Course Description
This course is designed to help middle school and high school English teachers develop an understanding of specific strategies that readers must use to achieve deep comprehension of content material. We will explore cognitive foundations of reading comprehension and their influence on methods of instruction and assessment, as well as the interrelationships among reading processes and language learning. Theory and practice relationships will be explored as students experience and learn about: text structure, use of background knowledge, comprehension connections, inferencing, strategies for active engagement, sociocultural influences on reading, reading/writing relationships, text sets, and assessment of content reading. Required for students seeking certification in English.

Course Goals
1. To become aware of recent research and best practices regarding literacy and the teaching of reading.
2. To link theories about reading and literacy to classroom curriculum and instruction.
3. To explore the contextualized nature of proficient reading in multiple contexts.
4. To embrace a broad-based understanding of reading and literacy that includes literacies in and out of the classroom.
5. To engage in reflective practice in relation to key instructional strategies and reading skills which occur before reading, during reading, and after reading.
6. To recognize reading in a broader context of learning, thinking, and understanding.

Northwestern Teacher Education Conceptual Framework
The Conceptual Framework for Northwestern’s teacher education program articulates a vision of learning, a vision of the learner, and a vision of teaching. The goal is to prepare educators who understand these visions. MS ED 424/TEACH ED 324: Foundations of Language and Reading Acquisition” is designed to address and assist in the development of the following principles:
A Vision of Learning:
1.1 Understanding student thinking about the subject matter
1.2 Reflection and research as a means of learning;
1.3 Learning as social practice, which encourages collaborative learning in which people clarify doubts, examine beliefs and work together to construct shared meaning, address questions and concerns;
1.4 Authentic experience where class sessions and assignments are designed to engage students’ interests and to have implication for the student beyond the classroom;

A Vision of the Learner:
2.1 Lifelong learning and development shaped by social contexts;

A Vision of Teaching:
3.1 Connecting theory to practice, where the candidates understand that theories suggest questions and ideas about practice, and practice suggests modification of theory;

Required Texts


Course Overview
We will approach this class from a variety of perspectives. As with all teaching, we must always understand the needs of the students in our classes. Therefore, some time will be spent discussing the needs of the learner, motivation, and obstacles to learning. Your previous and current experience working with students will be invaluable in this area. We will also understand reading from our own personal perspective as both a teacher and as a reader. We will spend some time analyzing our own reading ability and strategies. We will also try to understand how our personal assumptions about reading and learning can affect our decisions as instructors.

The bulk of our work will be spent developing a “toolbox” for teaching reading. Each week you will read about a variety of instructional strategies and have the opportunity to field-test these “tools.” At the end of the course, you should have a toolbox full of reading strategies and the knowledge of how and why we can use them to help students become better readers. The physical embodiment of this toolbox will be your course notebook or portfolio. This will be submitted at the end of the class as a compilation of all your class notes, reading notes, journals, analyses, and handouts. Your grade for the class will be based upon this notebook, graded assignments during the course, and your participation in class discussions/activities.

Course Schedule and Topics
Session 1: Tuesday September 28
- Getting to know each other
- Introduction to the course
- First reading experiences journal and activity
• Defining reading and literacy
• The Role of Textbooks

For next class:
1. Read Chapters 1 and 2 of *Content Area Reading*
2. After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages) I will collect these each week.
3. Locate a textbook in any content area other than your own. Do a readability analysis of one chapter from the textbook. This should first include the name, author, publisher, year, ISBN, and cost of the book. Second, it should offer a “readability score” based on one of the readability formulas presented in Vacca and Vacca. You can also type or scan in a 100-word passage into Microsoft Word and use the Tools: Spelling and Grammar function to get readability data on the passage, specifically the Flesch-Kincaid score for grade level. Third, your analysis should include either a readability checklist OR a FLIP analysis. Finally, write a SHORT rationale regarding the adoption (or not!) of this text into the curriculum.
4. LONG TERM ASSIGNMENT: Locate a novel that you have not read but might end up teaching one day. Read the novel and do a readability analysis of it. Then, create three lesson plans or handouts you would use with the novel that employ a pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activity. This will be due by November 30.

Session 2: October 5
• Everyone is responsible for literacy
• Readability Analyses
• National Reading Panel research
• Imagining the ideal
• Struggles with reading

For next class:
1. Read Chapters 3 and 4 of *Content Area Reading*
2. After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages)
3. Continue reading your novel.

Session 3: October 12
• The role of the reader
• The role of climate
• The role of the text
• Strategic processing
• Overview of reading strategies
For next class:
1. Read Chapters 7 and 8 of *Content Area Reading*
2. After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages)
3. Continue reading your literary text

Session 4: October 19
- Before, During, and After Reading
- The importance of words
- Graphic organizers
- Activating Prior Knowledge

For next class:
1. Read Chapters 9 and 10 of *Content Area Reading*
2. After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages)
3. Continue reading your literary text
4. Search ERIC, the International Reading Association, or English Journal for one article about teaching reading. Write an abstract for this article and bring enough copies of the abstract for the entire class.

Session 5: October 26
- During reading activities
- KWL
- Reading Guides
- The reading/writing connection
- Distribute reading article abstracts
- Sign up for chapter discussions

For next class:
1. Read Chapters 11 and 12 of *Content Area Reading*
2. After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages)

Session 6: November 2
- After reading activities
- Assessing reading
- Promoting literacy across the curriculum
- Promoting literacy outside the school

For next class:
1. Read Introduction, 1, 3, and 5 of *Improving Comprehension Instruction*
2. After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages)

Session 7: November 9
- Issues in Reading
- Teams will serve as discussion leaders
- Introduction, 1, 3, and 5
For next class:
1. Read Chapters 5, 8, and 11 of *Improving Comprehension Instruction*
2. After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages)

Session 8: November 16
- Issues in Reading
- Chapters 5, 8, and 11
For next class:
1. Read Chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16 of *Improving Comprehension Instruction*
2. After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages)

Session 9: November 23
- Issues in Reading
- Chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16
For next class:
1. Prepare your notebook. Collect together all your notes, journals, activities, and handouts in an organized fashion that will be useful to YOU as a teacher of reading. The last item in your notebook should be a 3-4 page reflective essay that describes what you have learned in this class. What did you know before the class? What aspects of the class had the biggest impact on you? The least? What are your goals regarding literacy in your discipline and in your classroom? Cite specific examples whenever possible.

Session 10: November 30
- Discuss novels read
- Distribute novel readability studies
- Present notebooks
- Final thoughts
- Course evaluations

Remember to pick up your notebook in the MS ED office at Garrett Place!
MS ED 424/TEACH ED 324: Foundations of Language and Reading Acquisition (Secondary)
Graded Assignments

Class Participation (100 pts)
Your attendance and participation in each class session will be part of your final grade. This includes leading one class discussion on a chapter from Improving comprehension instruction edited by Block, Gambrell, and Pressley.

Reader Response Journals (10 pts each)
After completing each week’s reading assignment, write a reflective journal on the ideas and concepts you found most useful or interesting. You may want to comment on each chapter or choose a topic to explore based on the reading. (1-2 pages) I will collect these each week.

Textbook Readability Study (50 pts)
Locate a textbook in any content area other than your own. Do a readability analysis of one chapter from the textbook. This should include:
- the name, author, publisher, year, ISBN, and cost of the book
- a “readability score” based on one of the readability formulas presented in Vacca and Vacca. You can also type or scan in a 100-word passage into Microsoft Word and use the Tools: Spelling and Grammar function to get readability data on the passage, specifically the Flesch-Kincaid score for grade level.
- a readability checklist OR a FLIP analysis
- a SHORT rationale regarding the adoption (or not!) of this text into the curriculum.

Novel Readability Study and Reading Plan (100 pts)
Locate a novel that you have not read but might end up teaching one day. Read the novel and do a readability analysis of it. Then, create three lesson plans or handouts you would use with the novel that employ a pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activity.

Reading Article (25 pts)
Search ERIC, the International Reading Association, English Journal, or Middle School Journal for one article about teaching reading. Write an abstract for this article and bring enough copies of the abstract for the entire class.

Course Notebook/Reflection (200 pts)
Prepare your notebook. Collect together all your notes, journals, activities, and handouts in an organized fashion that will be useful to YOU as a teacher of reading. The last item in your notebook should be a 3-4 page reflective essay that describes what you have learned in this class. What did you know before the class? What aspects of the class(readings, discussions, activities) had the biggest impact on you? The least? What are your goals regarding literacy in your classroom and in your school? Cite specific examples whenever possible.