

PBS TeacherLine Course Syllabus

Title

Facilitating Oral Language Development (PreK-3)

Target Audience

This course is intended for pre-service and in-service teachers, grades PreK-3, to address methods they can use to facilitate and assess oral language development.

Prerequisites

To successfully participate and complete the assignments in this course, the learner must:

- Have access to a writing classroom or a few grades PreK-3 students to complete the coursework.
- Be familiar with taking an online course or have gone through the PBS TeacherLine Practice Learning Online course.
- Have some experience in grades PreK-3 classrooms.
- Have an interest in language, literacy, and writing instruction.

Course Description

In this course, learners will gain both theoretical and practical information about facilitating oral language development in grades PreK-3. Specifically, they will learn authentic ways to assess students' oral language. They will also practice strategies for teaching vocabulary to young students either through enhanced conversation or planned book-reading. They will learn to elicit extended discourse from students by storytelling and then analyzing the features of the stories. Throughout the course, course participants will learn ways to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of diverse students as well as ways to support the oral language development of all students. Through the readings, videos, discussions, assignments, and other interactive experiences, they will have multiple opportunities to analyze student learning and teacher practice. They will choose one of two final project options: synthesize information about oral language development in a case study, OR design a professional development presentation for colleagues on using video as a vehicle to observe teacher practice in support of students' oral language. In either case, learners will need to work with students to complete this course.

Instructor/Facilitator

See instructor/facilitator sheet.

Credits

To be determined by college or university.

Goals

The overall goals of this course are for learners to develop an understanding of the elements of effective oral language facilitation for students in grades PreK–3 and to gain strategies for assessing students' oral language. By the end of the course, learners will understand and be able to use the following in their classroom:

- Concepts of typical oral language development.
- Ways to assess oral language in the classroom.
- Strategies for building students' oral vocabularies.
- Strategies for building students' extended discourse abilities.
- Techniques for equally supporting male and female students, English language learners, and other diverse learners.

Course Objectives

Students completing Facilitating Oral Language Development, PreK-3 will be able to:

- Classify and analyze patterns of talk in a classroom based on classroom observation.
- Analyze the profile of oral language development of students using the Teacher Rating of Oral Language and Literacy (TROLL) or the Oral Language Functions assessment.



- Create and evaluate a vocabulary lesson using the “Text Talk” technique or create and evaluate a book reading to stimulate vocabulary development.
- Evaluate the utility of a technology-based approach to elicit oral narratives.
- Develop strategies for students with language differences.
- Develop an oral language case study and plan of action or design a presentation about using video to inform other teachers about facilitating oral language development.

Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

Local stations can complete this section.

Outline of Content and Assignments

After previewing the documents in the Course Information, learners will proceed to the Course Content to complete the following six sessions, working through each session in order. Essential information pertaining to the topic is presented within each session. Throughout the sessions, learners are also asked to articulate their ideas in various forms; for example, they are encouraged to reflect on their ideas and experiences in their online journal. The weekly discussions in the discussion forum are designed to allow learners to glean information from other learners’ experiences with strategies both prior to and following the completion of the weekly assignments. The learner will choose one of two final project options: synthesize information about oral language development in a case study, OR design a professional development presentation for colleagues on using video as a vehicle to observe teacher practice in support of students’ oral language. This course is designed to address the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and International Reading Association (IRA) *Standards for the English Language Arts* that were developed to serve as a guide for teachers in developing curriculum and instruction that foster students’ literacy development. The course specifically addresses Standards 3, 4, 9, 11, and 12. Additionally, this course addresses several of the [ISTE NETS* T](#) for teachers: I (A); III (B); IV (A, B); V (C, D).

Session 1: Introduction: Oral Language in the Classroom

Objectives

By the end of this session, the learner will be able to:

- Define professional goals and expectations for this course in the online journal.
- Explain prior knowledge and experiences with facilitating oral language development.
- Explain the relationship between language and thought from perspective as a classroom teacher in an online discussion.
- Classify and analyze patterns of talk in a classroom based on classroom observation.

Read

- “Talking the Talk and Walking the Walk: Researching Oral Language in the Classroom” from *Language Arts*

Write in Online Journal

- Reflect on expectations for the course.
- Reflect on prior experiences facilitating oral language development.

Participate in an Online Discussion

- Introduce themselves to other learners.
- Respond to: “Based on your prior experiences, what is the relationship between language and thought?”

Complete Activities and Assignments

- Complete the “Observing Oral Language” assignment.

Additional Resources (not required)

- Birth of a Language from PBS
- Cazden, C. (1988). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.



Session 2: Oral Language Development

Objectives

By the end of this session, the learner will be able to:

- Discuss ways the *New Standards* regarding the development of oral language for students in PreK-3 may be implemented in the classroom.
- Reflect on how knowledge of language development and assessment can affect their own instruction in the online journal.
- Analyze the profile of oral language development of a student after implementing TROLL or the Oral Language Functions assessment.

Read

- ISTE NETS+S
- "Performance Indicators for Technology-Literate Students, PreK-2 and 3-5" from ISTE
- "Standards for the English Language Arts" from NCTE/IRA
- Your own state's standards (look for them on your district's Web site)
- "NCEE's Standard 1: Talking a Lot, K-1" from *New Standards for Speaking & Listening*
- "NCEE's Standard 1: Talking a Lot, 2-3" from *New Standards for Speaking & Listening*
- "Oral Comprehension Sets the Ceiling on Reading Comprehension" from *American Educator*
- "The Development of Language" Chapter 1 from *The Development of Language*
- "Teacher Rating of Oral Language and Literacy (TROLL): Individualizing Early Literacy Instruction with a Standards-Based Tool" from *The Reading Teacher*
- "Talk" from *Kidwatching*

Write in Online Journal

- Respond to: "In what ways can knowledge of language development and its assessment inform your own instruction?"

Participate in an Online Discussion

- Respond to: "What ideas and suggestions do you have for implementing the NCEE New Standards for oral language development in the classroom?"

Complete Activities and Assignments

- Complete the "Analyzing Oral Language Assessments" assignment.

Additional Resources (not required)

- "Creating ELL-Friendly Classrooms" from Education World
- "Optimal Conditions for Second Language Acquisition" from Stony Brook University
- Talking Milestones from PBS Parents

Session 3: Extending Students' Vocabularies

Objectives

By the end of this session, the learner will be able to:

- Discuss the connections between research on levels of vocabulary knowledge and the implications for classroom instruction.
- Reflect on book reading practices as compared to two video examples provided.
- Create and evaluate a vocabulary lesson using the "Text Talk" technique or create and evaluate a book reading to stimulate vocabulary development.

Read

- "Key Areas of Instruction: Vocabulary" from *Between the Lions*
- "Vocabulary" from *The Tutor*
- "How Do People Learn Words from Context? And What Does It Mean to 'Know' a Word?" from *Vocabulary Development*



- “Taking Delight in Words: Using Oral Language to Build Young Children’s Vocabularies” from *American Educator*
- “Preschoolers and Books: Contexts for Learning about Language and the World” from *Much More Than the ABCs: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing*

Write in Online Journal

- Respond to: “In your own practice, consider which particular elements of the book readings in the videos you already use in your own classroom and which elements you would like to incorporate and why.”

Participate in an Online Discussion

- Respond to: “What connections can you make between research about vocabulary knowledge and implications for you when teaching vocabulary in your own classroom?”

Complete Activities and Assignments

- View “Thunder Cake” video vignette
- View “Secret Remedy Part 1” video vignette
- View “Secret Remedy Part 2” video vignette

Additional Resources (not required)

- Arthur’s Reading Tips from PBS Kids
- Between the Lions games and activities:
 - Pounce
 - Vocabulary Building
 - Word Play
- Clifford: Measuring Up
- Enhancing Preschool Literacy Skills with Software and Internet Technologies PowerPoint Presentation from Ready to Learn
- Inspiration® Web site
- Strickland, D. & Snow, C. (2002). *Preparing our teachers: Opportunities for better reading instruction*. Washington, DC: Joseph Henry Press and the New Brunswick Group.

Session 4: Supporting Extended Discourse

Objectives

By the end of this session, the learner will be able to:

- Evaluate the relative success of two teachers as they elicit personal narratives from two students in a video.
- Generate suggestions about how and why teachers can help students overcome the limitations of gendered narrative in online journal.
- Evaluate the utility of a technology-based approach to elicit oral narratives.

Read

- “What’s Important When You’re Six? Valuing Children’s Oral Stories” from *Language Arts*
- “Suggested Child Narrative-Elicitation Prompts” from *Patterns of Narrative Discourse: A Multicultural, Life Span Approach*
- “Spanish-Speaking Children” or “Asian-American Children” from *Patterns of Narrative Discourse: A Multicultural, Life Span Approach*
- “‘When Your Powers Combine, I Am Captain Planet’: The Developmental Significance of Individual- and Group-Authored Narratives” from *Discourse Studies*

Write in Online Journal

- Respond to: “How and why might you help girls learn to include some of the elements of “boys’ stories” into their narratives and help boys include some of the elements of “girls’ stories” in theirs?”



- Respond to: “Reflect on your experience using the interactive with two students, including how successful the interactive was in eliciting oral narratives, what verbal prompts you gave that worked best, and what you learned that you could use in your own classroom.”

Participate in an Online Discussion

- Respond to: “What were the relative strengths and challenges of each teacher’s support for the students in the videos you watched, and what elements of the teachers’ practices contributed to their success?”

Complete Activities and Assignments

- View “Mateo’s Narrative” video vignette.
- View “Charlotte’s Narrative” video vignette.
- Explore “Oral Language Narrative” interactive, including use with two focus students.
- Complete “Implementing a Vocabulary Lesson” assignment (began in Session 3).

Additional Resources (not required)

- Arthur: The Question Game
- Between the Lions: The Land of Make-Believe
- K-2 Storytelling Resources from PBS Teachers
- Photo of the Day from National Geographic
- Nicolopoulou, A. & Richner, E.S. (2004). ‘When your powers combine, I am Captain Planet’: The developmental significance of individual- and group-authored stories by preschoolers. *Discourse Studies*, 6(3), 347-371.
- Picture Picture from PBS Kids
- Raphael, T. E., Pardo, L. S., & Highfield, K. (2002). *Book club: A literature-based curriculum*. Lawrence, MA: Small Planet.
- What’s Your Picture Story? from the British Broadcasting Company

Session 5: Supporting the Oral Language Development of Diverse Students

Objectives

By the end of this session, the learner will be able to:

- Discuss and recommend strategies for interacting with an English language learner to a teacher.
- Evaluate the utility of a technology-based approach to facilitate and support the receptive language of an ELL student in a journal entry.
- Develop a set of strategies based on synthesis of information about a student with language differences.

Read

- “Strategies and Resources for Mainstream Teachers of English Language Learners” from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory Web site
- “Classroom Conversations: Opportunities to Learn for ESL Students in Mainstream Classrooms” from *The Reading Teacher*
- “Language Diversity and Learning” from *Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*

Write in Online Journal

- Respond to: “Reflect on your experience using the interactive with an ELL student, including how successful the interactive was in facilitating receptive language development and to what extent the student learned the words.”

Participate in an Online Discussion

- Respond to: “What recommendations would you offer this teacher for interacting with Michael (the student in the video) and what else could she have done to take advantage of any opportunities she might have missed?”



Complete Activity and Assignment

- View “Support for an ELL Student Part 1” video vignette
- View “Support for an ELL Student Part 2” video vignette
- Explore “Receptive Language” interactive, including use with an ELL student
- Complete “Strategies Paper” assignment

Additional Resources (not required)

- Adger, C.T., Snow, C.E., & Christina, D. (Eds.). (2002). *What teachers need to know about language*. McHenry, IL: Delta Systems, & Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Dragon Tales: Finn's Toys
- Dragon Tales: Search for Mami
- Echevarria, J. & Graves, A.W. (2003). *Sheltered content instruction: Teaching English-language learners with diverse abilities*. (2nd ed.) Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Exploring African Culture from Africa from PBS
- “Learning Two Languages: Questions Parents Ask” from PBS Parents
- Making the Nightingale Sing from “The Nightingale” from Great Performances
- Many Voices from Circle of Stories
- Maya & Miguel: Experiencing Language with Friends
- Maya & Miguel: It's All About Word Play
- National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition
 - Oral Tradition and The Blues from The Blues from PBS
- Sesame Street: Spanish Word of the Day
 - Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). Preventing reading difficulties in young children. Retrieved February 27, 2003, from <http://www.nap.edu/html/prdyc>
- Storytelling and Recitation - Oral Traditions: Context and Background from River of Song: Music Along the River
- The TV to Lesson Connection: Storytelling from PBS Teachers
- U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) Web site

Session 6: Applying Oral Language Strategies

Objectives

By the end of this session, the learner will be able to:

- Discuss effective strategies, concepts, and questions about facilitating oral language development in young children.
- Develop an oral language case study of a focus student and a plan of action to support his/her oral language development (Final Project Option 1) OR design a presentation using a video example that informs other teachers in your school about facilitating oral language development (Final Project Option 2).
- Assess their learning in this course by comparing prior knowledge and acquired knowledge in the online journal.
- Analyze the learning experiences in this course by reflecting on professional goals and expectations in the online journal.

Participate in an Online Discussion

- Respond to: “What were the most effective strategies or concepts from this course that you intend to implement with your student population and why? What questions do you still have concerning the course topics?”

Final Project

Learners will submit their choice of two final projects in Session 6. The two options are:

Option 1: Oral Language Case Study & Action Plan

1. Case study and action plan, aligned to the NCTE/IRA, ISTE NETS*S, and state standards



2. Peer review
3. Revision

Option 2: Presentation Plan

1. Presentation plan for using video to analyze student work, aligned to the NCTE/IRA, ISTE NETS*S, and state standards
2. Peer review
3. Written reflection

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.
- Participate regularly in Discussion Boards.
- Submit the final assignment in a timely fashion (determined by the facilitator).

Materials

Technical Requirements

- Word processor
- Internet service provider
- E-mail
- PBS TeacherLine required plug-ins

Academic Dishonesty Policy

To be inserted by institution

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 Updated: March 25, 2008

