

## All in Accessibility Initiative

AIAI Grant UDL Example ~ Towson University

Title: Early Childhood Reading

Faculty Developer: Lea Ann Christenson

Course/Program or Department: Early Childhood Education/ ECED 321

Notes: 1 of 2 files

### UDL and/ or Accessibility Learning Modules

As a faculty member in the Department of Early Childhood Education I work with mostly students of junior and senior standing who want to become early childhood educators. UDL is part of my course in two ways: As the instructor I have incorporated UDL principles in my own teaching and students who are preparing to be Early Childhood teachers are required to incorporate UDL principles in several of their assignments. This is not so much a module as a way use UDL across an entire course. For the purpose of this Accessibility Initiative I am going to limit my discussion to how I handle course reading assignments.

### Context based information & Introduction

In the Department of Early Childhood education I usually teach ECED 321: Foundations of Reading and Language Arts and/or ECED 460: Dual Language Learners in Early Childhood Settings which are typically offered to students in the spring of their junior year in the semester in which they apply to the program. This semester is a transition for most students as they shift from taking core requirements to taking courses in their major. Prior to this semester students could compartmentalize their courses and for the most part not need to think about the content once the course is over. Once the students take courses in their major, this case Early Childhood Education they can no longer do this. They now need to take what they learn to inform subsequent courses and then most importantly apply what they have learned to their placements as interns in early childhood classrooms. To that end students need to master and be able to apply a large body of curriculum in their classes in the fall of their junior year when they are applying to the program.

I also have use the described application of UDL in my courses for students who are in the major in the spring of their junior year and senior year in the following courses:

ECED 341: Pre-Primary Curriculum

ECED 343: Pre-Primary Practicum

ECED 342: Primary Curriculum  
ECED 344: Primary Practicum  
ECED 351: Pre-Primary Internship III  
ECED 352: Primary Internship III

## UDL and/or Accessibility related references

All students in my courses will be reached with UDL. Over the years I have taught at Towson University each semester I have one or two students with documented disabilities. These students in particular are served by the UDL principles. This learning activity cuts across the UDL principles embracing Multiple means of representation, action expression and engagement.

## Learning Objectives

Students will be able to master the goals and objectives of the course as well as apply what they learn in unique situations including the subsequent semesters they will be serving as interns in early childhood classrooms.

## Readings/ Resources

My primary resource for this learning activity are the UDL principles outlined at [udlcenter.org](http://udlcenter.org).

## Steps in the Process and/or Activities

### **Reading Reflections:**

Each student is required to demonstrate understanding, mastery and application of selected readings for each week. They are not being asked to summarize the reading, but to express their point of view and support that view with pertinent references. They date each entry and identify the reading to which you are responding. Reading Reflections are collected weekly.

In the past I prescribed what was to be read and how it should be presented. In addition the reflections were done individually. Now I suggest a few 'sources' (not always a journal article) around a 'conceptual understanding'. The students can work alone or in pairs/teams to collect additional sources on the 'conceptual understanding' and represent what they learn in anyway they wish. what they learn is shared with the entire class and not just me so what they learn adds to everyone's knowledge base.

Students take this course in the semester that they are applying to the program. I require more readings than they are use to in their general education courses. In

addition, many of the readings are from professional journals or primary research studies. Students report to me either in class or via course evaluations that they struggle with the amount and difficulty of the readings. I did not want to give up any of the readings because all of them are important to the students foundational knowledge of beginning literacy instruction. My solution was adapted for one of our UDL presenters. Students are required to read all of the readings however, each week they are assigned one specific reading to read in detail. In class the students with others who have read the same article in depth and create a summary and analysis to share with the class. This summary can take any form (written, powerpoint, graphic organizer, etc.), is shared in class and is posted on Blackboard. The postings serve as a tool for reviewing information for the final. When the summaries/analysis are shared in class all students take away the most important information from each reading.

## Outcomes and/or Evaluation

Since embracing these UDL principles the group sharing of weekly readings/sources has been a dynamic springboard for group discussions. As a result our discussions are more engaging and more students are involved. They gained a deeper mastery of the content based on how they did on the final. In addition they no longer report on course evaluations that there is too much reading. They are also in control of what they learn by choosing resources that are the most meaningful to them and their style of learning.

## Reflection

This approach to course readings is not a fixed one. Each semester I adapt the directions and actual execution to each group of learners I work with. Each group has their own unique way of learning and this application of the UDL principles serves them well. They are better able to adapt the UDL principles for their own learners because they themselves have experienced the positive outcomes from their application. Part of the success is due to my deconstruction of the application of the UDL principles. As I adapt my teaching, in this case the weekly course readings I explain what I am doing and see the UDL principles as a lens. This in turn provides the students the scaffolding they need to apply the principles themselves in my course and beyond when they are in their internships in early childhood classrooms.

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**College of Education  
Department of Early Childhood Education**

**ECED 321 – Foundation of Reading and Language Arts**

**Instructor**

Lea Ann Christenson PhD

*UDL is part of this course in two ways: As the instructor I have incorporated UDL principles in my teaching. My students who are preparing to be Early Childhood teachers are required to incorporate UDL principles in several of their assignments. The UDL requirements and faculty reflections are annotated in red within this shortened version of the syllabus.*

**Required Texts**

Morrow, L. (2012). Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write. (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) New York. Pearson.

Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S., and Griffin, P. (1998). Preventing reading difficulties in young children. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.  
[http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=6023&page=R1](http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=6023&page=R1)

Clay, M. (2000). Running Records for Classroom Teachers. Portsmouth, NH. Heinemann.

Clay, M. (2000). Concepts About Print. Portsmouth, NH. Heinemann.

Foundation of Reading and Language Arts articles found on Blackboard (2-3 on weeks assigned)

Maryland Common Core Curriculum Link:  
<http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/reading/index.html>

**Department Theme**

**Mission Statement:** The mission of Teacher Education at Towson University is to inspire, educate, and prepare educators as facilitators of active learning for diverse and inclusive communities of learners in environments that are technologically advanced.

**Conceptual Framework:** Visit this website for details and graphic representation of the framework that guides what we do in the teacher education community at Towson.  
<http://www.towson.edu/coe/ncate/index.htm>

## Course Description and Objectives

### Course Description

ECED 321 is designed to assist pre-service and in-service teachers in understanding the reading acquisition process through the observation and analysis of reading and written language development, along with the study of current issues in reading research. Participants will apply knowledge of the core areas of language acquisition in terms of first and second language acquisition, typical development, and exceptionalities.

## Responsibilities and Assignments

The following is a list along with a brief description of responsibilities and assignments for this course. **Additional guidelines and information regarding these assignments will be provided in class.**

**Class Participation and Professionalism:** Participation and professional behavior is an important component in this course and is expected. Through actively engaging in discussions and interactions with your classmates and instructor, you will readily learn the content of the course and be better equipped to apply your learning in a classroom situation. It is expected that students complete the assigned readings for each class in order to be prepared to participate in discussions and activities during class. Participation will include written reflections, discussions, and small group activities. **Participation points and assignments cannot be made up in the event of absence.**

**Reading Reflections:** Each student will be required to write entries that reflect on selected readings for the week. You are not being asked to summarize the reading, but to express your point of view and support that view with pertinent references. You should date each entry and identify the reading to which you are responding. Reading Reflections will be collected weekly.

**Faculty Reflection:** *Students take this course in the semester that they are applying to the program. I require more readings than they are use to in their general education courses. In addition, many of the readings are from professional journals or primary research studies. Students report to me either in class or via course evaluations that they struggle with the amount and difficulty of the readings. I did not want to give up any of the readings because all of them are important to the students foundational knowledge of beginning literacy instruction. My solution was adapted for one of our UDL presenters. Students are required to read all of the readings however, each week they are assigned one specific reading to read in detail. In class the students with others who have read the same article in depth and create a summary and analysis to share with the class. This summary can take any form (written, Powerpoint, graphic organizer, etc.), is shared in class and is posted on Blackboard. The*

*postings serve as a tool for reviewing information for the final. When the summaries/analysis are shared in class all students take away the most important information from each reading. In addition the group sharing has been a dynamic springboard for group discussions. As a result our discussions are more engaging and more students are involved while gaining a deeper mastery of the content.*

If you are absent from class for an unexcused reason, **reading reflections will not be accepted.**

(MSDE - Performance Objectives from the Processes of Reading - P 1.1, P 1.4, P 1.6, P 1.7, P 1.8, P 1.9, P 1.10, P 1.11, P 2.4, P 2.5, P 2.7)

**Literacy Autobiography:** Students will complete an autobiography detailing their personal experiences with literacy learning. In order to develop a literacy development philosophy, you need to reflect on your own literacy development. This autobiographical reflection should include an analysis of the factors that contributed to your success and/or difficulties in learning to read. (MSDE - Performance Objectives from the Processes of Reading - P 1.2, P 1.3, P 1.5, P 1.6, P 1.7, P 1.10, P 2.1, P 2.2, P 2.8, P 2.9)

**Cueing System Assessment:** Students will analyze a sample of a child's oral reading and the subsequent retelling. You will analyze the child's oral miscues and retelling in order to gain insight into the child's literacy development. This assessment will be completed in class. *The students make instructional recommendations for the child they assess. I have started requiring that they consider the UDL principles in their recommendations.* (MSDE - Performance Objectives from the Processes of Reading - P 1.2, P 1.3, P 1.6, P 1.7, P 1.9, P 2.1, P 2.2, P 2.3, P 2.6)

**Writing Sample Analysis:** Students will analyze a child's writing sample for the following elements: spelling stage, writing stage, conventions, content, and relationship to other areas of literacy development. *The students make instructional recommendations for the child they assess. I have started requiring that they consider the UDL principles in their recommendations* (MSDE - Performance Objectives from the Processes of Reading - P 1.2, P 1.3, P 1.6, P 1.7, P 1.9, P 2.1, P 2.2, P 2.3, P 2.6)

**Research Article:** Students will locate a literacy research article, write a 3 page summary and analysis, and share this article during a class session (MSDE - Performance Objectives from the Processes of Reading - P 2.8, P 2.9, P 2.10, P 2.11, P 2.12, P 2.13)

**Demonstration Lesson:** Students will present a brief explanation of a reading component and research study (either phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, or vocabulary). *The students are required to consider and include the UDL principles when designing their lesson.* The students will then teach a lesson to the class that demonstrates how the component can be presented to students and how it can be modified and

enriched for students with reading difficulties. After the instructional experience, the group will discuss the literacy theory and research that undergirds the lesson's pedagogy and materials. (MSDE - Performance Objectives from the Processes of Reading - P 1.2, P 1.6, P 1.7, P 1.8, P 1.9, P 1.10, P 1.11, P 2.1, P 2.2)

**Literacy Block Unit:** Students will create a 5 day thematic unit for the Literacy Block. The unit will support the CCSS as well as Social Studies or Science. It will consist of Read Alouds, Shared Reading and 5 center activities. *The students are required to consider and include the UDL principles when designing their Literacy Block Unit.*

**Family Literacy Group Project:** Small groups will complete a project on family literacy. Details will be provided in class.

**Final:** An in class final will be given during the assigned university's final exam week. *All performance objectives.*

### Evaluation

Your final grade will be based on your success in meeting the objectives of this course as demonstrated throughout the semester and in the course assignments.

<b>Professionalism and Participation/Reading Reflections:</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Literacy Autobiography:</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Research Article:</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Cueing Systems Assessment</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Writing Sample Analysis</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Literacy Block Unit:</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Demonstration Lesson:</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Family Literacy Group Project:</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Final:</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Total Points Possible:</b>	<b>300</b>

ECED 321  
Dr. Christenson  
Fall 2017  
Due: various dates  
Assignment Example

**Research Article:**

Students will locate an article related to any aspect of emergent literacy from a *peer reviewed* journal. The citation for the article will be shared with the instructor in class on September 6th for approval. Students will write a 2 page paper including:

- \*brief *summary* of the article 5
- \*analysis of the article 5
- \*specific examples of how UDL is integrated or exemplified in the content 5
- \*how the topic can be applied to the classroom 10
- \*The article will be presented in class on various dates (10 minutes) 5

The presentation will NOT be a reading of the paper. The presentation will include a SHORT summary of the article. The remainder of the presentation will be **interactive, embrace UDL principles** and will focus on the analysis of the article and how what was learned from the article can be applied to the Prek-3rd grade classroom.

Total points: 30

Points may be deducted for unprofessional writing



