Using Mentor Texts to Teach Writing in the Common Core Classroom
PRDV#72724
Framingham State University
Fall 2018: 1 credit
Instructor: Kate Moore, M.Ed.
kmoo4@framingham.edu

Course Description: This course will present current information about mentor texts and their effectiveness within the writing workshop. Students will develop an understanding of what mentor texts are and how they can effectively be used to teach a specific craft of writing. Students will integrate this understanding of mentor texts and through close examination of the Common Core State Standards, will develop lesson plans for a selected writing unit that is part of their curriculum.

Objectives:
- Students will understand what mentor texts are and recognize their effective use within the writing workshop
- Students will identify a specific unit of writing within the curriculum they teach that can be enhanced through the use of mentor texts
- Students will create a bibliography of four mentor texts to use within the selected writing unit
- Students will closely examine the Common Core State Standards, in particular the writing and language standards
- Students will develop three lesson plans that will incorporate a mentor text and align with the common core

Required Text:

Text can be downloaded here: Mentor Texts by Anne Marie Johnson.pdf

Additional Materials:

Expectations:

Students are expected to complete assigned reading from the required text as well as from additional articles and websites, as well as watch selected videos, which can be accessed via Blackboard. Discussion questions will also be posted to coincide with the reading and videos. Students will be expected to respond to questions and complete the discussion post within the week they are assigned. Full credit will not be given to assignments that are turned in late, unless prior permission was granted. There are four required discussion posts; each post is worth 10% of the final grade. The following rubric will be used as a guide for grading each post.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsatisfactory: 0-3</th>
<th>Satisfactory: 4-6</th>
<th>Proficient: 7-8</th>
<th>Exemplary: 9-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Postings are not relevant to the question posted</td>
<td>✓ Postings are relevant to the question posted</td>
<td>✓ Postings are thoughtful, reflective, and relevant to the question posted</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Postings were not completed, or do not show an understanding of the material</td>
<td>✓ Postings reflect an vague understanding of the material, they are general and do not refer to specific connections to individual teaching</td>
<td>✓ Postings show a strong understanding of the material</td>
<td>✓ Postings show a strong understanding of the material and specifically cite information and examples from the material</td>
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Once an understanding of the use of mentor texts has been developed, students will be required to choose a writing unit taught within their own curriculum. Students will develop a bibliography of mentor texts with learning objectives to enhance the selected writing unit. This assignment is worth 30% of the final grade. For the final assignment, students will write three lesson plan outlines for the selected unit. Each lesson plan will incorporate a mentor text and align with the Common Core State Standards. This assignment is also worth 30% of the final grade. The following rubric will be used as a guide for grading each post.

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<td>✓ Assignment is not complete or none of the required guidelines were followed</td>
<td>✓ Most of the assignment is complete but some of the required guidelines were not followed</td>
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<td>✓ Assignment was not completed on time</td>
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Assignment was not completed on time

Assignment may not have been completed on time

content and a thoughtful, effective application to teaching

Grading Criteria:

Discussion Post #1: 10%
Discussion Post #2: 10%
Discussion Post #3: 10%
Discussion Post #4: 10%
Mentor Text Bibliography: 30%
Lesson Plan Outline Assignment: 30%

Course Content and Outline:

**Module 1**

**Activity 1: Introductions/Discussion Post #1**

Post an introduction of yourself in the Discussion Board. Include your name, grade/subject that you teach, and something about your career in education. Read all of the introductions, as you will find it useful throughout the course to interact with classmates teaching at a similar grade level or subject.

**Activity 2: Read pages 1-21 from Mentor Text: Using Children’s Literature & Modeling to Improve Student Writing by Johnson. Answer the following discussion questions in the Discussion Board. Your response should be a thoughtful, reflective paragraph.** *After you have written your own response, please reply to at least one of your classmate’s responses.*

Discussion Post #2:

- Describe your writer’s workshop. Do you incorporate the use of a writer’s notebook, writing conferences, and/or writing partners in your writing workshop? If so, how?

- What mentor texts, if any, do you use to support your teaching of writing? What aspect(s) of the writer’s craft is taught through that mentor text?
**Module 2**

**Activity 1:** Watch the YouTube video: Whole Class Instruction on Studying Author’s Craft and Intent from Teacher’s College of Reading and Writing Project:  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqNgeygcEr4
Respond to the following discussion questions in the discussion board.

Discussion Post #3:
- What craft of writing was the mentor text being used to teach?
- Do you think the text effectively modeled that craft?
- What do you feel was the most effective part of the lesson?

**Activity 2:** Identify a writing unit within your curriculum that you would like to improve though the use of mentor texts (ex. opinion writing). Familiarize yourself with the information on pages 21-71 in Mentor Text: Using Children’s Literature & Modeling to Improve Student Writing by Johnson. Use this information as well as some of the various websites listed on pages 114-116 and any other resources of your choice to develop a bibliography of mentor texts for the writing unit you selected.

To create the bibliography, choose three books that can be used as mentor texts within your chosen writing unit. For each book, provide a well-developed summary of the text as well as an objective for the lesson. Use the attached template to complete the bibliography and upload it as one attachment to the discussion board.

../Documents/Using Mentor Text Bibliography Template.doc - Bibliography Template

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**Module 3**

**Activity 1:** Follow the link below to read Chapter One from Pathways to the Common Core: Accelerating Achievement by Calkins, Ehrenworth, and Lehman.  

Respond to the discussion question on the Blackboard Discussion Board. Your response should be a well-developed, reflective paragraph.

Discussion Post #4:
- How can/do the Common Core State Standards improve the writing you teach? Incorporate specific examples from the curriculum you teach.

**Activity 2:** Familiarize yourself with the Common Core State Standards: http://www.corestandards.org/. If you teach in the state of Massachusetts, please review the standards specific to MA here: http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/ela/0311.pdf

Read the writing and language standards for your grade level. Identify 2-3 standards that will be covered in the writing unit you identified in module two. These standards will be incorporated in the
lesson plans you are going to design next week. You do not need to post the standards you are selecting, simply familiarizing yourself with them will help with the final assignment next week.

Module 4

**Final Assignment:** Create three lesson plan outlines that incorporate at least one of the mentor texts that you selected in your bibliography. You may choose to use three different mentor texts for each lesson or create three lessons using one text. As always, please do what is best and most useful to your teaching! Each lesson plan outline will also need to incorporate at least one of the Common Core State Standards, specifically a writing or language standard. Use the provided template for the Common Core Aligned Lesson Plan Outline and upload it as one attachment to the discussion board on Blackboard.

Common Core Aligned Lesson Plan Outlines.doc

**Academic Honesty Policy:**

“Integrity is essential to academic life. Consequently, students who enroll at Framingham State University agree to maintain high standards of academic honesty and scholarly practice. They shall be responsible for familiarizing themselves with the published policies and procedures regarding academic honesty. Academic honesty requires but is not limited to the following practices: appropriately citing all published and unpublished sources, whether quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise expressed, in all of the student’s oral and written, technical and artistic work.”

Please refer to academic honesty policy in the Framingham State University Graduate Catalog, Student Conduct page 7.

**Additional Resources/ Supplemental Material:**

http://readingandwritingproject.com

http://www.teacher2teacherhelp.com/mentor-texts/

Being a Good Writer: Writing tips and strategies from Lucy Calkins
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WO29k1-RysA

Mentor Texts in the Writing Workshop:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_4mKOjG5LU
Mentor Text Bibliography

Teacher:
Title of Writing Unit:
Grade:

Book #1
Book Citation:
Summary of Book:
Teaching Objective:

Book #2
Book Citation
Summary of Book:
Teaching Objective:

Book #3
Book Citation:
Summary of Book:
Teaching Objective:
Title of Unit: __________________________
Teacher: ______________________________
Grade: ________________________________

Title of Lesson #1: _______________________

1. Common Core Learning Standard(s) Addressed:
2. Learning Target/Objective(s): What will students know and be able to do as a result of this lesson?
3. Activities/Tasks: What learning experiences will students engage in?
4. Resources/Materials: What mentor text(s) & other materials will be used in this lesson?
Title of Unit:
Teacher:
Grade:

Title of Lesson #2: ____________________________________

1. Common Core Learning Standard(s) Addressed:
2. Learning Target/Objective(s): What will students know and be able to do as a result of this lesson?
3. Activities/Tasks: What learning experiences will students engage in?
4. Resources/Materials: What mentor text(s) & other materials will be used in this lesson?
Common Core Aligned Lesson Plan Outlines

Title of Unit:
Teacher:
Grade:

Title of Lesson #3: ___________________________________

1. Common Core Learning Standard(s) Addressed:
2. Learning Target/Objective(s): What will students know and be able to do as a result of this lesson?
3. Activities/Tasks: What learning experiences will students engage in?
4. Resources/Materials: What mentor text(s) & other materials will be used in this lesson?