

## **PBS TeacherLine Course Syllabus**

### **Title**

Effective Writing Instruction, PreK-K

### **Target Audience**

This course is intended for pre-service and in-service teachers, PreK-K, to address methods they can use to actively engage students in writing. The techniques included in this course are effective tools that educators can use to support students' development as writers. The focus of this course is to provide learners with the time to engage with the theoretical and practical information about effective writing instruction and to use the strategies to foster a classroom environment that offers multiple writing opportunities.

### **Prerequisites**

To successfully participate and complete the assignments in this course, the learner must:

- Have access to a writing classroom or a few PreK-K students to implement the strategies, lesson plans, and case study.
- Be familiar with taking an online course or have gone through the PBS TeacherLine Practice Learning Online course.
- Have some experience in PreK-K classrooms.
- Have an interest in language, literacy, and writing instruction.

### **Course Description**

In this course, learners will acquire both theoretical and practical information about effective writing instruction in grades PreK – K. In a facilitated, online environment, the course provides learners with an array of practical strategies for supporting students' writing development, including Modeled Writing, Shared Writing, Interactive Writing, and Independent Writing. Through multimedia, readings, discussion forums, and peer collaboration, the learners will gain knowledge of the typical patterns of writing development during the emergent literacy period. Learners participating in the course will work with students to complete the assignments so that they can directly experience the application of theory to practice and be better equipped to implement the content of the course in their own classrooms. The content aligns with the NCTE Standards 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 12, and both the content and delivery of the course align with many of the ISTE NETS.

### **Instructor/Facilitator**

See instructor/facilitator sheet.

### **Credits**

To be determined by college or university.

### **Goals**

The overall goal of this course is for the learner to develop an understanding of important research about effective writing instruction in grades PreK-K and to learn an array of practical strategies for supporting students' writing development.

By the end of the course, the student will be able to use the following in his or her own classroom:

- An understanding of typical patterns of writing development during the emergent literacy period.
- A repertoire of instructional strategies for helping PreK and kindergarten students at different stages of writing development, including Modeled Writing, Shared Writing, Interactive Writing and Independent Writing, and for incorporating elements of Writing Workshop into kindergarten instruction.
- Ideas for creating a classroom environment that offers multiple writing opportunities.
- Methods of observing, documenting, and assessing students' writing.

### **Learner Outcomes**

Students completing Effective Writing Instruction, PreK-K will be able to:

- Align their state's standards to the NCTE/IRA standards and the NCEE standards (for kindergarten teachers), and assess how the standards impact classroom instruction.
- Conduct formative assessments, as well as written and pictorial representation assessments, of students' writing.
- Observe and analyze how classrooms support writing using literacy environment checklists, and recommend strategies for improving both the environment and instruction.
- Develop plans to use technology to support developing writers.
- Create case studies of students having trouble with writing that apply the practical and theoretical knowledge gained in the course.

### **Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

Local stations can complete this section.

### **Outline of Content and Assignments**

After previewing the documents in the Course Information, learners will proceed to the Course Content to complete the following six sessions, working through each session in order. Essential information pertaining to the topic is presented within each session. Throughout the sessions, learners are also asked to articulate their ideas in various forms; for example, they are encouraged to reflect on their ideas and experiences in their online journal. The weekly discussions in the discussion forum are designed to allow learners to glean information from other learners' experiences with strategies both prior to and following the completion of the weekly assignments. As a final project, the learner will either develop a case study of a struggling writer or develop a technology and writing inventory for his or her school.

This course is designed to address the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and International Reading Association (IRA) [Standards for the English Language Arts](#) that were developed to serve as a guide for teachers in developing curriculum and instruction that foster students' literacy development. The course specifically addresses Standards 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 12. In Session 1 of this course, learners will read the applicable NCTE/IRA standards and a portion of the *New Standards* written by the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE). Learners will also familiarize themselves with how their own states' standards address writing.

Additionally, this course addresses several of the [ISTE NETS\\*T](#) for teachers including the following:

- Identify and locate technology resources and evaluate them for accuracy and suitability.
- Plan for the management of technology resources within the context of learning activities.
- Use technology to communicate and collaborate with peers, parents, and the larger community in order to nurture student learning.

### **Session 1: Writing Instruction and the Young Author**

#### **Objectives**

Learners will:

- Define professional goals and expectations for this course in the online journal.
- Explain prior knowledge and experiences about teaching writing to students in the online journal.
- Compare the standards for writing development put forth by the IRA/NCTE with his or her state's standards and, for kindergarten teachers, those of the National Center for Education and the Economy (NCEE).
- Identify and discuss what a young student needs to know to participate in writing.
- Reflect on beliefs about what is important to teach students of this age about language and writing.

## Read

- Emergent Writing: Developing Emergent Writing Skills in the Early Childhood Classroom  
<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2/issues/704issue.shtm>
- NCTE/IRA Standards  
<http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm>
- • PreK-K standards related to writing from the learner's own state
- NCEE's Kindergarten Writing Standards from National Center on Education and the Economy's *New Standards, Speaking and Listening Committee*
- "Preschools as Writers" from the book, *Teaching and Learning in Preschool*
- ISTE National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS\*S)  
[http://cnets.iste.org/students/s\\_stands.html](http://cnets.iste.org/students/s_stands.html)
- Performance Indicators for Technology Literate Students

## Additional Resources (not required)

- PBS Talking and Reading  
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/issuesadvice/talkingandreading/>
- PBS Parents Child Development Tracker: Literacy: Ages 4 to 5  
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/childdevelopment/literacy-4to5.html>
- PBS Parents Child Development Tracker: Literacy: Ages 5 to 6  
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/childdevelopment/literacy-5to6.html>
- Introduction to the NCTE/IRA Standards for English/Language Arts  
<http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110839.htm>
- Emergent Writing: Developing Emergent Writing Skills in the Early Childhood Classroom  
<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2/issues/704issue.shtm>
- Different Strokes for Different Folks: Carol Ann Tomlinson on "Differentiated Instruction"  
[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_issues/chat/chat107.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_issues/chat/chat107.shtml)

## Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on expectations for the course.
- Reflect on prior experiences teaching writing to students and techniques that were used.
- Synthesize the various sets of standards, in particular, how the state standards align to the NCTE/IRA standards.

## Participate in an Online Discussion

- Introduce themselves to other learners.
- Respond to: "How do you determine when to teach writing to a student? What do you think very young students need to know as they begin to write?"

## Complete Activities and Assignments

- View the video vignettes, "Signing In" and "Kerry and Jalen."

## Session 2: Writing Development and Formative Assessment

### Objectives

#### Learners will:

- Discuss the experience of assessing students' use of sound-letter correspondence after using an interactive.
- Analyze student work samples using assessment guidelines to find evidence of writing abilities.
- Reflect on the process of using assessment guidelines to gauge writing ability.

## Read

- “Getting Writing to Look Like Writing” from the book, *Much More than the ABCs: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing*
- “Learning that Alphabet Letters Represent Speech at the Phoneme Level” from the book, *Much More than the ABCs: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing*
- “Assessing Young Children: Measuring Growth and Celebrating Achievements”  
<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2/issues/1201issue.shtm>
- “Ten Pointers on Evaluating a Young Child’s Writing”  
[http://www.pbs.org/launchingreaders/writingandspelling/helpfularticles\\_2.html](http://www.pbs.org/launchingreaders/writingandspelling/helpfularticles_2.html)

#### Additional Resources (not required)

- Assessing Young Children  
<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2/issues/1201issue.shtm>
- Between the Lions: A.B. Cow  
<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/abcow.html>
- Between the Lions: Alphabet Soup  
<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/soup.html>
- Between the Lions: Chicken Stacker  
<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/stacker.html>
- Between the Lions: Fuzzy Lion Ears  
<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/ears.html>
- Between the Lions: Pounce  
<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/pounce.html>
- Sesame Street: Letter of the Day  
<http://pbskids.org/sesame/letter/index.html>

#### Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on the difficulties of analyzing the sample student work and how to make the assessment criteria useful in own classroom.

#### Participate in an Online Discussion

- Share the experience of using the “Alphabet Soup” interactive with students, noting what the interactive highlighted about the students’ knowledge of sound-letter correspondence and any differences in the individual students’ approaches. Describe how the game could be used in classroom instruction.

#### Complete Activities and Assignments

- Explore the “Experience a Graphomotor Difficulty” interactive
- Explore the “Alphabet Soup” interactive.
- Complete the “Formative Assessment of Writing Samples” assignment.
- Collect two pieces of student writing from case study or focus student by Session 5.

### Session 3: Environment, Opportunities, and Modeling

#### Objectives

#### Learners will:

- Identify ways to use modeled writing and shared writing in a PreK or kindergarten classroom.
- Evaluate a PreK or kindergarten classroom for environmental opportunities and instructional support for students’ writing.
- Reflect on how own writing instruction can better complement language and literacy practices students are likely to bring to the classroom.

#### Read

- “Writing for and with Children: Modeled, Shared and Interactive Writing” from the book, *Early Literacy Instruction in Kindergarten*

- “Space, Materials and Classroom Arrangement” from the book, *Designing Early Literacy Programs*
- “The Writing Spot” from the book, *Early Literacy Instruction in Kindergarten*
- “Sociodramatic Play as Opportunity for Literacy Development: The Teacher’s Role” from, *The Reading Teacher*
- Choose one:
  - “African American Parents’ Educational Orientations: The Importance of Social Class and Parents’ Perceptions of Schools” from *Education and Urban Society*
  - “The Drinking God Factor: A Writing Development Remix for ‘All’ Children” from *Written Communication*
  - “Adjustment Across Task in Maternal Scaffolding in Low-Income Latino Immigrant Families” from *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*

#### Additional Resources (not required)

- Between the Lions: Family Tales  
<http://pbskids.org/lions/parentsteachers/activities/family-tales.html>
- Between the Lions: Handbook  
<http://pbskids.org/lions/parentsteachers/resources/handbook/pdf/lions-hbk-activities.pdf>
- Caillou: Your Own Picture Storybook  
<http://pbskids.org/caillou/activities/storybook.html>
- Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood: My Family and Me  
[http://pbskids.org/rogers/parentsteachers/theme/1531\\_p\\_act.html](http://pbskids.org/rogers/parentsteachers/theme/1531_p_act.html)
- Reading Rainbow: Three by the Sea  
<http://pbskids.org/readingrainbow/family/activities/activity12.html>
- Share a Story  
<http://pbskids.org/shareastory/how.html>
- PBS Talking and Reading  
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/issuesadvice/talkingandreading>

#### Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on the article read of the choice of three and share how the article will affect own literacy instruction.

#### Participate in an Online Discussion

- What other opportunities are there in a PreK or kindergarten classroom for using a modeling technique and what are some other ways you incorporate shared writing into your instruction?

#### Complete Activities and Assignments

- Watch the video vignette, “Morning Message,” to see a modeled writing activity.
- Watch the video vignette, “What Makes Your Friends Happy?” to see a shared writing activity.
- Complete the “Writing Around the Room” assignment.

### Session 4: Interactive and Independent Writing

#### Objectives

#### Learners will:

- Analyze a teacher’s use of interactive writing with a kindergarten class.
- Discuss the use of interactive writing to foster students’ writing development in PreK and kindergarten.
- Reflect on the role of technology in scaffolding young students’ writing development and the place of such technologies in own practice.

- Explain the challenges and advantages associated with the use of the Writing Workshop with kindergarten students.
- Select and/or adapt elements of Writing Workshop practices for use with PreK and kindergarten students.

#### Read

- “Technology and Young Children—Ages 3 Through 8” from the position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Ways Technology Supports Early Literacy  
[http://www.pbs.org/readytolearn/resources/2005\\_summer\\_institute/Feldman\\_EarlyLiteracy.pdf](http://www.pbs.org/readytolearn/resources/2005_summer_institute/Feldman_EarlyLiteracy.pdf)
- “Recommendations for Using Technology in Preschool and Kindergarten” from the Northwest Educational Technology Consortium’s Web site
- “Writing by Children” from the book, *Early Literacy Instruction in Kindergarten*
- “Kindergarten Writing Workshop” from, *The Reading Teacher*

#### Additional Resources (not required)

- Arthur: Adventure Story  
[http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/acts/adventure\\_story.html](http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/acts/adventure_story.html)
- Arthur: Author  
<http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/acts/author.html>
- Clifford: Circus Stars  
[http://pbskids.org/clifford/caregivers/activities/act\\_109a.html](http://pbskids.org/clifford/caregivers/activities/act_109a.html)
- Clifford: Jetta’s Sneak Peak  
[http://pbskids.org/clifford/caregivers/activities/act\\_213b.html](http://pbskids.org/clifford/caregivers/activities/act_213b.html)
- Clifford: The Kibble Crook  
[http://pbskids.org/clifford/caregivers/activities/act\\_126a.html](http://pbskids.org/clifford/caregivers/activities/act_126a.html)
- Dragon Tales: Backwards to Forwards  
<http://pbskids.org/dragontales/parentsteachers/activities/activity123a.html>
- Dragon Tales: Just the Two of Us  
<http://pbskids.org/dragontales/parentsteachers/activities/activity225a.html>
- Jakers!: My Grand Story  
<http://pbskids.org/jakers/parentsteachers/activities/mygrandstory.html>
- McCarrier, A., Pinnell, G. S. & Fountas, I. (2000). Essential elements of interactive writing.” In *Interactive Writing* (pp.69-82). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Story Weaver Software  
<http://storymind.com/>

#### Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on the advantages and challenges of using Writing Workshop with kindergarten students or the elements of Writing Workshop that could be adapted for PreK and how to adapt them.

#### Participate in an Online Discussion

- Respond to: “How did the teacher in the videos make use of the concept of gradual release of responsibility in her interactive writing lesson? Share any ideas or questions about using interactive writing in own classroom.”

#### Complete Activities and Assignments

- Watch the video vignettes, “Interactive Writing: Part 1,” “Interactive Writing: Part 2,” and “Teacher Reflection,” to see an interactive writing lesson.
- Explore the “Story Starter” interactive.
- Complete the “Using Technology in Your Classroom” assignment.
- Collect another piece of student writing from case study or focus student by Session 5.

- Explore poetry resources and activities from PBS.

### Session 5: Observing and Documenting Early Writing

#### Objectives

#### Learners will:

- Describe the approach from the chapter, “Writing,” for assessing student’s writing abilities and compare it to other assessment strategies.
- Analyze a student’s knowledge of written and pictorial representation.
- Analyze a student’s self-evaluation to plan future writing instruction.

#### Read

- “Writing” from the book, *Kidwatching*
- “Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation” from the book, *Kidwatching*

#### Additional Resource (not required)

- Struggling to Learn: Understanding and Recognizing Writing Disabilities  
[http://www.pbs.org/parents/strugglingtolearn/understanding\\_writing.html](http://www.pbs.org/parents/strugglingtolearn/understanding_writing.html)

#### Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on the “Student’s Favorite Work” activity and share any surprises and how the information from the activity could be used to plan instruction.

#### Participate in an Online Discussion

- Discuss how the Kidwatching approach differs from traditional assessment and share what some of the challenges might be in implementing Kidwatching in the classroom.

#### Complete Activity and Assignment

- Complete the “Assessment of the Case Study or Focus Student” activity.
- Complete the “Student’s Favorite Work” activity.

### Session 6: Translating Your Learning into Curriculum Planning

#### Objectives

#### Learners will:

- Synthesize information about a focus student in a case study paper that includes an instructional plan and takes into account both the student’s and own goals for his or her growth.

#### OR

- Create a Technology and Writing Inventory—annotated with recommendations of whether or how to use each piece—of technology available to support emergent writers.
- Assess learning in this course by comparing prior knowledge and acquired knowledge in the online journal.
- List any questions about effective writing instruction at the PreK or kindergarten level.
- Analyze the learning experience in this course by reflecting on professional goals and expectations in the online journal.

#### Participate in an Online Discussion

- Ask any remaining questions.

#### Write in Online Journal

- Acquired Knowledge
- Professional Goals and Expectations

### **Final Project**

Learners will submit their choice of two final projects in Session 6. The two options are:

Option 1: Case Study of a Developing Writer - 4-6 page case study paper, aligned to the standards, with recommendations.

Option 2: Technology and Writing Inventory

1. Research available technology.
2. Evaluate and annotate the technology choices.
3. Share inventory with colleagues for Peer Review

### **Schedule**

This course is scheduled to take approximately 30 hours to complete readings, activities, video, assignments, reflections and a final project.

### **Requirements**

Learners are expected to:

- Complete all assignments.
- Maintain an online journal.
- Participate and actively engage in discussions with fellow learners while contributing to the social construction of knowledge.
- Be self-directed and self-motivated.
- Ask for assistance when they need it.
- Have access to a group of students for implementing lessons.

### **Materials (hardware, software, plug-ins)**

#### **Technical Requirements**

- Word processor
- Internet service provider
- E-mail

### **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

To be inserted by university institution only

### **Evaluation**

This course is evaluated on a letter grade basis, and may be available for graduate credit. See graduate credit details pertaining to specific graduate credit institutions.