

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to provide foundational reading skills for middle-school students to remediate gaps in reading skills and to support learning of reading. This course provides instruction that enables students to further develop and strengthen their skills in reading and responding to texts.

The instruction emphasizes reading fluency and comprehension, vocabulary and vocabulary skills, grammar skills, and writing fluency through responses to text. The skills in the course are taught through a variety of literary and informational texts. The readings have different text structures, different genres, and varying levels of complexity, while focusing on a wide range of topics. Students write in response to close reading and cite textual evidence when responding to text-dependent questions.

Students read, comprehend, and analyze various literary and informational texts through close reading. The literary texts include stories, myths, and folktales. The informational texts are magazine articles that focus on topics including space junk, wild and domesticated cats, the history found in rocks, peregrine falcons living in cities, adaptable butterflies, and endangered animals. Through the literary and informational reading selections, the students will

- determine and analyze central ideas
- determine topics
- summarize texts
- describe and analyze text structure
- make inferences
- determine word choice with figurative, connotative, and technical language

With literary text, students will

- determine and analyze themes
- compare and contrast topics and themes across texts

With informational text, students will

- determine arguments, claims, sound reasoning, and evidence
- find similarities in and integrate information from multiple texts

To help build upon phonics, decoding, and fluency skills in reading, students will review the following while focusing on accuracy, rate, and expression while reading:

- use of letter-sound correspondences
- syllable patterns
- word structure with roots and affixes
- context clues for reading words more effectively

Students will write responses to literary and informational texts based on prompts. Students are asked to identify, describe, and analyze based on a specific reading skill to demonstrate comprehension of a reading's content. In each unit, students complete a project in which they write responses to show their understanding of texts.

In addition, the course focuses on key vocabulary skills, such as finding meaning through roots and affixes, and using context clues. This vocabulary instruction helps students build key skills so that they can work through unfamiliar vocabulary they encounter while reading.

The course also covers the basics of grammar, including the formatting of text titles and the use of phrases, clauses, commas, and quotation marks. Students also review how to recognize complete sentences and various types of sentences. These skills will help students with the writing of their responses to text.

Through the lessons provided in this course, students can build their reading and comprehension skills to become successful and independent readers.

Course Objectives:

- Recognize and use letter-sound correspondences, syllable patterns, roots and affixes, and context when reading words.
- Read different texts using accuracy, rate, and expression.
- Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin roots and affixes as clues to the meaning of a word.
- Distinguish among the connotations of words with similar denotations.
- Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works when writing.
- Identify and use various types of phrases and clauses when reading and writing.
- Recognize complete sentences, fragments, and run-ons in and out of context.
- Recognize and use simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences when reading and writing.
- Use commas and quotation marks correctly in a sentence when writing.
- Determine topics, central ideas, and themes in literary and informational text.
- Write an objective summary of literary and informational text.
- Analyze the development of central ideas and themes in literary and informational text.
- Recognize organizational structures in literary and informational text.
- Recognize and analyze structural elements in literary and informational text.
- Determine the purpose and use of text features in informational text.
- Identify explicit and implicit details in literary and informational text.
- Make inferences based on literary and informational text.
- Determine the meaning of figurative, connotative, and technical words and phrases in literary and informational text.
- Analyze how specific word choice impacts the meaning in literary and informational text.
- Compare and contrast how multiple literary texts approach similar themes and topics.
- Identify and trace the arguments, claims, reasoning, and evidence in informational texts.
- Identify similarities among topics or ideas presented in different informational texts.
- Integrate information presented in multiple informational texts to develop an understanding of topics and ideas.
- Write responses to texts based on given prompts.

Required Materials:

- word-processing software
- internet browser

Course Overview:

At the beginning of each unit is a brief description of the intended learning outcomes. Following the introduction are these activities:

Checking Up on Phonics/Decoding/Fluency – This activity provides instruction and practice in phonics, decoding, and fluency skills to improve students' reading skills and to help them become more proficient readers.

Building Vocabulary – This activity provides the parts of speech, definitions, and example sentences of words found in the course's reading selections. These activities have graded workbook questions.

Developing Vocabulary Meaning – This activity provides instruction and practice in key vocabulary skills. These activities contain examples and practice questions and have graded workbook questions.

Developing Grammar – This activity provides instruction and practice in key grammar skills needed for writing and responding to text. These activities contain examples and practice questions and have graded workbook questions.

Close Reading – This activity focuses on reading selections that are referenced and used in the lesson. Some of these activities in the beginning of the course include instruction on close reading.

Checking Comprehension – This activity provides instruction and practice in key comprehension skills. These activities contain examples and practice questions and have graded workbook questions.

Analyzing Text – This activity provides instruction and practice in key analysis skills. These activities contain examples and practice questions and have graded workbook questions.

Responding to Text – This activity enables students to write responses to the reading selections based on given prompts. One activity in a unit is practice, and the other activity in a unit is a project.

Project – This activity is an assessment graded by the instructor. It requires the application of knowledge and writing to demonstrate mastery of the unit content. Each project contains a checklist for students and a grading rubric for teachers.

Discussion Board – This activity is graded by the instructor and allows the student to interact and communicate with classmates and the instructor about lesson content.

Checkpoint – This graded activity uses five questions to assess mastery of lesson objectives. The Checkpoint may be taken up to three times.