

Course Title: ED/D 9097 Improving Decoding Skills and Strategies, Grades 6-8 (S)

Instructor: Instructors of Record – Dr. Vicente M. Ontiveros, Dr. Tim Ham

Course Description:

Improving Decoding Skills and Strategies, Grades 6-8 is an interactive, online and in-person professional development course designed for all teachers of grades 6-8. The six online sessions focus on understanding the role of decoding in reading instruction for the middle-school student. The sessions teach effective syllabication strategies to help students decode multisyllabic words and learn how to use morphemes to decode words and build vocabulary. The program also has an effective, systematic, and explicit intervention program for students who struggle with decoding.

- Sessions 1 and 2 focus on early decoding. They cover foundational skills such as developing phonological awareness, learning basic sound-spelling correspondences, and understanding the importance of automaticity. The role of decoding instruction with respect to students' stages of reading development is emphasized.
- Sessions 3–5 cover the essential skills related to decoding instruction at the intermediate grades. Session 3 discusses the relationship between reading multisyllabic words fluently and comprehension, as well as the links between decoding and spelling proficiency. The characteristics of effective phonics instruction are also emphasized. You will also learn how to assess students' decoding needs through screening, diagnostic tests and ongoing assessment. Session 4 covers the six basic syllable types—open, closed, *r*-controlled, vowel team, consonant + */e*, and final *e*—and effective instructional techniques. Session 5 covers the teaching of morphemes, such as prefixes, suffixes, and Greek and Latin roots.
- Session 6 concludes the course, designing an effective intervention program to build students' decoding and spelling skills. This session also includes suggestions on how to manage differentiated instruction in the classroom.

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

Course Objective/Goals:

On completing this course, you will be able to:

- explain the role of decoding in middle grades' reading instruction and distinguish early decoding (grades K-2) from advanced decoding (grades 3-8).
- use assessment tools to screen for early decoding deficiencies; diagnose decoding needs; and check for progress in decoding proficiency.
- identify the six characteristics of effective phonics instruction and incorporate them into your daily phonics lessons.
- analyze the six syllable types in words—open, closed, *r*-controlled, consonant + */e*, vowel team, and silent *e*—and determine the best techniques for teaching them.
- recognize morphemes—such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots—and teach students how to use them to decode and define unfamiliar multisyllabic words.
- design an effective decoding program to meet the needs of all your students.

Course Outline:

1. Course Introduction

1.1 Course Keynote
Self-Assessment

2. Background: What Is Decoding?

- 2.1 Understanding Decoding
- 2.2 The Stages of Reading Development
- 2.3 Foundations of Language
- 2.4 Phonological Awareness
- 2.5 Building Phonics Skills
- 2.6 Becoming Automatic with Words

3. Phonics for Grades 6-8

- 3.1 Phonics: What? When? Why?
- 3.2 Phonics: The Link to Comprehension
- 3.3 Phonics: The Link to Spelling
- 3.4 Key Characteristics of Phonics Instruction
- 3.5 Teaching an Effective Phonics Lesson
- 3.6 Assessing Phonics Skills

4. Syllabication and Reading

- 4.1 What Is a Syllable?
- 4.2 Teaching Closed Syllables
- 4.3 Teaching Open Syllables
- 4.4 Teaching Other Syllable Types
- 4.5 Syllables: Whole Class Activities
- 4.6 Syllables: Small Group and Independent Activities

5. Morphemes and Reading

- 5.1 What Is a Morpheme?
- 5.2 Teaching Prefixes
- 5.3 Teaching Suffixes
- 5.4 Teaching Inflections
- 5.5 Teaching Latin and Greek Roots
- 5.6 Teaching Structural Analysis: Other Word Parts

6. Building a Decoding Intervention Program

- 6.1 Guiding Principles
- 6.2 Assessment: Who Needs What?
- 6.3 Basic Decoding: Filling in the Gaps
- 6.4 Developing Capable Spellers
- 6.5 Helping Students Who Struggle with Big Words
- 6.6 Wrap-up: Setting Up Your Classroom

Method of Evaluating Student's Performance:

Each participant will be evaluated on the basis of successfully completing the following activities, work products and tests. The evaluation process will be conducted through analysis of the following assignments:

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

End-of-Course Assessment: The final assessment for this course will assesses your ability to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the course material and your final grade will be based on this assessment as follows:

Grade Score

A 18-20

B 16-17

C 14-15

D 12-13

F 11 and below

Textbooks and/or Other Materials:

All instructional materials are provided by Scholastic Red, professional development for raising student achievement

Bibliography:

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Shefelbine, John. (1990). "A Syllable-Unit Approach to Teaching Decoding of Polysyllabic Words to Fourth- and Sixth-Grade Disabled Readers." In J. Zutell and S. McCormick (eds.), *Literacy Theory and Research: Analysis from Multiple Paradigms*. National Reading Conference.

Zutell, J. (1998). "Word Sorting: A Developmental Spelling Approach to Word Study for Delayed Readers." *Reading and Writing Quarterly*.

Instructor Background:

See attached Resumes' for Dr. Tim Ham and Dr. Vicente M. Ontiveros



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