

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**

**EDUCATION 385-4**

**SPECIAL TOPICS: WHOLE LANGUAGE**

Fall Semester, 1990  
Mondays, 16:30 - 20:20  
Location: MPX 7600

Instructor: E. Rabinovitch  
Phone: 291-3395

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*Whole language in its essence goes beyond the simple delineation of a series of teaching strategies to describe a shift in the way in which teachers think about and practise their art." (Sharon Rich)*

**PREQUISITE:** Education 401/402 or equivalent.

**PURPOSES**

The purposes of this course are to help beginning and experienced teachers

- a) understand the theoretical foundations on which whole language instruction is based, and
- b) develop practical strategies for a whole language instruction approach throughout the classroom curriculum.

**OBJECTIVES**

Students in this course will:

- 1) understand the theoretical and research foundations of the whole language approach;
- 2) become familiar with a variety of instructional strategies for implementing a whole language approach;
- 3) become familiar with strategies for assessing children's language and evaluating individual progress in a whole language program;
- 4) clarify personal beliefs about the teacher's role in a whole language program;
- 5) be able to articulate a rationale for using a whole language approach in their own classrooms, supported with examples from current educational literature and classroom practices.

**OUTLINE OF TOPICS**

What is literacy? How do we grow into literacy?  
Theoretical and research foundations of whole language Instruction  
Principles of whole language instruction  
Developing meaning through oral language — with special reference to informal talk, discussion, storytelling and drama  
Developing meaning through reading and writing — with special reference to the emergent reading/writing process and literature-based reading instruction.  
Evaluation and record-keeping in a whole language approach

## FORMAT

The course addresses both theories of whole language development and instruction and the more practical, day-to-day aspects of teaching using a whole language approach. Therefore, classes will include a variety of learning opportunities such as lectures, class discussions, small-group tasks, experiential learning activities and student presentations. The instructors will complement the investigation of whole language principles with the modeling of whole language teaching strategies.

## REQUIRED READINGS

Brownlie, F., Close, S., & Wingren, L. *Reaching for Higher Thought*. Arnold Publishing Ltd., ISBN 0-919913-42-3.

Jaggar, Angela & Smith-Burke, M.T. *Observing the Language Learner*. IRA/NCTE ISBN 0-87207-890-6.

McCormick-Calkins, L. (1988). *The Art of Teaching Writing*. Heinemann, ISBN 0-435-08246-9.

## RECOMMENDED READINGS

Atwell, N. (1987). *In the Middle: Writing, Reading & Learning With Adolescents*. Heinemann, ISBN 0-86709-163-0.

Booth, D., Swartz, L., & Zola, M. *Choosing Children's Books*. Pembroke, ISBN 0-921217-12-9

Hansen, J., Graves, D., & Newkirk, T. *Breaking Ground: Teachers Relate Reading and Writing in the Elementary School*. Heinemann, ISBN 0-435-08219-1.

Meek, M. (1988). *How Texts Teach What Readers Learn*. Thimble Press, ISBN 0-903355-23-X.

Routman, R. (1988). *Transitions: From Literature to Literacy*. Heinemann, ISBN 0-435-08467-4.

Trelease, J. *The Read-Aloud Handbook*. Penguin, ISBN 014-046-727-0

Waterland, L. (1985). *Read With Me: An Apprenticeship Approach to Reading*. Thimble Press, ISBN 0-903355-175

Wells, G. *The Meaning Makers*. Heinemann, ISBN 0-435-08247-7.

Weaver, C. (1988). *Reading Process and Practice: From Socio-Linguistics to Whole Language*. Heinemann, ISBN 0-435-08444-5.

Throughout the course, the instructor will suggest related additional articles and books.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and participation in all aspects of the course  
Completion of assigned professional readings  
Completion of oral and/or written assignments  
Completion of professional journal