



High School Literacy: Comprehension Through Active, Strategic Reading, Grades 9-12

Course Description

High School Literacy: Comprehension Through Active, Strategic Reading is an interactive, online, and in-person professional development course designed for all high school teachers. The six online sessions focus on the latest research findings on active, strategic reading techniques and strategies for implementing active, strategic reading across the curriculum; and six important elements of adolescent literacy—Motivation, Contexts, Communication, Collaboration, Connections, and Assessment.

Goals of this course include getting students to read and think critically about fiction, nonfiction, and informational text through marking a text; write purposefully about all types of texts through the use of a dialectical journal; interpret and analyze texts through small-group and whole-class discussion of open-ended prompts; and make text and real-life connections through participation in Socratic Seminars.

- **Session 1**, the Course Introduction, includes a Course Keynote by lead author Dr. Marilyn Whirry, who discusses the importance of adolescent literacy and the role of active, strategic reading in developing that literacy. Also provided is a description of how this course supports teachers of all content areas in helping their students to construct meaning from all kinds of text. A Self-Assessment follows the Keynote.
- **Session 2** defines active, strategic reading, presents the research base behind it, explains the contexts for it, and highlights the techniques that foster a learning environment in which adolescent literacy can best develop.
- **Session 3** focuses on how to get students reading and thinking critically about fiction, nonfiction, and informational texts by using markings to comment upon and question text. Included is how to assess students' markings.
- **Session 4** focuses on writing purposefully about all types of texts through the use of a dialectical journal. The session presents techniques for using journal writing to help students interact with text by identifying, questioning, and analyzing key ideas, and identifying unfamiliar vocabulary. It also describes how to assess students' use of dialectical journals.
- **Session 5** explains how using prompts to talk collaboratively about texts can help students deepen their comprehension. Included are techniques for raising questions about the text, a discussion of the roles of primary and secondary sources, as well as supplementary texts in classroom discussions. The session provides guidance in assessing group discussions.
- **Session 6** focuses on how to motivate students to deepen meaning by exposing them to multiple points of view, to sharpen their critical thinking skills through a free exchange of ideas, and to make connections within a text, between texts, and to the larger world. The format of the Socratic Seminar, which is used to draw out and

practice these skills, is successfully modeled in this session. This session also explains how to assess the Socratic Seminar.

Lesson plans and classroom resources support all online sessions. The plans and resources ensure that the course content can be seamlessly integrated into the classroom reading programs.

Course Objectives:

On completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Establish classroom objectives for improving adolescent literacy in the content areas of English/language arts, social studies, science, and math by utilizing active, strategic reading techniques that are supported by current academic research.
- Teach students to read and think critically about fiction, nonfiction, and informational texts through marking texts as a method of questioning and constructing meaning.
- Teach students to write purposefully about all types of texts by making effective use of a dialectical journal.
- Guide students to deepen their comprehension of text by using small-group and whole-class discussion to interpret, analyze, and synthesize ideas found in texts.
- Lead students to construct deeper meanings and to make connections within a text, between texts, and to the larger world through their participation in Socratic Seminars.
- Apply active, strategic reading strategies to different types of texts and text structures encountered in the content areas, as well as in information conveyed by electronic and digital media.

Course Outline

1. Course Introduction and Keynote

1.1 Getting Meaning From Texts Across the Content Areas
Self-Assessment

2. How Active, Strategic Reading Improves Adolescent Literacy

- 2.1 Engagement Between Reader and Text
- 2.2 Explicitly Guiding Active Readers
- 2.3 Enhancing Reading Comprehension Through Discussion
- 2.4 Using Collaborative Learning to Deepen Comprehension
- 2.5 The Reading-Writing Connection
- 2.6 Assessing Student Progress

3. Reading and Thinking Critically About Texts

- 3.1 Marking a Text: Targeted Comments and Questions
- 3.2 Methods for Marking a Text
- 3.3 Marking Fiction to Understand Story Meaning and Conventions
- 3.4 Marking Nonfiction to Gain Information and Insight
- 3.5 Using Marking as a Basis for Discussion
- 3.6 Assessing Students' Marking of Texts

4. Writing Purposefully About All Types of Texts

- 4.1 The Role of the Journal in Reading Comprehension
- 4.2 Using Strategic Responses to Construct Meaning from Text
- 4.3 Connecting to Text Through Response, Analysis, and Criticism
- 4.4 Extending the Discourse to Deepen Comprehension
- 4.5 Sharpening Listening and Speaking Skills Through Discussions
- 4.6 Assessing Dialectical Journals and Discussions

5. Talking Collaboratively to Further Understanding

- 5.1 The Role of Collaborative Discussion in Active Reading
- 5.2 Using Primary Sources for Collaborative Discussions
- 5.3 Using Secondary Sources for Collaborative Discussions
- 5.4 Creating Prompts for Focused Discussions
- 5.5 Managing Collaborative Discussions
- 5.6 Assessing Collaborative Discussions

6. Connecting Literacy to the Curriculum and to Students' Lives

- 6.1 Using the Socratic Seminar to Maximize Text Comprehension
- 6.2 Enabling Students to Listen and Respond
- 6.3 A Formula for Seminar Success
- 6.4 Teacher's Role as Facilitator
- 6.5 Assessing the Socratic Seminar
- 6.6 From Active Reading to Responsive Writing

High School Literacy: Comprehension Through Active, Strategic Reading, Grades 9-12 Course Research Chart

All content in *High School Literacy: Comprehension Through Active, Strategic Reading*, is grounded in scientifically based research. *High School Literacy: Comprehension Through Active, Strategic Reading* is an interactive, online, and in-person professional development course designed for all high school teachers. The six online sessions focus on the latest research findings on active, strategic reading techniques and strategies for implementing active, strategic reading across the curriculum; and six important elements of adolescent literacy—Motivation, Contexts, Communication, Collaboration, Connections, and Assessment.

Goals of this course include getting students to read and think critically about fiction, nonfiction, and informational text through marking a text; write purposefully about all types of texts through the use of a dialectical journal; interpret and analyze texts through small-group and whole-class discussion of open-ended prompts; and make text and real-life connections through participation in Socratic Seminars.

COURSE RESEARCH BASE	COURSE IMPLEMENTATION
Reading	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading literacy encompasses more than just basic or functional literacy—it includes knowing when to read, how to read, and how to reflect on what’s been read—in a variety of texts and for a variety of purposes. Therefore, NAEP assesses students’ in three contexts for reading—reading for literary experience, reading for information, and reading to perform a task (NAEP, 2003). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Techniques to help students read analytically and critically in the three contexts—reading for literary experience, reading for information, and reading to perform a task—are modeled on video, simulated on Red TV, and supported by lesson plans and resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active reading is a process of constructing meaning that involves various levels of interaction between reader and text (Lipson and Wixson, 1986). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Techniques that encourage multiple levels of interaction between students and the text they are reading are modeled on video and supported with lesson plans and resources

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Reading strategies are important only insofar as they assist readers to construct meaningful understanding of texts. With this level of understanding, readers can respond to, converse with, and even resist the meanings the author seems to put forth” (Wilhelm, 2001). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The technique of marking a text—which involves students agreeing, arguing, querying, and commenting on text as well as identifying unfamiliar vocabulary—is modeled on video, simulated on Red TV, and supported with resources ✓ The technique of using a dialectical journal to identify meaningful passages and to create a dialogue with the text encourages students to respond and question what they are reading is modeled on video, simulated on Red TV and supported with resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When students at all levels of reading proficiency turn their attention to a particular piece of text, it’s important that they get the right scaffolding to think and discuss, for example summarizing, justifying answers, and making connections (Langer, 2000). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strategies such as summarizing, justifying answers, and making connections modeled on video when students employ the techniques of marking a text, using a dialectical journal, holding small-group and whole-class discussions, and participating in a Socratic Seminar; techniques are supported by resources ✓ Various forms of scaffolding for struggling readers are provided in the struggling reader note at the end of every topic
Writing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active reading and writing “both help students proceed from understanding goals to demonstrating understanding. As a result, if we have engaged our students well in [active reading], then we have also prepared them to draft well” (Jacobs, 2002). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Techniques to encourage engaged and interactive reading, such as meaningful markings and journal responses, are modeled on video, simulated on Red TV, and supported by resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing-to-learn forms and extends thinking and thus deepens understanding” (Fulwiler, 1984; Knoblauch and Brannon, 1983). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teachers receive online instruction and view a classroom video modeling the use of a dialectical journal, which facilitates writing to learn; models of journals are provided as well

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading literature carefully, thinking about it, discussing it and finally writing one's extended thoughts about it opens students' minds to the world of ideas in a text" (Whirry, 2003). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Small-group and whole-class discussions extend the ideas in the journal and require students to support their statements with evidence from the text. These techniques are modeled on video, simulated on Red TV, and supported by resources. Examples of student dialogue can be heard on Red TV
Listening and Speaking	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich classroom discussions should range from basic conversations to clarify what was stated in the material to drawing interpretations from the text to relating text to other texts, experiences, and reading goals (Duke and Pearson, 2002). • "Constructing meaning during reading means going back and forth between reading relatively small segments of text and discussing the ideas encountered" (Beck, McKeown, Hamilton, and Kucan,1998). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The discussion techniques modeled on video (and supported by resources) build upon one another; examples of student discussions are modeled on Red TV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In successful group discussions, students engage in "thoughtful-dialogue" in which "they play the multiple roles of learners, teachers, and inquirers" (Langer, 2000). • "In addition to being an enjoyable forum for students to share their responses, collaborative discussion promotes comprehension and helps students to become expert readers" (Cummings, 1999). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teachers watch a video of a Socratic Seminar in action (students carry on a dialogue between their peers that requires them to query the text, explain their responses, and listen and understand other viewpoints); guidelines for both teachers and students are provided as resources in the course
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading is a socially interactive process (Vygotsky, 1978). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Small-group and whole-class discussions (including Socratic Seminars) are presented and modeled in the course on video and supported by resources; resources include behavior and etiquette guidelines for the social interaction that takes place during the Socratic Seminar.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Learning to talk about [texts] in complex ways is a skill that must be modeled, explicated, supported, practiced, reviewed, and revised” (Wilhelm, Baker, and Dube, 2001). • “Talking with others about ideas and work is fundamental to learning. But not all talk sustains learning or creates intelligence. For classroom talk to promote learning, it must have certain characteristics that make it <i>accountable</i>. Accountable talk seriously responds to and further develops what others in the group have said. It puts forth and demands knowledge that is accurate and relevant to the issue under discussion. Accountable talk uses evidence in ways appropriate to the discipline (for example, proofs in mathematics, data from investigations in science, textual details in literature, documentary sources in history)” (Resnick, 1999). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Methods to encourage effective and engaging small-group and whole-class discussions are modeled on video and presented on audio; models of accountable talk can be heard Red TV ✓ Students are held accountable for their contributions to the Socratic Seminar; they are provided with guidelines to self-assess their performance, and they see a rubric teachers create to evaluate their participation
Critical Thinking	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By considering the implications (both intellectual and ethical) of ideas and comparing these ideas to their own, students “refine their critical thinking skills and deepen their collective understanding of the material they discuss” (Tredway, 1995). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Techniques modeled in the course require students to target the most important ideas in a text and comment, question, and compare these to what they have read and to their experiences

Comprehension	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "...comprehension instruction should be balanced. By this we mean that good comprehension instruction includes both explicit instruction in specific comprehension strategies and a great deal of time and opportunity for actual reading, writing, and discussion of text" (Duke and Pearson, 2002). • Reading for meaning "involves a dynamic, complex interaction among three elements: the reader, the text, and the context" (NAEP, 2003). • "Both reading comprehension and comprehension instruction are highly interactive and reciprocal. The meanings students create for the texts they read are complex negotiations involving an unseen author, a teacher, and an interpretive community of peers" (Pearson, Roehler, Dole, and Duffy, 1992). • "In transmission classrooms, texts (like teachers) are viewed as dispensers of knowledge, whereas in participatory classrooms, students use text as tools for learning and constructing new knowledge" (Alvermann, 2001). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Video shows how to get students to discuss their writing with their peers to extend and develop their ideas ✓ Tips for struggling readers are aimed specifically at helping below-basic readers make meaning from text ✓ Graphic organizers are included as organizational tools to help students understand the relationship between text ideas and themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Vacca and Vacca (1999) contend that prior knowledge is 'the single most important resource in learning with texts'" (Barton, Heidema, and Jordon, 2002). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Graphic organizers for helping students to build prior knowledge are provided as resources ✓ By using a dialectical journal, students confront the factual and experiential knowledge base that helps facilitate their understanding of text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Students today must read very different types of materials including fiction, scientific and technical texts, charts and graphs and historical documents. This higher standard of reading requires many skills, including comprehension, reflection, the ability to distinguish facts from argument and the ability to weigh evidence and make conclusions" (Grosso de León, 2002). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Included within the course are resources to help students read and respond to content-area textbooks ✓ Red TV provides examples of student interaction with content-area texts.

Motivation and Self-Esteem	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In an extensive review of how instruction influences students’ reading engagement and academic performance, Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) concluded that various instructional practices, while important, so not directly impact student outcomes (e.g., time spent reading independently, achievement on standardized tests, performance assessments, and beliefs about reading). Instead, the level of student engagement (including its sustainability over time) is the mediating factor, or avenue, through which classroom instruction influences student outcomes” (Alvermann, 2001). • “Adolescents’ perceptions of how competent they are as readers and writers, generally speaking, will affect how motivated they are to learn in their subject area classes (e.g., the sciences, social studies, mathematics, and literature). Thus, if academic literacy instruction is to be effective, it must address issues of self-efficacy and engagement” (Alvermann, 2001). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Techniques presented in this course, such as using a dialectical journal to respond to a text and participating in small-group and whole-class discussions, engage and motivate students by asking them to tap into their experiences and make connections to other texts and other viewpoints ✓ Struggling readers who are more comfortable speaking and listening than reading or writing are often particularly motivated by the ample discussion opportunities this course presents
Assessment and Test Preparation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The seeds of successful student self-assessment are often planted by teachers’ thoughtful questions and comments that help students focus their attention on details of critical importance” (Block and Pressley, 2002). • “Students who trust their own reasoning test better. And students whose schooling is connected to their experiences are more actively engaged in their own learning” (Tredway, 1995). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Model questions that teachers can use with students and a self-assessment rubric for students are provided as resources ✓ Each session concludes with a “Test Prep Tie-In” that gives example NAEP questions that course strategies will prepare students to answer correctly

Connecting between the Content Areas

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A student who writes about “science, social studies or industrial arts, acquires the basic vocabulary of the subject. That [student] learns to use the technical terms in context; learns how language is used in every discipline: in short, learns to think as a scientist or think like a historian” (Squire, 1983).• “Content literacy instructional practices help shape the comprehension strategies students need to think deeply about texts” (Vacca, 2002).• “Adolescents respond to the literacy demands of their subject area classrooms when they have appropriate background knowledge and strategies for reading a variety of texts” (Alvermann, 2001). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ The techniques presented in the course are used within the content areas of social studies, science, and math and are directed toward all teachers; content-area models and resources that support the use of these techniques are included |
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***High School Literacy: Comprehension Through Active Strategic Reading,
Grades 9-12***
Professional Development Course Hours

Description	Estimated Time	Participation Hours
Self-paced instruction includes the relevant reading research base. Participation in interactive simulations for practice of research-based strategies. Video modeling by teachers.	1 hour per session plus additional time to revisit concepts and key activities for ongoing practice.	6
Reflection on learned and applied skills; sharing of ideas and student work; lesson planning; facilitator modeling, in-person instruction and in-class coaching.	2 hours x 4 workshops; 3 hours in-class coaching	11
Personal journal writing in response to session-specific topics and prompts.	20 minutes per session	2
Collaborative discussions with colleagues and advice/feedback from reading specialist.	20 minutes per session	2
Relevant articles to read study and connect to learning and classroom application.	1 hour per session	6
Print and review online resources (lesson plans, management tools, graphic organizers, etc.) – for planning and application in classroom.	1 hour per session	6
Preparation for application of learned skills and strategies utilizing tested lesson plans and student resources	1 hour per strategy; 1 strategy per week	6
Preparation and presentation of course learning.	2 hours	2
Setting goals and incorporating into Professional Improvement Plan.	2 hours	2
Review online correlations to standards and reading programs. Use online correlations in preparing lesson plans for classroom application.	2 hours	2
Total Hours		45