

Bridging Gaps: Literacy for All – Course Map

Course Foundation Components

Learner Profile Summary	Course Description
<p>The learners in this context are 6th-grade students at a diverse Title I school, where the majority face significant financial hardships, including homelessness, and come from low-income backgrounds. They are between 11 and 12 years old and come from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, with many speaking English as a second language. These students often experience gaps in foundational literacy skills due to external life challenges and inconsistent schooling. While they are eager to learn, they may face difficulties with motivation, confidence in their reading, engagement, writing, and comprehension abilities. They benefit most from structured, hands-on, interactive literacy experiences that incorporate kinesthetic and visual elements to make writing and reading more accessible. Many students have limited access to technology outside of school, but they do use Google Classroom and Chromebooks for assignments. Social-emotional learning is crucial, as students carry trauma and stress that impact their academic success and focus. They value positive reinforcement, peer connections, and literacy lessons that feel relevant to their lives. Despite possible resistance to academic challenges, students thrive when given supportive structures, clear expectations, and engaging, scaffolded literacy instruction that meets their individual needs.</p>	<p>This course aims to strengthen literacy skills for sixth-grade students in a diverse Title I school, addressing financial challenges, language barriers, and gaps in foundational learning. Aligned with state and district literacy standards, the curriculum integrates writing fluency, reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and language acquisition strategies throughout differentiated instruction. Using a structured, scaffolded approach, students will engage in evidence-based reading and writing practices, including interactive writing, guided reading, close reading strategies, and peer collaboration. Lessons incorporate multimodal learning, leveraging visual, kinesthetic, and technology-enhanced activities to support diverse learning styles. The instruction will focus on various genre writing, analyzing texts, and developing critical thinking skills. This type of focus on the instruction will help students connect, understand, and communicate their ideas effectively. This course also has social-emotional learning embedded throughout the curriculum. By embedding social-emotional learning in the curriculum, it fosters student engagement, resilience, and confidence. The assessments that will be used will be ongoing, and formative, with a summative assessment by the final module. These assessments use data-driven instruction to adjust to meet the individual needs of learners. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate literacy proficiency, improved critical thinking skills, and the ability to apply reading and writing strategies.</p>
<h3>Course Objectives</h3>	
<p>CO1 Analyze fiction and nonfiction texts using close reading strategies, summarize key ideas, and cite evidence to demonstrate comprehension and identify themes and details.</p>	
<p>CO2 Compose narrative, informative, and argumentative texts with a clear structure, and revise drafts for clarity, coherence, and organization.</p>	

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<p>CO3 Expand academic vocabulary by identifying key terms in texts and using them in reading and writing tasks, applying context clues and explicit instruction.</p>	
<p>CO4 Examine texts and participate in group discussions to develop evidence-based reasoning, make connections across genres, and justify opinions.</p>	
<p>CO5 Develop social-emotional skills by collaborating with peers, setting literacy goals, and reflecting on progress to build confidence in reading and writing.</p>	
Summative Assessment Idea	
<p>Summative Assessment: Literary Exploration Project</p> <p>Overview: Students will create a portfolio or multimedia presentation (e.g., video, written report, or digital slideshow) to show their understanding of critical thinking skills, texts, vocabulary use, and writing abilities. This project will include creative writing, written analysis, and personal reflection to demonstrate writing, reading, and vocabulary growth.</p> <p>Project components:</p> <p>Text Analysis and Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose one nonfiction and fiction text from the unit. • Summarize key ideas and themes from the text. • Explain how the two texts connect to your own experience. • Use specific evidence and examples from the two texts (fiction and nonfiction). • Assessment criteria: Clear summary with evidence-based explanations <p>Original Writing Piece</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write an informative, argumentative, or narrative piece relating to one of the themes of the texts. • Organize writing and ideas clearly and revise for detail and clarity. • Assessment criteria: Well-organized, revised, and detailed work. <p>Vocabulary Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the assigned vocabulary words from the writing unit. • Highlight each word and explain how you use it in the proper context. • Assessment criteria: Meaningful and correct use of academic vocabulary that aligns with the unit <p>Critical Thinking and Connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how your texts, writing, and real-world experiences connect. • Use examples from the texts and real life to support your ideas. • Assessment criteria: Thoughtful connections to real life and the texts. <p>Self-reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe any challenges you faced in reading, writing, or vocabulary. • Explain how you overcome those challenges 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a literacy goal for future growth. • Assessment criteria: Insightful reflection with a personal goal set for specifically literacy. 	

Learning Design – Bridging Gaps: Literacy For All

	M1	M2	M3
Module Title	Mastering Text Analysis: Close Reading and Evidence-Based Comprehension	Writing with Purpose: Crafting and Revising Clear Texts	Building Literacy and Confidence: Collaboration, Goal-Setting, and Reflection
Course Objective Alignments	<p>CO1 Analyze fiction and nonfiction texts using close reading strategies, summarize key ideas, and cite evidence to demonstrate comprehension and identify themes and details.</p> <p>CO4 Analyze texts and participate in group discussions to develop evidence-based reasoning, make connections across genres, and justify opinions.</p>	<p>CO2 Compose narrative, informative, and argumentative texts with a clear structure, and revise drafts for clarity, coherence, and organization.</p> <p>CO3 Expand academic vocabulary by identifying key terms in texts and using them in reading and writing tasks, applying context clues and explicit instruction.</p>	<p>CO5 Develop social-emotional skills by collaborating with peers, setting literacy goals, and reflecting on progress to build confidence in reading and writing.</p>
Module Objectives	<p>Students will identify key ideas, themes, and details in fiction and nonfiction texts using close reading strategies.</p> <p>Students will summarize key information and cite evidence to explain how it supports the main idea.</p>	<p>Students will compose narrative, informational, and argumentative texts with a clear beginning, middle, and end.</p> <p>Students will revise and edit writing to improve clarity, structure, and details with feedback from peers and teachers.</p>	<p>Students will discuss texts with peers, sharing ideas and using evidence to support opinions.</p> <p>Students will set personal literacy goals and reflect on progress by writing about strengths and areas for improvement.</p>

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Topics/Skills to Teach	a) Cracking the Code: Close Reading Strategies b) Find the Proof: Citing Text Evidence c) What's the Big Idea? Identifying Themes and Main Ideas	a) Hook, Build, & Conclude: Structuring Strong Writing b) Show, Don't Tell: Adding Voice and Details c) Fix it Up: Revising and Editing Like a Pro	a) Stronger Together: Debating and Discussing Ideas b) My Reading and Writing Journey: Setting Goals c) Looking Back, Moving Forward: Reflecting on Growth
Learning Resource	<p>Learning Resources:</p> <p>Academic Research-Based Article: Baki, Y. (2024). The Impact of Close Reading Strategies on Individual Innovativeness and Life Skills: Preservice Teachers. <i>Behavioral Sciences (2076-328X)</i>, 14(9), 816. https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14090816</p> <p>YouTube Video: CrashCourse. (2015). <i>How to read literature like a professor</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2G-MalxjBI</p>	<p>Learning Resources:</p> <p>Youtube Video: TED-Ed. (2014). <i>How to write descriptively - Nalo Hopkinson</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSO RzTtwgP4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This video resource helps students develop a strong writing voice and improves clarity, structure, and coherence. These are all essential skills for composing and revising informative, narrative, and argumentative texts. 	<p>Learning Resources:</p> <p>YouTube Video: BrainCraft. (2017). <i>The growth mindset</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KU Wn_TJTrnU</p> <p>Newsela Source: Dweck, C. (2020). <i>The science of a growth mindset</i> [Article]. Newsela. https://newsela.com</p> <p>Edutopia Source: Finley, T. (2016, October 5). <i>Building growth mindsets in the classroom through reflection</i>. Edutopia. https://www.edutopia.org/article/build-growth-mindsets-classroom-reflection</p>

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Assessment Ideas	<p>Formative Assessment: “Text Evidence Detective”</p> <p>Students will work in small groups to analyze a nonfiction or fiction passage, both culturally relevant, using their learned close reading strategies. Each small group will identify the key themes and will highlight any supporting evidence in the text(s). Each group will create a “case file” document where they justify any findings with text-based evidence. Afterward, students will present their findings to the class, while citing evidence to support their reasonings and explain their thought processes.</p> <p>Alignment with Module Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO1: Analyze texts and cite evidence to summarize key ideas and identify themes. • CO4: Engage in group discussions, providing evidence-based reasoning. 	<p>Formative Assessment: Writing and Revising with a Purpose</p> <p>Students will write a rough draft of an informative, argumentative or narrative piece, based on a prompt. After receiving feedback from the teacher and their peers, students will revise their rough drafts, focusing on improving clarity, coherence, and organization. Students will submit both their rough drafts and finalized versions, with a brief reflection on the changes they made, why those revisions were necessary, and why those revisions improved their writing. They will submit these to Jamboard or Padlet to collaborate with their peers and receive peer feedback.</p> <p>Alignment with Module Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO2: Composing and revising clear, organized texts. • CO3: Expanding academic vocabulary and applying it in writing. <p>This type of assessment allows the sixth-grade students to practice writing in a structured manner, while also practicing revising their writing in an actionable, coherent, and clear way. This also allows for students to focus on</p>	<p>Summative Assessment: Literacy Growth Journey Journal”</p> <p>Students will create a Literacy Growth Journal – both Written and Digital Journal are offered. This Literacy growth Journal includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A goal-setting sheet where students write or record personal literacy goals at the start of the course, such as improving reading comprehension, becoming more confident in writing, or expanding vocabulary. • Samples of their writing and reading work to show progress over time (e.g., summaries, written drafts, and assignments). • Reflections on their social-emotional growth, focusing on how they overcame challenges, how they worked with their teachers and peers, and how they’ve gained confidence in their abilities. <p>At the end of the course, students will upload their Literacy Growth Journals to Jamboard or Padlet to view and give peer feedback. Students will then present their Literacy Growth journals in</p>

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		measurable improvements in organization, clarity, and vocabulary use.	<p>small groups, or to the class. During this presentation, they will share their goals, progress, and how they feel about their growth in writing, reading, social-emotional learning, and collaboration.</p> <p>Alignment with Module Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO5: Developing social-emotional skills, goal setting, and reflecting on progress. <p>This type of summative assessment allows students to track and reflect all the academic and personal growth they've made over the course of their modules in a creative and engaging way. It reflects both academic and social-emotional growth.</p>

Alignment Analysis & Reflection

Alignment – Key Terms

Key Terms (3–5)				
Writing	Literacy	Social-Emotional	Collaboration	Comprehension
34	20	9	4	6

Alignment Analysis

The highlighting activity assesses how well my curriculum aligns with key terms and priorities that drive the course objectives. By identifying key terms and counting the occurrences of those key terms in the document, the activity provides insight into which concepts are emphasized and whether any of those terms are underrepresented. This process is crucial for evaluating whether the course focuses sufficiently on its core components, such as literacy, writing, collaboration, social-emotional development, and comprehension.

Analysis of Findings

From this activity, I observed that writing was the most frequently mentioned term in my course map, which is expected given the emphasis on my ELA classes – specifically writing fluency, composition, and revision in the course objectives. Literacy also appeared frequently, reflecting the broader focus on improving my students' foundational skills, specifically literacy. Social-emotional development/learning appeared less often, although it was a significant part and a core focus of the course design. This may indicate the need for further integrating social-emotional learning into more aspects of the curriculum. Comprehension and collaboration, both crucial components of the course, appeared less frequently, potentially signaling an opportunity for a more explicit emphasis on reading comprehension strategies and peer interactions.

Reflection on Curriculum Design

The findings of my course map reveal a well-rounded curriculum design with a strong emphasis on literacy and writing, which aligns with my overall goals of improving my student's academic skills, specifically literacy. However, the relatively lower social-emotional, collaboration, and comprehension occurrences suggest that these elements might be further integrated into lessons or activities. For example, more structured peer collaboration opportunities could enhance comprehension skills and social-emotional growth. This course addresses the literacy gap and provides scaffolding for writing development. Still, I feel it might benefit from more explicit links between social-emotional learning and writing tasks. According to research, fostering a growth mindset and social-emotional skills can directly enhance academic performance and student engagement (Dweck, 2020).

Recommendations for Improvement

1. **Increase Social-Emotional Integration:** Incorporate more opportunities for students to reflect on their emotional responses to writing and reading tasks, perhaps by linking social-emotional learning to peer collaboration activities or the writing process.
2. **Enhance Collaboration Focus:** Increase the emphasis on collaborative learning in the curriculum by introducing more peer review opportunities or group-based tasks that build comprehension and social-emotional skills.
3. **More Focused Comprehension Strategies:** Given that comprehension is a key component of literacy development, it may be helpful to include activities or additional strategies that specifically target comprehension skills, especially for more complex texts.

References

Dweck, C. (2020). *The science of a growth mindset*. Newsela. <https://newsela.com>