

Language & Communication Package (50 Hours)



The courses in this package help teachers create effective curriculum that teach language skills to all students. The package includes strategies, templates, and tools to help teachers teach reading, communication, and other English language skills.

The Language & Communication Package includes 5 self-study courses (10 hours each) for a total of 50 hours of professional development.

- Enhancing the Classroom Learning Environment
- Reading Resilience
- Reading Strategies for All Teachers
- Teaching English Learners
- The Art and Science of Reading

Enhancing the Classroom Learning Environment



Standards:

This course aligns to the INTASC Standard, Learning Environments.

It also aligns to the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content and Teachers Facilitate Learning.

Explore successful ways to create an active, engaging, and inviting learning environment that promotes student learning.

The first section of this course provides a fresh new approach to bulletin boards. Teachers learn the basic principles of art and design and how to apply them in planning and creating bulletin boards.

The second section focuses on equipping teachers to partner with parents. This will enhance a teacher's professional interaction and communication skills as well as help build lasting relationships with parents.



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Quizzes

Enhancing the Classroom Learning Environment

Course Outline

SECTION A: Bulletin Boards - Ideas for Every Classroom

LESSON 1: Introduction to Bulletin Boards

- Exploring the purpose, application and skills enhanced by bulletin boards
- Identifying essential characteristics of good bulletin boards
- Considering the three main types of bulletin boards: teacher created, teacher-student created and student created to understand their applications, features and advantages

LESSON 2: Designing Bulletin Boards

- The effective use of art elements in the design of classroom bulletin boards
- Using principles of design to organize elements of a bulletin board for a specific purpose
- Applying the basics of graphic organization to present the content of a bulletin board

LESSON 3: Creating a Bulletin Board

- Planning for the physical aspects and logistics of the board as well as its purpose
- Understanding the process of constructing the background, lettering and adornments for the board
- Ensuring student participation through clear expectations, creating success, promoting teamwork and organization

LESSON 4: Bulletin Board Ideas

- Exploring the applications and features of seasonal boards in celebrating events and reinforcing learning
- Creating boards for classroom management and social skill development to emphasize rules and expectations
- Examining how conceptual boards can be used to effectively teach and reinforce subjects like Math, English, Science and History

Enhancing the Classroom Learning Environment

Course Outline

SECTION B: Partnering with Parents

LESSON 1: Introduction

- Structure of teacher and parent partnerships across grade levels
- Common obstacles to partnership
- Dealing with some of the special challenges in the partnership process

LESSON 2: Understanding the Parent

- Parent types, learning to recognize them and applying the strategies that are suitable for that specific parent type to create successful partnerships
- Basic needs across parent types and how teachers may meet these needs

LESSON 3: Partnering Strategies

- Ways in which parents can partner, both in the school and from home
- Volunteering at school and the benefits for the student, teacher, and parent
- Volunteering opportunities available for parents in the form of academic activities, creative activities, social activities, support activities, and leadership positions
- Communication methods and strategies

LESSON 4: Building Lasting Relationships

- How the teachers' attitude and communication style can make or break the partnership relationship
- Communication is addressed in detail, especially relating to various situations such as: when there's an issue, when parents volunteer, and discussing students
- Responding to challenging situations such as parental anger, disruptive students, cheating, stealing, violence, bullying, academic issues, and lies



10 Hours
of Learning



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Reading Resilience



Standards:

This course aligns to the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to all of the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.

The ability to read helps children communicate, comprehend their course curricula, become independent learners, and have access to career opportunities.

Through the strategies presented, educators can teach children how to make connections between written texts and the world, overcome challenges, and master the art of reading. Teaching students this important life skill can be complex, challenging, and require educators to adopt a range of approaches and methodologies.

This course enables teachers to help all children—regardless of their learning preferences and disabilities—become independent readers. Prepare your students for success both in and beyond the classroom.



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Reading Resilience

Course Outline

SECTION A: Guided Reading

LESSON 1: An Overview

- Integrating guided reading into the classroom curriculum
- The pros and cons of traditional vs guided reading groups
- The foundational principles of guided reading
- Impact of guided reading, and its implementation across grades

LESSON 2: Procedure

- Implement a guided reading program to match individual student needs
- Manzo's 9 Steps to improve reading comprehension
- Strategies to provide differentiated instruction
- Stages of reading and assessing student levels by specific characteristics

LESSON 3: Strategies

- Implementing guided reading by integrating strategies
- Tips for implementing age-appropriate strategies to match student age and intellect
- The scope and implementation of guided reading for ELLs (English Language Learners), CCNs (Complex Communication Needs) and students with special needs
- Understanding the application of guided reading across curriculum
- The challenges faced during guided reading

LESSON 4: Resources and Organization

- Practical tips for effective implementation of the Guided Reading Program
- Managing student behavior
- Learning the key to staying organized
- Assessing the reading level of students
- Using technology effectively for guided reading groups

Reading Resilience

Course Outline

SECTION A: Writing and Dyslexia: Overcoming Challenges

Lesson 1: Writing Challenges

- The importance of writing
- Dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia: symptoms and diagnosis
- Decoding and encoding challenges
- Handwriting and other writing challenges

Lesson 2: Transcription Challenges

- Spelling
- Morphology
- Phonics
- Keyboarding

Lesson 3: Cognitive Functions in Writing

- Writing challenges
- Memory, attention, and concentration
- Sequencing, planning, and organization
- Strategies to improve writing

Lesson 4: Sharpening Writing Skills

- Pre-writing
- Initial draft
- Revising
- Assessment



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Reading Strategies for All Teachers



Standards:

This course aligns to all of the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to all of the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.

This course helps teachers understand more about reading across the curriculum.

Since the reading range in any given classroom varies extensively, all educators should be aware of reading instruction best practices. The first section is full of new ideas to motivate students to read more and equips teachers with a variety of strategies that they can use to support reading comprehension.

The second section highlights the importance of change from traditional reading strategies to new and innovative ways of improving reading comprehension. This is a great tool for any teacher who wants to help students build a stronger understanding of the text that they come across in the classroom.



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Reading Strategies for All Teachers

Course Outline

SECTION A: Reading Across the Curriculum

LESSON 1: Research

- The importance and nature of the 'reading' skill
- Language development in the early years
- Implications of different levels of daily language exposure
- How the brain processes what we already know and have experienced to develop reading skills

LESSON 2: Reading Assessments

- Diversity of students' reading abilities
- The purpose of reading assessments and components
- Common reading assessments and their usage
- Cloze and CARI to measure reading performance

LESSON 3: Basic Reading Strategies

- Basic reading strategies and accessing results
- Essential elements and traditional lesson formats
- Pre-reading, the reading process, and post-reading
- Effective ways to extend the life of the text beyond the lesson

LESSON 4: Reading Across Content Areas

- Scaffolding a common textbook to support varying reading levels using four steps
- Using different books on a common topic or learning objective to meet differing needs
- Question-Answer Relationships (QARS)
- Effectively approaching different structures of texts

Reading Strategies for All Teachers

Course Outline

SECTION B: Tackling Tough Text

LESSON 1: Comprehension

- The importance of building students' self-efficacy to ensure learning
- The need for appropriate background knowledge and reading strategies
- Strategies for teaching reading comprehension
- Go beyond traditional teaching models toward participatory literary practices
- The Reading Comprehension Checklist

LESSON 2: The Checklist

- The roadmap to activate students' background knowledge
- Understanding essential steps while working with the checklist, to ensure an internalization of the reading comprehension process
- The value of pre-reading in making stronger readers, and the four steps involved

LESSON 3: Working with Questions

- Understanding how to label and analyze questions that accompany the text

LESSON 4a: Time to Read

- Beginning the final part of the checklist; the actual reading of the text
- The process of identifying and underlining five key words in the text
- The recommended sequence of answering questions
- The importance of emphasizing students' self-confidence

LESSON 4b: Evaluating the Checklist

- The practical aspects and benefits of using the checklist in the classroom
- Using the evaluation in the checklist to identify areas where students need more help
- Understanding the need for tough text levels and the significance of the checklist



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Teaching English Learners



Standards:

This course aligns to all of the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to all of the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.

Any teacher, administrator, or support staff member who would like to help English Language Learners do well in school will find this course to be both informative and useful. The focus includes how to make ELLs and their families feel more welcome while generating academic successes through empowerment.

Participants will improve cross-cultural skills, examine cultural influences on school practices, and come away with greater insight into how second languages are acquired. They will also discover teaching methods and educational strategies for today's diverse mainstream classroom that are considered best practices for reaching and teaching all learners. Included are highlighted practical tips and activities that can be put to use right away.



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Teaching English Learners

Course Outline

SECTION A: Language Acquisition

LESSON 1: Introduction

- Considering how language is acquired
- Distinction between learning and acquiring a language
- Rules of language
- Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)
- The meanings and need for comprehensible input and interactionism
- Age related considerations in the acquisition of a language

LESSON 2: The Acquisition Process

- The stages of language acquisition and the characteristics, duration, and strategies of each; The Silent Period, Early Production, Speech Emergence, Intermediate Proficiency, Advanced Proficiency
- Reception and production of oral language vs. reception
- Reciprocity between oral skills and written skills in second languages

LESSON 3: Literacy Skills - Reading

- Why Literacy skills are essential to school success
- "Balanced Literacy" approach, its principles, and choosing appropriate texts
- The Language Experience Approach for early reading development
- Context-based activities in diverse classrooms
- Top-down approaches to reading and phonics for a balanced literacy program

LESSON 4: Writing and Dialogue

- Shared or modeled writing to benefit writers at early stages
- Free writing vs. a structured writing
- Dialogue journals
- Process writing stages: Prewriting, Drafting, Peer Review, Revising and Publishing
- Instructional Conversation (IC)

Teaching English Learners

Course Outline

SECTION B: English Language Learners in the Classroom

LESSON 1: Welcoming English Language Learners

- Create an environment of acceptance
- Understand the backgrounds of English Language Learners
- Establishing an open channel of communication with parents

LESSON 2: Accommodating a New Culture

- Identify the educational needs of English Language Learners
- Avoiding assumptions
- Conversational and cross-cultural skills
- Comparing cultures and value systems

LESSON 3: Collaboration and Connection

- Approaches for mainstream teachers to effectively serve English Language Learners
- The Sheltered Instruction (SI) model
- Four language skill areas

LESSON 4: Curriculum and Lessons

- Engaging students in “higher order thinking skills” (HOTS)
- Methods of simplification and expansion



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Resources & Tools for
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The Art and Science of Reading



Standards:

This course aligns to all of the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to all of the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.

Reading instruction requires an understanding of the mechanics, brain areas involved, and methods for training visual skills. It can be a science. Interestingly, it is also an art.

Each child is different and unique. What works for one doesn't always work for another. Personality, interests, environments, and learning styles all play a role in learning and building reading skills.

In this course, we explore both. From systematic phonics instruction, to multisensory strategies, vocabulary techniques, and content approaches, this course is full of ideas teachers can use in any classroom.



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Quizzes

The Art and Science of Reading

Course Outline

SECTION A: Early Reading Skills

LESSON 1: Language Development

- Stages of reading development
- The role of neuroscience in language development
- Reading wars and speech-language impairments
- Reading disorders and assessment for reading disorders

LESSON 2: Reading Disorders

- Growth mindset approach and “think-aloud” strategy
- Zone of proximal development (ZPD)
- Gradual release of responsibility
- Fostering early literacy at home and play & literacy

LESSON 3: Supporting Early Literacy Skills

- Purposeful conversations and vocabulary
- Academic vocabulary and narratives
- Phonological words and syllable awareness
- Rhyming, onset, rime, and phonemic awareness

LESSON 4: Phonics

- Letter-sound relations and keyword for each letter
- Word building and decoding words
- Letter tiles and elkonin boxes
- Sound-spelling patterns and encoding (spelling)

The Art and Science of Reading

Course Outline

SECTION B: Reading in Content Areas

LESSON 1: Reading Fundamentals

- What is reading comprehension
- Reading disorders
- Assessments for reading, writing, and spelling
- Reading at home and school
- Growth Mindset approach

LESSON 2: Reading Comprehension

- Reading development
- Strategies in building reading skills
- Working memory
- Vocabulary instruction

LESSON 3: Comprehension Strategies

- A Purpose for reading
- Art of questioning
- Visualization skills and inferencing
- Using self-monitoring and making predictions

LESSON 4: Text Structure

- Why text exists and why we read
- Graphic organizers
- Informational texts
- Digital text



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