

**Title**

Children’s Authors on the Web: Online Sites that Motivate Students to Write

**Target Audience**

This course is designed for current and preservice teachers of grades K-6.

**Prerequisites**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Course Description**

Connecting with authors motivates students to read and write. In this course, learners will explore author studies and learn how to use technology to introduce the idea of “authorship” to their students. Learners will explore author Web sites and other Internet sources in order to build a collection of resources that introduce students to a variety of genres, as well as encourage students to experiment with communicating in different forms with others.

**Facilitator**

TBA

**Credit**

To be determined by college or university

**Standards**

This course will help the teacher to meet the ISTE *National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers* (NETS\*T) 1, 2, 3, and 5.

This course will help your students to meet the ISTE *National Educational Technology Standards for Students* (NETS\*S) 1 and 4.

**Learning Outcomes**

After completion of this course, learners will:

- Explain an author study and describe how it can support/enhance student reading and writing.
- Locate Internet resources for an author study.
- Design an author study that is meaningful for their students and their curriculum.
- Develop steps and strategies for activities in an author study.
- Develop a plan to implement their author study in the classroom.

**Process**

In each assignment the learner will have access to numerous online resources from high quality sources. Throughout the course, learners will also have access to video vignettes showing “best practice” examples for technology integration.



Assignment 1: Examine and evaluate author and literature Web sites

Assignment

Explore the following Web resources

- Independent Lens: The Political Dr. Seuss  
This site from PBS offers resources and activities for advanced students that examine how the famed children's author was influenced by the political and social issues of the day, including racism, injustice and especially World War II.
- Author Focus: Jan Brett and Jane Yolen  
This Author Focus from PBS Parents includes interviews with Jan Brett and Jane Yolen along with comprehensive lists of their books and links to their Web sites.
- Children's Literature Recommended Links  
This page from PBS Teachers provides a list of recommended links to authors' Web sites and general sites regarding children's literature.
- Masterpiece Theatre: Pollyanna  
This site provides students with information and links about Eleanor Hodgman Porter.
- Masterpiece Theatre: The Railway Children  
This Web site provides a wonderful opportunity to explore the life and times of children's author Edith Nesbit and an introduction to the golden age of children's literature.
- American Masters: Maurice Sendak: Imagination and Art  
This American Master's series lesson for teachers contains activities for both elementary and middle school students.
- Children's and Young Adults' Authors & Illustrators  
This site is an index of authors and illustrators. It also has many useful links to help you find more about your favorite authors.
- Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site  
Hurst's page is an excellent resource for the discussion of children's literature. This page contains links to pages of many children's book authors. Make sure to explore the rest of the site-this is an outstanding Web resource.
- Authors on Yahoooligans  
This is a Yahoooligans site that lists over 650 author sites in alphabetical order by Author's last name.
- Author Spotlight  
The author spotlight site features visits with authors including book summaries, biographies, classroom connections, and Internet links.
- Horn Book Virtual History Exhibit  
This is a unique site featuring correspondence between authors and editors through the years. It is a great look into an author's life.
- Online Writing Resources for Kids
- Authors and Illustrators on the Web  
Lists authors' personal websites and websites maintained by fans, scholars, and readers

Product

Submit a list of 3-5 authors to potentially study with your students. For each author, note the resources you discovered while exploring Web sites.

Idea Sharing

Write about an author that has been particularly motivating for your students. Briefly explain how or why the experience has been particularly successful. Respond to at least one other person's post.



Online Journal

Reflect on your learning by answering the questions in the Online Journal.

Assignment 2: Choose an author to examine for your author study

Assignment

In this assignment you will consider the authors identified in Assignment 1 in relationship to your curriculum and your students' interests and needs. Choose the author for your study that you determine to be best for your students and your curriculum.

Explore the following resources for motivating students:

- Arthur: About Marc Brown  
This site provides a biography and links about the creator of Arthur: Marc Brown.
- Curious About George?  
This site provides information about the authors of Curious George: H. A. and Margret Rey as well as answers to frequently asked questions about the curious monkey.
- Kids Reads: Norman Bridwell  
This Web site provides a biography of the children's author Norman Bridwell.
- Kids Reads: Jan and Stan Berenstain
- This Web site provides a biography of the children's authors Jan and Stan Berenstain.

Product

Submit the name of the author you will build your study around. Give a brief explanation of why you chose this author and how the author study will fit into your curriculum.

Idea Sharing

Share a challenge you encountered in selecting an author for your study (i.e. plenty of resources were available but the topic didn't match your curriculum; the topic aligned with your curriculum but there was little student interest). Respond to at least one other learner's post.

Online Journal

Reflect on your learning by answering the questions in the Online Journal.

Assignment 3: Identify potential activities and ways to build an immersive classroom environment for your author study

Assignment

In this assignment, you will begin planning the classroom environment and selecting activities to peak student interest, motivate them to learn about the author, and encourage them to do their own writing.

View and reflect upon three videos

Explore the following Web resources:

- NOW with Bill Moyers: Maurice Sendak  
This site includes an interview and video clips of Maurice Sendak.
- Sagwa: Amy Tan interview  
This site provides a video and transcript of an interview with the Sagwa author: Amy Tan.
- NewsHour: Interview with Holes author Louis Sachar  
This site provides a transcript of Louis Sachar, author of the National Book Award-winning novel Holes, discussing his work with Elizabeth Farnsworth.
- NewsHour: Interview with author Kate DiCamillo



This site provides a transcript of an interview with Kate DiCamillo (winner of the 2004 Newberry Medal for her novel "The Tale of Despereaux").

- **Berenstain Bears - Let's Collaborate!**  
This lesson provides an opportunity for students to discuss the idea that we all have talents, skills and abilities. Students listen to stories, discuss the roles and interdependence of authors and illustrators and analyze a puppet story about valuing abilities.
- **Arthur - Publishing and Sharing Stories**  
Design and create a book cover with front cover illustrations and back cover "about the author" blurbs. Explore several ideas for the final step in the writing process: publishing and sharing.
- **Reading Rainbow: Make Your Own Book**  
This link provides different templates for students to write their own book.
- **Themes and Subject Area Connections by Author Carol Hurst**  
Information on related books, activities, and sites on the Internet listed according to themes and subject areas.
- **Johnson County Libraries Kid's Page: Edge of Adventure**  
Provides book lists, Web links, activities, songs, and clip art.
- **Meet the Authors and Illustrators**  
A WebQuest about authors and illustrators. Includes an interview sheet for directing student questions about/to authors.
- **Scholastic Authors and Books**  
Discussion guides and teaching ideas for using literature in the classroom
- **Children's Book Authors Who Visit Schools**  
Links to the Web sites of children's book authors who visit schools

## Product

Submit a list of four or five potential activities for your author study. Also submit a description of what you will do to build the classroom environment. The description should be detailed enough for the reader to 'picture' the display in his or her mind.

## Idea Sharing

Share something you've done in the past to introduce a unit and/or create a classroom environment. Explain what worked particularly well OR ask for suggestions on an aspect you'd like to improve. Respond to at least two other learners' posts.

## Online Journal

Reflect on your learning by answering the questions in the Online Journal.

## Assignment 4: Develop specific steps and strategies for at least three author activities

### Assignment

Explore the following Web resources:

- **Lesson Plans and Lesson Planning**  
Resources, guidelines, and tips on lesson planning.
- **10 Steps to Developing a Quality Lesson Plan**  
This brief article provides descriptions of what should be included in an outstanding lesson plan.
- **The Educator's Reference Desk Lesson Planning Guide**
- **Integrating Technology: Ultimate Lesson Plan Page**



Provides lesson plans that can be used for specific subject content and technology integration

## Product

Submit the specific steps and strategies for at least three activities in your author study. Include descriptions of the technology and other materials needed.

## Idea Sharing

If you have any questions about some aspect of an assignment, ask for suggestions OR elaborate on an aspect of an assignment that you think will go particularly well. Respond to at least two other learners' posts.

## Online Journal

Reflect on your learning by answering the questions in the Online Journal.

## Additional Resources

- The Merrow Report: Censorship and Children's Literature  
Author Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, whose Alice books were the second most-banned books of 1999, discusses sex, censorship and children's literature.
- NOW with Bill Moyers: The Controversy over Children's Literatures  
Read an article about how children's literature has been censored and the controversy over Maurice Sendak's stories.

## Assignment 5: Plan for implementation of your author study

### Assignment

Explore the following classroom management resources on the Web:

- Strategies for Classroom Management  
Strategies from the Florida Department of Education.
- Classroom Management  
An interactive Web site on classroom management from the Department of Education and Professional Studies (EPS) at the University of Limerick.
- Tip Sheet: Classroom Management  
Strategies for managing one-computer and limited-computer classrooms

### Product

Submit a plan for implementing your author study. You should include a timeline, a plan for gathering resources, requirements for technology use, and provisions for classroom management. Your plan should include enough detail for an outside reader to clearly understand what you are going to do.

### Idea Sharing

Discuss the component of your implementation plan that you feel will be most critical to successful implementation OR discuss what you think your biggest obstacle will be. Respond to at least two other learners' posts.

### Online Journal

Reflect on your learning by answering the questions in the Online Journal.

## Final Project



Before you submit your final project, you should review your submissions. This will allow you to review the work you have done in order to complete your final project. You should make sure you are meeting each of the final project criteria. Review each section to ensure that all are complete and have been edited for content and grammar. You may want to submit your project draft to a peer or colleague to assist with editing. When you are ready to submit your final project, compile the following sections:

- Author's name and short biography (paragraph)
- List of books written by the author
- List of websites to be used with the author study; for each site list the specific pages or subsections to be used
- Diagram and/or explanation of a display or bulletin board about the author that will be used to create an immersive environment
- Description of at least three activities in the author study - including the materials and technology needed
- Plan for implementation

## **Schedule**

This course is scheduled to take approximately 30 hours to complete readings, activities, video, assignments, reflections and a final project.

## **Requirements**

Learners are expected to:

- Complete all assignments
- Maintain an online journal
- Participate regularly in discussion boards

## **Materials (hardware, software, plug-ins)**

### Technical Requirements

- Word processor
- Internet service provider
- Email

## **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

To be inserted by university institution only

## **Evaluation**

This course is evaluated on a letter grade basis, and may be available for graduate credit. See graduate credit details pertaining to specific graduate credit institutions.

**Last Update: September 10, 2008**

