

## SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

**EDUC 472 Designs for Learning: Elementary Language Arts**  
**EDUC 474 Designs for Learning: Elementary Social Education**

**Summer Semester 2009 (May 4 – July 27)**  
**Meeting Mondays 9:30 to 1:20 / SFU Burnaby campus 8620**

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“In problem-posing education, people develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation”

Paulo Freire, 1970 <sup>1</sup>

“What am I going to have my students do today? What is it good for? How do I know?”

Neil Postman & Charles Weingartner, 1969 <sup>2</sup>

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### **Course Description:**

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EDUC 474 (instructor Sensoy) and EDUC 472 (instructor Marshall) will be offered simultaneously. Students should register for one or the other. Students enrolled in either will receive instruction that focuses on cross-curricular planning from a critical approach for elementary classrooms. The curriculum is based on theories and practices of critical pedagogy and begins with the assumption that *schooling is a political act*. Students will have the opportunity to develop critical practices for teaching literacy and social education that take into consideration the ways in which power operates in classrooms, the curriculum, school, and society at large.

From Dr. Sensoy, students will: familiarize themselves with one's own approach to social issues and social dynamics, as well as familiarizing oneself with the research literature on teaching social education. We will study an issues-based approach to enacting social education curricula within the framework of citizenship in a pluralistic, aspiring democracy. Students will examine the PLOs for elementary social studies, examine the dominant thematic strands at their grade levels, and also develop the language and skills with which to discuss some of the key issues that researchers in critical social education examine.

From Dr. Marshall, students will familiarize themselves with a balanced approach to literacy instruction, critical literacy, new literacies and other issues relevant to teaching in multi-lingual and culturally diverse classrooms. Students will also be introduced to how to choose and evaluate a range of texts created for children (including children's fictional/non-fictional texts, film, etc.). Students will also examine the PLOs for elementary language arts, understand dominant thematic strands at their grade levels, and develop the language and skills to discuss key issues in language arts research and practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 1993 (originally published 1970), p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Teaching as a Subversive Activity, 1969, p. 193.

Students in 472 and 474 will explore these ideas and produce elementary learning activities together that meet the PLOs in Language Arts and Social Studies, and are characterized as anti-oppressive, interdisciplinary, critical, and culturally relevant. If you are interested in understanding a critical pedagogical approach, and creative socially-just, anti-oppressive tools for transgressive educative practices in school, then this course for you.

Students enrolled in this section of 474 will have their PDP literacy requirement met.

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**474 & 472 course topics will include:**

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- key issues and concepts in social education;
- critical literacy theories and practices;
- media literacy, popular culture, cartoons, and kid culture;
- critical thinking methodology;
- new literacies;
- ancient civilizations;
- studying cultures, learning about the world;
- action & participation in creating a just society;
- contemporary scholarship that critically examines language arts education;
- the politics of language and literacy instruction in contemporary classrooms;
- the use of children's literature as well as other cultural texts for critical investigations of social issues;
- critical pedagogical and interdisciplinary connections between social education and language arts.

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**Course Objectives:**

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By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Describe an issues-based, critical thinking approach to elementary language arts education with social education as the anchor;
- Design various critical challenges, field and classroom activities for students;
- Understand and speak about the relationship between social education and living and teaching in a pluralist democracy;
- Plan engaging lesson plans and create unique integrated units of study with clearly conceptualized social, political, pedagogical, and professional goals;
- Incorporate at least one other subject area into social education lessons;
- Show increased understanding of the four major content components of social studies (history, geography, civics, and economics), and their relation to social groups in Canada (primarily of race, class, and gender);
- Articulate and refer to the Provincial Learning Outcomes for the social studies in British Columbia.
- Define and demonstrate a familiarity with a balanced literacy curriculum
- Define and demonstrate a familiarity with critical literacy theories and practices
- Define and demonstrate an understanding of "new literacies"
- Read contemporary scholarship that critically examines language arts education
- Demonstrate an understanding of the politics of language and literacy instruction in contemporary classrooms
- Identify and use children's literature as well as other cultural texts for critical investigations

- Develop an ability to critically examine children's media
- Actively pursue critical pedagogical and interdisciplinary connections between social studies and language arts

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**Required Learning Activities & Evaluation:**

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Attendance & Participation in classroom activities, field trips, seminar discussions, and homework assignments	20%	ongoing
Quizzes	20%	ongoing
Assignment A: Designing Critical Challenges	10%	
Assignment B: Midterm	20%	
Assignment D: Final	30%	

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**Required texts:**

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**Textbooks**

Cunningham, P. M. & Allington, R. L. (2007). *Classrooms That Work: They Can All Read and Write, 4th Ed.* Toronto: Pearson Canada. ISBN-10: 0205493947

Case, R. & Clark, P. (Eds.). (2008). *The Canadian Anthology of Social Studies: Issues and strategies for teachers, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press. ISBN 0-86491-171-8

Evans, J. (Ed.). (2005). *Literacy moves on: Popular culture, new technologies and critical literacy in the elementary classroom.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. ISBN 0-325-00738-1.

Vasquez, V. (2003). *Getting beyond 'I like the book': Creating space for critical literacy in k-6 classrooms.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association. ISBN 0-87207-512-5

**Children's Books**

Ellis, D. (2000). *The breadwinner.* Toronto: Groundwood. ISBN 0-88899-416-8

Graydon, S. (2003). *Made you look: How advertising works and why you should know.* Toronto: Annick press. ISBN 1-55037-814-7

Sterling, S. (1992). *My name is Seepeetza.* Toronto: Groundwood books.

**Choose One Professional Development Text**

**(You will be select a title on the first day of class):**

Cassel, J. & Jenkins, H. (1999). (Eds.). *From Barbie to Mortal Kombat: Gender and computer games.* Cambridge, MA: MIT press. ISBN 0-262-03258-9.

Freire, P. & Macedo, P. (1987). *Literacy: Reading the word and the world.* Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey. ISBN 0-89789-126-0.

Harman, C. (2008). *A people's history of the world: From the stone age to the new millennium*. NY: Verso. ISBN 978 1 84467 238 7

Kohl, H. (2007). *Should we burn Babar? Essays on children's literature and the power of stories*. NY: The New Press. ISBN 1-59558-130-8

McCaskell, T. (2005). *Race to Equity: Disrupting Educational Inequality*. Toronto: Between the Lines. ISBN 1-896357-96-2

Steinberg, S. R. (Ed.). (2009). *Christotainment: Selling Jesus through popular culture*. Westview Press. ISBN 0813344050.