



Castleton University

Early Childhood Educators Institute Summer 2021 Course Syllabus

The course objectives, expected outcomes, assignments, and readings for this course were aligned with Vermont child care program licensing qualifications criteria and relevant certificates and credentials issued by Northern Lights at CCV and the endorsement standards for early childhood overseen by the Vermont Agency of Education. Specifically, this course was framed using the Vermont Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals, the Vermont Early Learning Standards, the Vermont Guiding Principles for the Full Participation of Each and Every Child, and/or the Vermont Core Teaching Standards. This syllabus was vetted for licensure and credential alignment by both the Agency of Education's Early Education Programs Manager and the Director of Northern Lights at CCV. Detailed information regarding that alignment is available upon request from the Castleton Center for Schools.

Course Title: Building Blocks for Literacy®

Number of Credits: 3 graduate or undergraduate credits

Level: Graduate & Undergraduate

Students may elect to take this course at the undergraduate level. If so, some assignments and expectations for scholarly writing (paper page length, APA expectations) will be minimized to the level of complexity for what would be expected of an undergraduate student. Any adjustments to course expectations for this purpose should be determined collaboratively by the instructor and the student(s).

Course Code: EDU 5515 C10 (graduate) & EDU 4710 CFS11 (undergraduate)

Dates: July 20 – November 1, 2021.

This course is part of the 2021 Early Childhood Educators Institute and requires attendance all 4 days of the online institute July 20, 22, 27 & 29. The course continues in an online environment until November 1, 2021 at the latest.

Times: July 20, 22, 27, 29 from 9:00 am - 4:05 pm.

Format: Online asynchronously and synchronously using Zoom videoconferencing.

Location: Online

Learning Management System or Technology Tools: Google Classroom and Gmail account

Instructor: Karen Shearer M.A., A/AOGPE

Email: kshearer@fwsu.org

Phone: (802) 923-6333

Course Cost to Student: \$375 for this 3-credit course. The institute fee is \$200. Total: \$575

Course Description: Building Blocks for Literacy® is an undergraduate/graduate foundational course to understand the development of early literacy skills as they relate to later reading and writing skills. Originally designed as a course for early care/education providers and kindergarten teachers, this course also provides classroom elementary teachers with the knowledge to apply effective intervention for struggling Grade 1-3 readers. Building Blocks provides a conceptual understanding of the research-based components necessary to deliver effective language learning opportunities in early care and education/Pre-K settings to assure later literacy success. Participants will learn how language acquisition, phonological awareness, shared book reading and the speech to print connection help children acquire early literacy skills. The course emphasizes the specifics of phonemic awareness and matching speech sounds to the varied letter representations to support early elementary students who struggle learning to read and write. Building Blocks is aligned with the Vermont Early Learning Standards, integrating play-based strategies to demonstrate scaffolding skills within each key concept. Participants will become familiar with ongoing evidence-based practices that integrate current research with family and professional wisdom and values. They will also learn how to deliver these developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in a variety of settings, including individual (1:1), small group/large group, and teacher or child-directed free play.

Audience: Birth to Five Early Care and Education Providers **and** Pre-K to Grade 3 Teachers

Course Goals: Participants will learn:

- Early Literacy Research including necessary components (shared book reading, phonological awareness, and the speech to print connection) to help children build early language and literacy skills
- Executive Function skills supported through explicit play-based strategies
- Effective and enjoyable research-based language strategies to help assure kindergarten success
- Observation strategies and assessment tools
- How to adapt the learning environment to meet learning goals
- The relationship between phonemic awareness and alphabet knowledge to master the alphabetic principle
- The importance of strong home-school connections through partnering with parents/caregivers in solid relationships will be discussed throughout the course.
- Specific attention will also focus on healthy development of executive function skills.
- Participants will understand how diversity in children's cognitive, social-emotional development, gross and fine motor delays impact language acquisition and language development.

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Synthesize and apply the research on early literacy skills of vocabulary development and shared book reading, phonological awareness, and the speech to print connection, including alphabet knowledge
- Analyze learning gaps in children's vocabulary, phonological awareness, language comprehension and usage
- Analyze the impact of the alphabetic principle to help children become successful literacy learners

- Apply knowledge of child development and learning to provide intentional experiences through Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) to promote literacy development
- Design curriculum based on observation and data to develop individual learning outcomes
- Design collaborations with families and early care providers to help each child become a successful literacy learner
- Demonstrate a gain in students' own early literacy knowledge from pre to post assessment

Required Readings/Texts: (required texts not included in the course tuition)

***** Unless labeled “Graduate Level,” the following readings are required:**

***** Required readings must be completed by July 20*****

- **Required Text:** *All about words: Increasing Vocabulary in the Common Core Classroom, Pre K-2.* (2013). By Susan B. Neuman and Tanya S. Wright. Available through www.Amazon.com
- **Required Text:** *Literacy for Young Children: A Guide for Early Childhood Educators.* (2008). Priscilla L. Griffith, Sara Ann Beach, Jiening Ruan, Loraine Dunn. Available through www.Amazon.com
- **Required Text:** *Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children’s Reading Success.* (1999). Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children. By Susan Burns, Peg Griffin, & Catherine Snow. Available through www.Amazon.com
- **Required Text:** *Lift-Off for Early Literacy: Directed Reading Opportunities for Struggling Students,* Charlene Iannone-Cambell and Susan Lloyd Lattimore. Foreword by Linda Baker, to be purchased by participant
- **Required Text:** *be-yond ba-by talk: From Speaking to Spelling: A Guide to Language and Literacy Development for Parents and Caregivers.* (2012). Kenn Apel and Julie J. Masterson. To be purchased by participant. Available through www.Amazon.com
- **Required Text (Graduate Level):** *Early Childhood Literacy: The National Early Literacy Panel and Beyond.* By Timothy Shanahan and Christopher J. Lonigan. Available through www.Amazon.com
- **Required Text (Graduate Level):** *Book Smart: How to Develop and Support Successful Motivated Readers,* Anne E. Cunningham, Ph.D. and Jamie Zibulsky, Ph.D., to be purchased by participant. Available through www.Amazon.com

Other Suggested Readings/Texts:

- **Optional Text:** *Bringing Words to Life,* Isabel Beck, Margaret G. McKeown, Linda Kucan. Available through www.Amazon.com

- **Optional Text:** *Assessing Preschool Literacy Development*, Billie J. Enz, Lesley Mandel Morrow. Available through www.Amazon.com
- **Optional Text: (Graduate Level)** *Literacy and Young Children: Research-Based Practices*, edited by Diane M. Barone and Lesley Mandel Morrow to be purchased by participant. Available through www.Amazon.com
- **Additional journal articles listed with class schedule will be required reading and will be available through the Stern Center or downloaded from internet sources**

Assignments: The course is assessed on participants' case study observations/reflections/scaffolding strategies, papers, portfolio development, and post assessment of knowledge:

- 1) **Case Study:** Participants will determine the child/children to use for the case study and will provide no personal identifiable information on the child. Students will use this approach to observe and reflect upon the early literacy research-based components of shared book reading including vocabulary development and comprehension, phonological awareness with detail to phonemic awareness, and the speech to print connection including alphabet knowledge. Students will analyze learning gaps and development in early literacy using multiple assessment data and evidence based practice. In addition, students will use developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) to design and share strategies that scaffold children's learning.
- 2) **Small Group Project:** Students will apply their understanding of the alphabetic principle through a small group project to create their own activity to evaluate and scaffold children's understanding of the relationship between sound and print.
- 3) **Self-Analysis Paper:** Students will develop a written self-analysis focused on how course content has impacted their own teaching practice and curriculum development.
- 4) **Graduate Level Only:** Students will write a 5-6 page research paper that designs strategies to collaborate with families and early care providers that encourage the development of strong early literacy skills in language comprehension and usage, vocabulary, and the alphabetic principle. These strategies will require research support and citations based upon readings from class.

Projects: See above

Grading:

Assignments and Projects	Percentage
Class participation and attendance	30%
Self-Analysis of course content impact to practice	25%
Group Project presentation	30%
Writings: Including Case Study, Observations and Reflections assigned in class. Graduate level includes research paper.	15%

NO Graduate Grade/Credit without Final Paper due August 27, 2021.

All grades submitted to Castleton University on or before October 15, 2021.

Grading Policy:

Grades are indicated by letters with a designated “quality point” value assigned to each as follows:

A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3

Additional grading information can be found in the Castleton University Graduate Catalog, under Academic Policies, accessible online at: <http://catalog.castleton.edu/index.php>

Academic Honesty Policy:

Castleton University is a learning institution committed to the highest standards of scholarly conduct. The students, faculty, and administration make up a scholarly community whose integrity and success necessarily stem from a mutually agreed upon code of academic standards and principles that promote trust and honesty and prohibit the attempt to gain unfair academic advantage. Membership in the Castleton community means sharing responsibility for upholding and safeguarding these academic standards and principles.

Any violation of academic honesty will be considered cheating and will be dealt with accordingly by the appropriate authorities.

For more information click the link below to access the Castleton University Graduate Catalog Academic Policy section:

http://catalog.castleton.edu/content.php?catoid=16&navoid=1204#Academic_Honesty

Use and Ownership of Copyrighted Materials:

For information and guidance, faculty and students are referred to the Vermont State College Manual of Policy and Procedures as it relates to the use and ownership of copyrighted materials. Guidelines are set out in Policy 416, accessible online at the following address:

<http://www.castleton.edu/library/information-literacy-graduation-standard/information-literacy-tutorial/information-ethics-citing-sources-and-fair-use/>

Accommodations:

Castleton is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities so that no such student shall, by reason of a disability, be excluded from participating in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of Castleton University. For more information, please contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, at (802) 468-1428.

Course Drop Policy:

Castleton University offers courses to educators with the expectation that participants will complete the course. However, the University realizes circumstances arise in one’s personal life that may cause disruptions. **The policy for dropping a course is that a participant will notify the instructor in writing of the intent to withdraw from the course. The withdrawal notice should be made within**

the first week of the course and should include the reason for withdrawing. After week one, changes in class status will be considered for health, bereavement, and personal or emergency situations only. Those who withdraw without adhering to this policy may receive a failing grade on their transcript and/or be liable for associated course costs. For more Academic Policy information, check the link below to access the Castleton University Graduate Catalog:

<http://catalog.castleton.edu/content.php?catoid=23&navoid=2159>

Transcript Request:

www.castleton.edu/transcripts