment, and how can you build one in your classroom?
- What is the difference between sight words and high-frequency words, and how can you teach them to your students?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.3: Teaching Methods: Emergent Literacy**
  The graduate understands the nature of concepts about print and how parents can work with children at home to help develop that skill.

**Developmental Continuum**

Access and read the following:

- **Stages of Reading and Writing Development**

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- **chapter 4 ("Fostering Emergent/Early Literacy")**

After completing the readings from the textbook and designated website, see if you can articulate the developmental patterns of emergent reading and writing.

Do this in a way that best suits your preferred learning style (e.g., writing informal notes, recording your thoughts into a tape recorder or in a digital audio format, creating a graphic organizer, etc.).

Share what you have created with at least two other people (e.g., family member, friend, WGU peer, WGU mentor) and seek feedback about what you have done.

- Can the two reviewers explain to you, based on what you have included in your work, what the developmental patterns of emergent reading and writing are? If not, you need to go back, review your learning resources, revise your work, and resubmit it for additional feedback.

**Alphabet and Letter Recognition**
Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 5 ("Teaching Phonics, High-Frequency Words, and Syllabic Analysis")

Reflect on the following:

- What are the key stages in learning to read?
- How might knowledge of stages be used to guide instruction?

**Language Development**

Read the following pages in *Language Arts: Integrating Skills for Classroom Teaching*:

- pages 14–26 of chapter 1 ("Language and the English Language").

**Factors That Support a Literacy-Rich Environment**

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 13 ("Creating and Managing a Literacy Program")

Complete the "anticipation-reaction" guide on page 533 before and after you read this chapter.

**Sight Words and High-Frequency Words**

Review the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 5 ("Teaching Phonics, High-Frequency Words, and Syllabic Analysis")

Then, reflect on the following questions:

- What are the major syllable patterns?
- What are the main approaches to teaching syllabication?
- What are at least two approaches to teaching sight words?
- What are at least two approaches to teaching high-frequency words?

Think ahead to your own future elementary classroom and do at least two of the following activities:

Make a checklist of activities you will include in your classroom that promote literacy.

**Phonics**

Access the following Teachscape module:

- *Foundations of Teaching Reading: Phonics*

Watch the videos in the Exploring Phonics Instruction folder. After each video, complete the questions and check your answers.
Note: *Make sure to engage in all the materials in the folder to build your foundational knowledge.*

As you view the program, take notes on any key points; doing so should help you to learn more about high-frequency word instruction. Test your knowledge about sight words and high-frequency words by completing at least two of the following activities:

- Create a list that shows at least 10 reasons why it is important for students to develop an essential sight word vocabulary. Share this list with a friend, family member or WGU peer, and see if the list can be expanded even more.

- Find a list of at least 10 words from your reading textbook or some other source of your choosing. Classify the words on a chart as decodable or as sight words. What determines whether a word is decodable or a sight word?
- How will you teach students to recognize high-frequency words?

After completing your readings and viewings of the Teachscape videos, work with at least one other WGU peer in creating a word wall.

Use the following resources as a guide for your word wall:

- "[10 Great Word Wall Strategies for Classrooms](#)"
- "[Instructional Strategies Online: Word Walls](#)"
- "[Reading Rockets: Word Walls](#)"

The word wall can be created on a word-processing document or even on a multimedia presentation (e.g., Microsoft PowerPoint, Apple Keynote). Show the finished word wall to an elementary teacher for feedback.

**Emergent Literacy, Part 2**

Phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, and phonics are all essential elements of helping young children develop a solid foundation for future reading skills. The activities associated with this section will delve deeper into beginning reading instruction.

There is a significant difference between phonemic awareness and phonics. It is important that you understand the differences between the two terms, why phonemic awareness has emerged as a critical reading skill for young children, and how and when to teach phonemic awareness skills to children.

After completing this week’s activities, you should be able to

- understand and teach phonemic awareness skills,
- understand the role that phonics plays in learning to read, and
● provide effective research-based phonics instruction.

**Phonemic Awareness**
Phonemic awareness is not the same as phonics. Some questions you might consider include the following:

- What is phonemic awareness?
- Could you define it clearly?
- Are phonemic awareness and phonics the same thing?
- If not, what is the difference?
- How can you promote phonemic awareness in your elementary classroom at all grade levels?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.4: Phonemic Awareness**
  The graduate understands and teaches phonemic awareness skills, and (2) the graduate understands the role that phonics plays in learning to read and provides effective research-based phonics instruction.

**Phonemic Awareness**
Consider the following question:

- What is phonemic awareness and what is its role in early literacy?

Access the following Teachscape module:

- **Foundations of Teaching Reading: Phonemic Awareness**

Watch the videos in the Exploring Phonemic Awareness folder. After each video, complete the questions and check your answers.

*Note: Make sure to engage in all the materials in the folder to build your foundational knowledge.*

As you view the program, take notes on any key points; doing so should help you to better understand and reflect on strategies for building reading readiness.

Reflect upon and answer the following questions:

- What are the characteristics of phonemic awareness? How is phonemic awareness related to phonics? What are some good resources that you used to support your learning on this topic?
- Give examples of strategies you will use to develop phonemic awareness.
- Explain to a friend why manipulating phonemes with letters is more effective than limiting manipulation to spoken units.
Imagine that you are to build a case for providing specific instructional group sizes for teaching phonemic awareness. What research would you use to support specific instructional group sizes when teaching phonemic awareness?

Phonics and English Language Learner (ELL) Instruction

The activities associated with this subject will help you develop a foundational knowledge of phonics and fluency as it relates to a balanced reading/literacy program. The activities will also introduce you to meeting the instructional needs of English language learners (ELL).

Due to conflicting research study results and differing viewpoints regarding how children best learn to read, teaching phonics has been a controversial issue for the past 50 years. Current research is telling educators that phonics is an important approach to incorporate into a balanced reading/literacy program. The key is to understand how best to teach phonics and how to balance reading instruction.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- describe the role that phonics plays in learning to read and
- provide research-based phonics instruction.

Early Reading Development for English Language Learners

Phonics instruction builds on what was covered previously in the sections on language concept development, emergent literacy, and phonemic awareness. Instruction for English language learners (ELL) has become increasingly more relevant for the classroom teacher in recent years.

Some guiding questions to consider include the following:

- Can you now compare and contrast the terms *phonemic awareness* and *phonics*?
- Is phonics the best way to teach reading?
- What are some basic principles of effective phonics instruction?
- What are cueing systems, and why do you have to know about them?
- What if an ELL student is assigned to your classroom? How would you begin to teach that student to read and write?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.5: Teaching Methods: Decoding and Word Recognition**
  The graduate understands the role that phonics plays in learning to read and provides research-based phonics instruction.

Phonics Basics

Review the following in the *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* text:
Reflect on the following questions:

- What is the developmental nature of phonics?
- What are the key word analysis strategies?
- How might those strategies be introduced and reinforced?

View the following video:

https://lrps.wgu.edu/provision/33214445

Answer the questions that follow the video. Consider how you might create a word wall or high-frequency word chart in your classroom.

Complete at least two of the following:

- Explain why systematic phonics instruction makes a more significant contribution to student growth in reading than alternative programs that provide non-systematic or no phonics instruction. Seek feedback from a WGU peer, WGU academic mentor, or an elementary teacher. *Note: You should respond to this prompt in a way that best suits the way that you learn most comfortably, either through writing a brief narrative, jotting down informal notes to yourself, or creating a graphic organizer (e.g., a Venn diagram).*
- How are phonemic awareness and letter knowledge important foundational skills for phonics instruction?
- Explain to a friend, a family member, or on paper to yourself how you would coordinate the teaching of phonics with the instruction of other reading skills.
- Develop a resource bank or multimedia presentation (e.g., Microsoft PowerPoint, Apple Keynote) of research-based findings to explain the most appropriate time period for teaching phonics. Share your creation with at least one other individual for feedback. This would be very useful information to use later on, either in a job interview, or in a workshop for parents or other teacher colleagues.

**Decoding**

Review the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 5 ("Teaching Phonics, High-Frequency Words, and Syllabic Analysis")

Consider the following questions:

- What are decodable texts?
- What are their advantages and disadvantages?

**Building Vocabulary**

Read the following in the *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* text:
Consider the following question:

- What are the stages of word knowledge?

Complete the "anticipation-reaction" guide on page 258 in Chapter 5 ("Teaching Phonics, High-Frequency Words, and Syllabic Analysis") of Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students text.

Complete the following:

- **Guess the Covered Word**
- Use the Guess the Covered Word Activity to create your own version of the activity
- Try out your activity with an elementary-aged student and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the activity.
- **Making Word Activity**
- Create a "making words" activity for elementary-aged students. If possible, videotape yourself (not students) during this activity and critique the effectiveness of the lesson. It would be even more helpful to your growth if you and an elementary teacher could view the videotape together and discuss the session.
- Explain three instructional strategies that you could use to help children both recognize and decode words.

**Cueing Systems**

Then access and read the following article:

- **"Three Cueing Systems"**

Consider what you have learned about the important role cueing systems can play in reading success.

In a journal

- Define cueing systems and explain how beginning readers use the systems to decode words and move to word phrases.

**Phonics and Balanced Instruction**

Access and read the following article published by the National Institute for Literacy. After reading it, reflect on what you read relative to phonics and balanced instruction.

- **"Put Reading First"**

- What are the five areas that are needed to have a balanced literacy program? How do these
five areas work together?

**Reading Instruction for ELL**

Complete the following Teachscape module:

- English Language Learners: Reading and Writing

Reflect on ways in which you could provide effective reading/literacy instruction for English language learners.

After reviewing the learning resources, complete at least two of the following skill-builder exercises:

- Interview a child or an adult whose native language is not English. Find out the challenges that this individual has faced both culturally and linguistically. Seek that person's input regarding words of advice or strategies that teachers should employ when working with ELL students.
- After completing the Teachscape module at the beginning of this activity, collaborate with at least two other WGU peers to create a teacher workshop via teleconference or chat room on the topic of reading and writing instruction for English language learners. Coordinate the event with your WGU course instructor.

**Taskstream Performance Assessment**

Follow the directions in Taskstream to complete the following tasks as part of the performance assessment for this course:

- 602.4.5-01

**Oral Reading Fluency**

The activities associated with this subject will help you to more clearly understand the importance of not just decoding words, but of reading with automaticity and accuracy. This is necessary to become a fluent reader.

Fluency is very important to reading success. Fluent readers are better able to enjoy and understand what they read, and they read with appropriate speed, accuracy, intonation, and automaticity.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- define oral reading fluency,
- describe how oral reading fluency impacts comprehension, and
- describe effective research-based teaching practices that promote fluency.

**An Overview of Fluency Principles**

Oral reading fluency is an extremely important part of becoming a successful reader, and it will be your role as an elementary teacher to help each of your students to achieve fluency.
A few guiding questions to consider as you work through these activities include the following:

- Exactly what is meant by fluency?
- If you listened to a child read out loud, would you know if he or she was fluent?
- How can fluency be measured and assessed?
- What are some key instructional strategies that have been proven to be effective in promoting fluency?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.6: Oral Reading Fluency**
  The graduate understands the nature of oral reading fluency, describes its role in reading comprehension, and demonstrates effective research-based teaching practices that promote fluency.

**Oral Reading**

Oral reading fluency can be taught effectively in many ways. Some of these ways include choral reading, repeated reading, guided reading, and readers' theatre. Complete the Daniel case study found on page 9 of the below exercise:

**Daniel Case Study**

**Oral Reading Fluency Defined**

Review the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 5 ("Teaching Phonics, High-Frequency Words, and Syllabic Analysis")

Reflect on the following questions:

- What is "oral reading fluency"?
- What are some ways to foster oral reading fluency?

Continue your learning by completing at least one of the following activities:

- Explain how oral reading techniques such as guided oral reading, repeated reading, and choral reading have been shown to improve fluency and overall reading achievement.
- Create an audio archive of you reading a book in a format of your choice (e.g., digital audio recording, cassette, videotape). Listen to the recording after your first attempt and then critique it—look for ways in which you could perform at a higher oral reading level with intonation, inflection, and enthusiasm. Read the same book a second time and listen to that recording. Note any improvements that have been made, but target additional areas that could be read better. Read and record the book a third time and note your improvements. What did you learn about the importance of reading well orally as it relates to the development of students' fluency?
Complete the following Teachscape module:

- **Foundations of Teaching Reading: Fluency**

After completing the module, reflect on the following questions:

- What confirmed what you already knew about fluency?
- What new information did you learn?

Using what you have gleaned from the learning resources above, complete at least one of the following activities:

- Explain strategies you will use to provide adequate practice for students developing accuracy and fluency in reading words in isolation, in sentences, and in selected passages.
- A **think-aloud** is a technique whereby a teacher models a specific skill for students by going through the steps out loud—he or she pretends to be going through the skill for the first time and verbally articulates the steps involved.

Using a think-aloud, model for an elementary-aged student what it means to be a fluent reader. Based on what you learned, start (but do not finish) a multimedia presentation (e.g., Microsoft PowerPoint, Apple Keynote) on this topic.

Complete the presentation and send it to your course instructor or an elementary teacher for feedback.

**Fluency Assessment**

Read the following chapter in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- **chapter 3 ("Assessing for Learning")**

Then access and read the following articles:

- **Oral Fluency Assessment**
- **Oral Fluency Assessment Calculator**

**Guided Reading Practice**

Using the index in the back of the *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* text, look up and define the following aspects of a literacy program. Create a chart defining the experience and giving an example of how you can use this in your classroom:

- read aloud
- shared reading
- independent reading
- guided reading
- word study
Guided Reading Instruction

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- *chapter 10* ("Approaches to Teaching Reading")

As you read the chapter, pay particular attention to the section on guided reading. Consider the following questions:

- What is "guided reading"?
- How might guided reading be implemented?

Reading Assessment

Read the following pages in *Reading Assessment and Instruction For All Learners*:

- pages 233–236 of chapter 8 ("Once Upon a Time")
- Appendix B (Frequently Asked Questions about Informal Reading Inventories – Revisited)

Read the following chapter in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- *chapter 3* ("Assessing for Learning")

Consider the following:

- How are running records similar to but different from informal reading inventories (IRIs)?
- How are running records administered and interpreted?

Reading Assessment and Flexible Grouping

Read the following pages in *Literacy Survival Tips: 72 Lessons You Can’t Teach Without*:

- pages 101–115 of *chapter 8* ("Grouping Survival Tips: Guidelines and Top 5 Grouping Strategies for Improving Reading")

After reading, choose two of the strategies listed in the chapter. How can you incorporate these strategies into a lesson that you will be teaching in the classroom? Consider the role that flexible grouping structures plays in the assessment of reading/literacy. Think about how you might incorporate flexible grouping into your teaching.

Running Records

Read the following pages in *Literacy Survival Tips: 72 Lessons You Can’t Teach Without*:

- pages 87–100 of *chapter 7* ("Assessment Survival Tips: Guidelines and Top 5 Quick, Informal Assessments Every Teacher Should Know")

View the following video segment. Jot down key points to reflect on later as it relates to running
Choose at least two of the three skill-builders associated with the topic of "reading assessments":

- Using the "Running Records" form from the MyLabSchool video segment above, gain practice in conducting running records by working with at least two elementary-aged students. You can access these children through family or friends or a local elementary school with permission.
- Explain why retelling a story is an effective assessment strategy.
- Work with your course instructor to coordinate a group teleconference or chat session in which you will play a major role, perhaps in collaboration with other WGU peers, in leading a discussion about reading assessment.

You will want to discuss formal and informal assessment, effective ways teachers can assess students, and how assessment results should steer instruction.

**Vocabulary**

The activities associated with this subject will introduce you to effective methods of teaching vocabulary in the elementary classroom. Vocabulary is one of the five components of a balanced reading/literacy program, and therefore, it is directly linked to reading success.

A strong "meaning" vocabulary helps children understand the content of what they are reading, and "sight" vocabulary helps children read with fluency. Both types of vocabulary are critical for comprehension.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- state the major principles of vocabulary instruction,
- discuss research-based practices, and
- explain how vocabulary, decoding, and comprehension are connected.

**Vocabulary and Balance**

Vocabulary is one of the components of a balanced reading/literacy program as defined by the National Reading Panel. It is important for students to have a solid reading and content area vocabulary.

Some guiding questions to consider as you work through this the activities include the following:

- What would be a good working definition of vocabulary?
- What impact does vocabulary have on a child's overall reading success?
- What are at least three instructional strategies that you could use to teach vocabulary to your students?
- How can you promote vocabulary in content areas such as math, science, and social
This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.7: Teaching Methods: Vocabulary**
  The graduate understands the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension, and teaches vocabulary in isolation and in context.

**Vocabulary Basics**

Review the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- **chapter 6 ("Building Vocabulary")**

Define the following terms:

- adage
- idiom
- metaphor
- simile

Access the following Teachscape module:

- **Building Vocabulary**

Consider how the techniques for teaching vocabulary might be adapted for the different levels of students above kindergarten.

**Effective Vocabulary Instruction**

Complete the following Teachscape module:

- **Foundations of Teaching Reading: Vocabulary**

As you work through it, evaluate why repetition and multiple exposures to vocabulary are important to student mastery.

Complete at least three of the following skill-builder activities to help you develop your understanding about vocabulary:

- Engage in a conversation with a family member, a friend, or a WGU peer about vocabulary. You should be able to explain why pre-teaching critical vocabulary words prior to passage reading facilitates vocabulary acquisition and comprehension. You may want to develop a "think" sheet prior to the conversation.
- Using the terms you defined in the previous activity (i.e., adage, idiom, metaphor, simile), create a list of specific examples for each term. Jot down how you might teach each term to an elementary-aged student.
- Evaluate why repetition and multiple exposures to vocabulary are important to student
mastery. As a challenge, see if you can locate another scholarly source such as an article from the WGU Library that supports your views.

- Summarize a method you will use to teach vocabulary. Talk about how this method facilitates comprehension.
- Based on information you gained from completing the Teachescape module at the beginning of this activity, compare and contrast the following three ways to teach vocabulary: contextual analysis, structural analysis, and resources.

### Children's Literature

Did you read *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White when you were a child? What about *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* (written by Judi Barrett and illustrated by Ron Barrett)? Or perhaps the *Little House* series by Laura Ingalls Wilder? Do you remember what enjoyment you received from reading a book for pleasure?

The activities associated with this subject will introduce you to the world of quality children's literature and how it can be used to promote a lifelong love of reading.

Different types of quality reading material provide a variety of learning experiences for children. The effective use of children's literature can enhance and motivate children to become lifelong readers.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- describe the properties of quality children's literature,
- evaluate the qualities of children's literature,
- select appropriate children's literature materials, and
- use high-quality children's literature for a variety of purposes across the curriculum.

### An Introduction to Children's Literature

Children's literature plays a significant role in a child's overall development as a reader. Therefore, it is important to select high-quality pieces for your students to read on a regular basis.

Some guiding questions to think about as you work through these activities include the following:

- What makes a children's book or story high quality?
- What should you look for when selecting literature for your students?
- What are some good sources for locating quality children's literature, using both traditional and virtual methods?
- What are the major award-winning categories?
- How can you integrate children's literature as anchor pieces into content area lessons such as math, social studies, or science?

This topic addresses the following competency:
- **Competency 602.4.9: Children’s Literature**
  The graduate describes, evaluates, selects, and uses children’s literature for a variety of purposes across the curriculum.

**Reading Literature**

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 10 ("Reading Literature")

Consider the following questions:

- What steps might be taken to foster voluntary reading?
- How is reading literature different from reading other materials?

**Knowing Children’s Literature**

Read the following chapter in *Charlotte Huck's Children's Literature*:

- chapter 1 ("Knowing Children's Literature")

Write your reading autobiography (e.g., What memories do you have of reading as a child?).

**Understanding Children's Responses to Literature**

Read the following chapter in *Charlotte Huck's Children's Literature*:

- chapter 2 ("Understanding Children's Responses to Literature")

Summarize this chapter and generate a list of questions that you still have about the topic.

**Interest Inventory**

Read the following article by Worthy:

- "A Matter of Interest: Literature that Hooks Reluctant Readers and Keeps Them Reading"

After reading this article, discuss it with another WGU student. What are three ideas from this article that you will take with you to the classroom? It is really helpful to interview students one-on-one and find out as much as you can about their reading interests and their attitudes toward reading.

Review the following article by McKenna and Kear:

- "Measuring Attitude Toward Reading: A New Tool for Teachers"

This is an informative research study that contains a bonus feature, the "Elementary Reading Attitude Survey." Many teachers commonly refer to this as the Garfield Survey, for obvious reasons. You should interview a child (with permission) about his or her interests, and then
administer the survey. Score the results, and then generate a list of at least five books that would align with what you learned about that child's interests and reading attitude. Add to the list of questions you might ask of a student in order to determine his or her reading interests.

**Selecting Resources and Materials**

Read the following article by Williams and Bauer:

- "Pathways to Affective Accountability: Selecting, locating and using children's books in the elementary school classrooms"

Reflect on the following question:

- What sources could you consult in order to assemble a high-quality classroom library?

**Transitional Readers**

Reflect on the following question:

- What are at least five benefits of using quality children's literature in your elementary classroom?

Complete **one** or more of the following activities:

- Using the sample questions found on the Dyslexia Help website, create your own interest inventory. Interview an elementary-aged child and discover more about his or her reading interests:

  - **Reading Interest Inventories**

Based on that inventory, compile a list of at least five books that would be appropriate for this child. Share the information with the child's parent or teacher for feedback.

- Examine the distinction between the Newberry and Caldecott awards. Provide at least two examples of books representing each award, and discuss why it is important to incorporate these kinds of books into your teaching repertoire.

**Complete: Task 602.4.9-02 and Task 602.4.9-13, 14, 15 Performance Assessments**

Complete the following task in Taskstream:

- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.9-02
- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.9-13, 14, 15

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

**Narrative Text Analysis**
Based on what is found in the *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* text, expository text "is writing that is designed to explain or provide information" (p. 362). It typically consists of factual works of writing. Narrative writing, on the other hand, tells a story and contains various story elements that are associated with works of fiction, although narrative works may be either fiction or non-fiction in origin.

You as a teacher need to be able to analyze and select appropriate, high-quality narratives for your students to read. The activities associated with these subjects will introduce you to helping students to develop their skills in analyzing narrative texts.

It is important not only to introduce students to quality children's literature, but they must also learn how to break down what they have read and analyze it. This will aid not only in deeper levels of reading comprehension, but also in higher level thinking skills.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- explain what narrative text analysis is;
- define the difference between type and genre;
- analyze texts for structural devices;
- analyze texts for perspective, bias, and stereotyping; and
- analyze texts for grade-level appropriateness.

**An Overview of Narrative Text Analysis**

Narrative text analysis is a key skill that successful readers know how to employ.

Consider the following guiding questions as you explore this topic further:

- What exactly is narrative text, and how can you analyze it?
- Furthermore, how can you teach this skill to your elementary students?
- Why should young children learn how to analyze a narrative text?
- What are major literary elements?
- What kinds of literature work best for narrative text analysis?
- How can you encourage parents or other caregivers at home to help their children develop their skills in this area?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.8: Narrative Text Analysis**
  The graduate understands the differences in type and genre, and can analyze texts for structural devices, perspective, bias, stereotyping, and grade-level appropriateness.

**Text Structures and Teaching Procedures**

Review the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 7 ("Comprehension: Text Structures and Teaching Procedures")
Reflect on the following questions:

- What role does knowledge of text structure play in comprehension?
- What can be done to build students' sense of story structure?

Select at least three examples of children's text (fiction and nonfiction). Analyze the text for internal consistency, bias, stereotyping, and use of metaphors and analogies. Make a chart so that you can develop a visual perspective and look for patterns.

**Genres**

Read the following chapters from part 2 ("Exploring Children's Literature") in *Charlotte Huck's Children's Literature*:

- chapter 5 ("Picture Books")
- chapter 6 ("Traditional Literature")
- chapter 7 ("Modern Fantasy")
- chapter 8 ("Poetry")
- chapter 9 ("Contemporary Realistic Fiction")
- chapter 10 ("Historical Fiction")
- chapter 11 ("Nonfiction Books")
- chapter 12 ("Biography")

Complete at least two of the following skill-builder activities:

- Create a graphic organizer or chart of at least ten different children's books.

Categorize each according to genre.

- Select at least one children's fiction book and at least one children's nonfiction book.

Analyze each book to identify a perspective or position on an issue, the author's purpose for writing the book, and visual text features.

Then create an electronic poster advertising one of the two books.

- Define the term literary elements. Share examples of each element.

**Cause/Effect, Main Ideas/Details, Fact/Opinion**

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- chapter 8 ("Comprehension: Text Structures and Teaching Procedures")

Complete the following exercise to help solidify your understanding of elements of writing, viewpoints, and other aspects of literary analysis:

- Develop a table to define cause-effect, main ideas vs. details, and fact vs. opinions;
provide examples of each concept.
- Consider how you might go about teaching these concepts to elementary-aged students.

**Complete: Task 602.4.8-07 Performance Assessment**

Complete the following task in Taskstream:

- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.8-07

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

**Reading Comprehension, Part 1**

Have you ever read a technical manual and not understood it? Struggling readers feel this way every day. The activities associated with this subject will introduce you to reading comprehension, which is one of the most important elements of reading success.

Comprehension is the ultimate purpose of reading. All of the skills you teach will be directed toward children comprehending what they read.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- define reading comprehension,
- explain the role of comprehension in learning to read, and
- explain how to teach comprehension skills effectively.

**An Introduction to Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension is most definitely one of the elements of a balanced reading/literacy program, as ascribed by the National Reading Panel.

Some questions to guide your learning include the following:

- What exactly does it mean to comprehend?
- At what grade levels should reading comprehension be taught?
- How are oral comprehension and silent comprehension alike and different?
- How can reading comprehension be measured and assessed?
- How will you know if a book is on a child's reading level or not?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.10: Teaching Methods: Reading Comprehension**
  The graduate understands the role of comprehension in learning to read and teaches comprehension skills.

**Comprehension Overview; The Retelling Strategy**

Access the following videos and article on retelling and think about the different approaches presented:
• **Hands on reading:** A simple strategy to build comprehension
• **Alternatives to oral retellings**

Analyze the steps involved in conducting a retelling and take notes the key points; generate questions for yourself to further your learning.

**Strategies that Promote Comprehension**

• Read the article and view the embedded video: [SQ3R: Studying More Effectively](#).
• Read the article [Strategies that Promote Comprehension](#).

**Metacognitive Awareness**

Read the following pages in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* on graphic organizers:

• pages 338–343 of chapter 7 ("Comprehension Theory and Strategies")

**Reading Strategies**

Review the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

• chapter 7 ("Comprehension: Theory and Strategies")

Consider the following questions:

• What is the role of preparatory strategies?
• What are some key preparatory strategies?
• How might they be taught?

**Reading Aloud**

Read the following chapter in *Charlotte Huck's Children's Literature*:

• chapter 13 ("Planning the Literature Program")

Generate a list of best practices for reading aloud to children.

Also complete one of the following activities:

• Read a story to a child. When you are done, write a reflective journal entry to describe the experience of reading aloud to that child. Include why you selected the specific book that you read, what you learned from the experience, what worked well, what needed improvement, and so on.

Make a plan for how you might improve your skills the next time that you read to a child.

• Differentiate literal, inferential, and evaluative (applied) comprehension skills. Discuss why it is necessary to balance the kinds of comprehension questions you ask your students, and list two or three specific ways in which you can make sure that you are maintaining balanced comprehension instruction.
Determining Readability Levels

Read the following in Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students:

- chapter 3 ("Assessing for Learning")

This chapter introduces the learner to the concepts of readability.

Consider the following questions:

- What procedures might you use to estimate the readability of materials on a second-grade level or higher?
- How do the characteristics of materials change as the materials become more advanced?

Access and read about the Fry Readability Graph.

After reading that section in the text, summarize the following:

- What is the Fry graph and why is it useful?
- What are the main things to keep in mind when using the Fry graph?

Critical Reading

Read the following section in Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students:

- pages 387–392 (on critical reading)

Then consider the following questions:

- What is critical reading?
- What are some key critical reading skills?
- How would you go about teaching them?

Complete the following Teachscape module:

- Foundations of Teaching Reading: Comprehension

Reflect on what you studied in the module. What further questions come to mind?

Access and view the presentation "Lessons for Critical Reading".

Then, complete the following skill-builder exercises:

- Make a list of the major skills elementary students need in order to read critically. Then for each of those skills, identify a strategy you will use in order to help your students. How will you know for sure if your students are reading critically?
Discuss your list with a local elementary teacher,

- Select a book for a specific grade level. Write pre- and post-reading questions for each of Bloom's Taxonomy levels within the cognitive domain.

**Task 602.4.10-01 Performance Assessment**

Complete the following task in Taskstream:

- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.10-01

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

**Reading Comprehension, Part 2**

The activities associated with this subject will build upon what was introduced in the previous section about reading comprehension.

As stated previously, comprehension is the major purpose of reading. Students must understand what they read or hear in order to apply that information. There are some key strategies that have been proven to be effective in teaching readers to comprehend successfully.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- hone your understanding of comprehension as it relates to reading success,
- discuss principles of effective comprehension instruction,
- explain how to make predictions to improve comprehension,
- use compare/contrast as a comprehension strategy, and
- use graphic organizers as a way to organize information.

**Principles of Comprehension**

The National Reading Panel has identified some very specific principles or tenets of reading comprehension. These principles build upon what was covered in previous activities and focus more on specific instructional strategies.

Some key questions to consider include the following:

- What are the best ways to teach comprehension?
- What role do graphic organizers play in developing comprehension?
- What does it mean to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate?
- How can making predictions before reading a story help a child to comprehend more easily?
- What are at least five strategies that have been proven to be effective at promoting reading comprehension?

This topic addresses the following competency:
• Competency 602.4.10: Teaching Methods: Reading Comprehension
  The graduate understands the role of comprehension in learning to read and teaches comprehension skills.

Principles of Effective Comprehension Instruction

Review the following chapter of the "Put Reading First" document published by the National Institute for Literacy:

• "Text Comprehension Instruction"

Now, review the following in Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students:

• chapter 7 ("Comprehension: Theory and Strategies")
• chapter 8 ("Comprehension: Text Structures and Teaching Procedures")

Reflect on the following questions:

• What is the role of elaboration strategies?
• What are some ways in which making inferences might be taught?
• What are the steps in "ReQuest"?
• Why is "monitoring" a key reading strategy?

Comprehension Instruction

Read the following in the Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students text:

• chapter 7 ("Comprehension: Theory and Strategies")
• chapter 8 ("Comprehension: Text Structures and Teaching Procedures")

Compare/Contrast

Read the following article:

• "Compare/Contrast"

As you read, reflect on the following questions:

• What is compare/contrast? What is its purpose?
• What are at least three ways in which you could teach the skill of compare/contrast to students?

After reviewing the compare/contrast website, conduct a compare/contrast of two children's books of your choice. Consider creating a thinking map or other type of graphic organizer to visually communicate your compare/contrast. Build in teaching ideas for a specific grade.

Making Predictions

Review the following in Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students:
After completing your readings for this activity, test your knowledge about making predictions by completing at least one of the following skill-builder exercises:

- Select a quality children's literature book (fiction or biographical non-fiction) to read with an elementary-aged family member or friend. Conduct a picture walk with the child asking for predictions in the story as a pre-reading activity.

Use the read-aloud skills you learned previously to continue with the session, and then return to those predictions made in the picture walk at the conclusion of the book. What did you learn about making predictions using the picture walk?

- Select a quality children's literature book (fiction or biographical non-fiction) different from the one used in the picture walk.

Work with an elementary-aged family member or friend to make predictions by using either the DRTA or the "reciprocal teaching" strategy.

Reflect back on the lesson when you are finished.

**Graphic Organizers**

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:

- pages 264-269 (on graphic organizers)

Reflect on the following questions:

- What are the major graphic organizers?
- How does each of these organizers foster vocabulary development?
- How does each foster comprehension?

Review a variety of different types of graphic organizers on the "Graphic Organizers" page of the ProTeacher website.

Select at least two books or stories in which to use different types of graphic organizers and reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Put your knowledge about graphic organizers to use by completing at least one of the following:

- Select one children's book (fiction) and one children's book (nonfiction). Then select two graphic organizers from the website above and use one for each of the two books that you have chosen. Can you see how this might help your elementary students strengthen their understanding about key concepts, main ideas, details, and vocabulary?
Engage in a conversation with an elementary teacher.

- Explain how graphic organizers and semantic maps contribute to student comprehension. Can you find and share at least three high-quality organizer resources that you might use in your elementary classroom?

**Task 602.4.10-07 Performance Assessment**

Complete the following task in Taskstream:

- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.10-07

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

**Spelling**

Have you ever reviewed the job application or resume of someone who misspelled words? Have you ever received a letter that contained numerous spelling errors? The activities associated with this subject will focus on effective spelling instruction.

Spelling is a critical element of effective written communication. Helping students to become proficient, confident spellers will enhance their written communication skills.

After completing these activities, you should be able to identify and describe multiple strategies for teaching spelling.

**Principles of Effective Spelling Instruction**

Helping students to become good spellers has been an age-old challenge. Through the years, different educational perspectives have emerged regarding the approaches elementary teachers should take in spelling instruction.

Some key questions to consider might include the following:

- At what age should formal spelling instruction begin?
- Should you expect your students to have perfect or nearly perfect spelling in their written work?
- Is it ever acceptable to allow children to write a word as it sounds even if that word is spelled incorrectly?
- What are at least three effective strategies for teaching spelling at the elementary level?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.13: Teaching Methods: Spelling**
  The graduate provides systematic and explicit instruction in spelling.

**Spelling Basics and Development**

Review the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*: 

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As you review, reflect on the following topics and their corresponding questions:

**Spelling Basics**
- How are consonants formed?
- How are vowels formed?
- What impact does the formation of speech sounds have on spelling and reading?

**Spelling Development**
- What are the stages of spelling development?
- What are the three levels of students' understanding of spelling?
- How does spelling ability develop?

**Emergent Writing (as it Relates to Spelling Development)**
- How does writing develop?
- What are the forms of emergent writing?
- What are the key characteristics of each form?
- How does emergent writing relate to spelling?

**Phonological Awareness**
- What is phonological awareness?
- Why is phonological awareness so essential, but so difficult to learn?
- What are key phonological awareness skills?
- How might they be introduced and reinforced?

**Using Systematic Spelling Instruction**
- Why is it important to integrate phonological awareness and phonics?
- What are some ways in which phonological awareness and phonics might be integrated?

**Spelling Strategies**

Access and read the following articles:

- "Spelling Strategies: Guiding Kids to ‘Discover’ Spelling Rules"
- "Spelling Strategies" (Gentry)

Synthesize what you have gleaned from these learning resources by completing at least one of the following exercises:

- Work with an elementary-aged family member, friend, or student from a local elementary
school; locate words that are appropriate for that child’s grade level and develop a two-week plan that focuses on spelling instruction.

Select one of the strategies you found in the resources above; record your results and reflect on strengths and weaknesses of that strategy.

Seek feedback from an elementary teacher, WGU peer, or WGU course instructor.

- In a journal explain how phonemic awareness and oral language prepare students for spelling.

**Direct Spelling Instruction**

Access and read the following articles:

- "How Spelling Supports Reading"
- "Best Practices in Spelling Instruction: A Research Summary"
- "Ideology and Empiricism in Spelling Instruction"

Develop your knowledge base about effective spelling principles by completing at least one of the following skill-builder exercises:

- Consider how a technique (such as Elkonin boxes) might help with spelling. Use this technique with an elementary-aged family member, friend, or student from a local elementary school; reflect on your results.

Share those results with your WGU peers by leading a teleconference or chat room discussion on the topic of Elkonin boxes; coordinate the event with your course instructor.

- Identify the major strategies for teaching spelling. Discuss how you might incorporate at least two strategies into your classroom.

**Making Words:**

Access and read the following website; connect the information on the website to a lesson you would like to teach. What did you glean?

- "Word Wizards"

After reviewing the learning resources above, find an elementary-aged child with whom to conduct a making words activity. Choose an appropriate set of spelling patterns to focus on and use the ideas from the "Word Wizards" website as a guide.

Reflect on the following:

- What did you learn about the making words approach?
- What would you do differently next time you conduct this lesson?

**Spelling Rules**
Access and read the following web page:

- "Spelling Rules".

Generate a graphic organizer of the most common spelling rules for use in your classroom.

**Writing**

At some point in your life, you have been judged by how well you write; this is true for both traditional forms of writing and electronic means of communication. Your potential for success can also be measured by others simply by examining your writing samples. The activities associated with this subject will focus on effective writing instruction.

The writing process includes more than spelling and grammar. It is an important process in which ideas and thoughts are communicated to specific audiences and for specific purposes.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- describe the writing process,
- discuss oral language and writing, and
- explain how to assess students' writing.

**Writing Instruction**

Helping students to develop their skills as effective writers is a responsibility of all elementary teachers. The writing process is closely connected to other components of a balanced reading/literacy program.

Key questions to think about as you work through these activities include:

- What is "the writing process"?
- Could you list all the steps in the writing process if asked?
- At what age do students begin to write?
- What are the various stages of writing development?
- How is the quality of writing evaluated and assessed?
- What role does oral reading play in writing development?
- What are at least three ways in which you could incorporate the writing process into a thematic unit that covers multiple subject areas?
- What is the relationship between the spoken word and writing?
- How do emergent literacy and writing connect?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 602.4.12: Teaching Methods: Writing**
  The graduate provides systematic and explicit instruction in writing.

**Writing and Reading**

Read the following in *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*:
As you read about the following topics within chapter 12, reflect on the following questions:

**Writing Development**
- How does writing develop?
- What are the stages of writing?

**Process Approach to Writing**
- What is the process approach to writing?
- What steps might the teacher take to foster writing during the prewriting stage of the process approach?

**Composing**
- How do students' composing processes and the difficulties they face changes as they become more experienced writers?
- What might the teacher do to help students compose more effectively?

**Revising and Editing**
- How do students change the way they revise their writing as they become more experienced?
- What are some techniques the teacher might use to foster more effective revising?
- How should editing be taught and reinforced?

**Writing Conferences**
- What role do conferences play in the writing process?
- What are the characteristics of an effective writing conference?

**Writers Workshop**
- What are the major components of a writing workshop?
- How might each of these components be implemented?
- What are quickwrites, and how can they be used in conjunction with a writer's workshop?

**Writing Conferences (Follow-Up)**

Complete the following Teachscape module:
- **Writing Conferences**

Compare/contrast between what you learned from chapter 12 ("Writing and Reading")
of the *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* text and what you learned from the Teachscape module.

**Writing Instruction Synthesis**

In this activity, you will synthesize what you have gleaned from the following learning resources:

- *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students*: chapter 12 ("Writing and Reading")
- Teachscape module "Writing Conferences"

Do this synthesis of learning by completing at least two of the following exercises:

- Develop a handout that shows at least four activities that prepare students for writing passages (e.g., outlining, story grammar, graphic organizers, note taking).
- Identify common writing errors that students make. How might you help those students overcome challenges in those areas?
- Generate a list of steps that would be useful for teaching elementary students to write expository paragraphs. Where would you begin? What steps would you take? What teaching resources have you come across for helping students to write good, solid expository paragraphs? How might you evaluate the quality of those students’ expository paragraphs?

**Assessing Writing**

Reflect on the following questions:

- What are some ways to assess students’ writing?
- How often should writing assessment occur?
- How should the results be analyzed and used?

Based on what you have learned from chapters 2 and 12 in the *Creating Literacy Instruction for All Students* text, complete the following:

- Jot down your ideas, and then chat with a friend about what the most important criteria to consider when evaluating students’ writing are and how you should use that insight in order to improve the quality of students’ writing samples.
- What is the role of self-evaluation and/or peer-evaluation relative to writing samples? Moreover, what role do teacher/student writing conferences play in writing improvement?
- Create your own writing rubric for a specific grade level.

**Task 602.4.12-09 and Task 602.4.12-15 Performance Assessment**

Complete the following task in Taskstream:

- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.12-09
- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.12-15

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.
Handwriting and Penmanship

Have you ever tried to read a signature or a note from a parent at school but you could not make out the words? Have you ever had a child copy your own handwriting style, and you noticed that their penmanship was negatively impacted? The activities associated with this subject will focus on effective handwriting and penmanship instruction.

Even in this high-tech world, legible handwriting is a skill everyone uses. Teachers must understand how to teach handwriting and be able to model correct penmanship whenever they write.

After completing these activities, you should be able to

- explain and use basic principles of effective handwriting/penmanship.

An Introduction to Handwriting and Penmanship

Even in this age of increasing dependence upon technology for communication, it is very important for elementary students to develop good, legible handwriting, also known as penmanship.

Some key questions you may consider as you work through this set of activities include the following:

- Why do you need to teach your students handwriting and penmanship if they mostly use the computer to finish their work?
- What role does the quality of your own handwriting play in your students' handwriting development?
- There are many different methods for teaching penmanship-how can you know which is the best?
- At what age should formal handwriting instruction begin, and how long should it continue?
- What are some effective methods for teaching penmanship?

This topic addresses the following competency:

- Competency 602.4.14: Teaching Methods: Handwriting/Penmanship
  The graduate provides systematic and explicit instruction in handwriting/penmanship.

Penmanship

Complete the entire Handwriting correspondence course.

Note: You should have enrolled in this course as soon as you requested the performance assessment at the beginning of this course. This external course will take approximately three months to complete. You should begin working on your lessons as soon as it arrives.

Teaching Handwriting
Access and read "Handwriting Instruction: What Do We Know?". Write a summary of what you gleaned from this article.

Access and read "How to Teach Handwriting". What are the key principles to effective handwriting instruction?

**Task 602.4.14-01 Performance Assessment**

Complete the following task in Taskstream:

- ETP: Language Arts: Task 602.4.14-01

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

**Final Steps**

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! This course has prepared you to complete the assessment associated with this course. If you have not already been directed to complete the assessment, schedule and complete your assessment now.