# COURSE SYLLABUS

**Course:** Common Core: Implementing the Writing Standards Grades 6-8

**Presenter:** Meesha Brown

**Credits:** CEU

## Course Overview

In this course, you will learn how to implement the Common Core State Standards for grades 6-8 writing instruction in your own classroom, whether you teach English language arts or high school science. You will examine the organization of the standards to see how the demand for more sophisticated writing increases over time. You will also explore in detail the 10 anchor standards that run through the two grade bands of K-5 and 6-12, including text types and purposes, production and distribution of writing, research to build and present knowledge, and range of writing.

## As you take this course, you will:

- Listen to experts.
- Watch real classroom learning.
- Read research and best practice.
- Access an application toolkit that provides resources, lesson plans, and graphic organizers.

## Learning Objectives

In this course, you will explore:

1) The Common Core writing standards and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model.
2) The key elements of Common Core opinion/argumentative writing.
3) The key elements of Common Core informational/explanatory writing.
4) The key elements of Common Core narrative writing.
5) The key elements of Common Core research writing.
6) The Common Core approach to writing across all content areas.
7) A variety of ways to assess student writing, including baseline, formative, and summative assessments.

## Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1) Integrate the Common Core writing standards, the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model into your classroom, and the key elements of Common Core opinion/argumentative writing.
2) Guide students through the process of developing Common Core opinion/argumentative writing at your grade level and the key elements of Common Core narrative writing.
3) Guide students through the process of developing Common Core informational/explanatory writing at your grade level and the Common Core approach to writing across all content areas.
4) Guide students through the process of developing Common Core narrative writing at your grade level.
5) Guide students through the process of developing Common Core research writing at your grade level.
6) Integrate writing across content areas at your grade level.
7) Use baseline, formative, and summative assessments to guide students through the writing process.

**Course Resources**

Included within each unit are readings, resources, and materials available to download, save, and print. Please make sure you access all materials for each unit by clicking on the "Resources" tab to the right of the screen.

At the end of each unit, you will find a KDS Application Toolkit that includes resources that can be used for implementation the next day, e.g., graphic organizers, project ideas, suggested texts and all onscreen graphics that are available to print or download.

**Methods of Instruction and Evaluation**

- Videos (presentations consisting of interviews and classroom footage)
- Readings
- Reflection questions (open-ended questions at intervals throughout the course which ask participants to reflect on the course content, their own practice, and next steps for their practice)
- Checks for Understanding (selected-response quizzes to assess understanding)
- Discussion forum (prompts that engage participants in online dialogue with their cohorts)
- Pre and post surveys

**Academic Honesty**

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as one's own, and includes failing to cite sources for others' ideas, copying material from books or the Internet (including lesson plans and rubrics), and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult plagiarism.org.

**Grading Policy (using rubric 1-4 scale system)**
Total grade for the course is a culmination of performance grades

A: 3.4 – 4.0
B: 2.7 – 3.3
C: 2.0 – 2.6
F: >2.0

**Percentage of Course Credit**
Course grade is determined by the following:

- Reflections                                    40%
- Checks for understanding              60%

In order to complete the requirements of the course, you must complete all course work (e.g., reflections, checks for understanding), including watching all videos and participating in all discussion forums. We do not award partial credit.

**Checks for Understanding and Reflection Rubric**

| Assessment | Underdeveloped (1) | Basic (2) | Proficient (3) | Distinguished (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Checks for understanding | 65% or below | 66-79% | 80-89% | 90-100% |
| Reflection Question | Participant has included little to no content indicating consideration and comprehension of course content.<br><br>Participant has not addressed the questions posed. Participant has copied from the course transcript without synthesis or analysis. | Participant has included little that indicates consideration and comprehension of course content.<br><br>Participant has answered most questions directly but some too briefly. | Participant has included appropriate content from the course content.<br><br>Participant has made thoughtful comments in direct response to the prompts. | Participant has provided rich detail and supporting examples from the course content.<br><br>Participant has made responses to prompts personally meaningful and relevant to his or her teaching practice. |

**Course Calendar**

| Unit 1: Introduction to the Common Core State Standards for Writing |
|---|
| **Objectives**<br>In this unit, you will explore the Common Core writing standards and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model.<br><br>**Outcomes**<br>By the end of this unit, you will be able to integrate the Common Core writing standards and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model into your classroom.<br><br>**Readings:**<br><br>▪ Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects<br>▪ Glossary of Terms, Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, Appendix A<br>▪ "Effective Use of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model" by Douglas Fisher<br>▪ "The Writing Revolution", *The Atlantic*, 2012, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/10/the-writing-revolution/309090/ |

## Unit 2: Writing Opinions/Arguments

**Objectives**
In this unit, you will explore the Common Core writing standards and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model.

**Outcomes**
By the end of this unit, you will be able to integrate the Common Core writing standards and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model into your classroom.

**Resource:** KDS Application Toolkit related to the unit topic that provides project ideas, reading suggestions, and templates to support classroom planning and instruction.

**Readings:**

- Common Core State Standards, Appendix A, the "Argument" section (p. 23) and "The Special Place of Argument in the Standards" (p. 24-25)
- ASCD "Teaching Argument Writing to ELLs"- http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr14/vol71/num07/Teaching-Argument-Writing-to-ELLs.aspx

## Unit 3: Writing Informational/Explanatory Texts

**Objectives**
In this unit, you will explore the key elements of Common Core informational/explanatory writing.

**Outcomes**
By the end of this unit, you will be able to guide students through the process of developing Common Core informational/explanatory writing at your grade level.

**Resource:** KDS Application Toolkit related to the unit topic that provides project ideas, reading suggestions, and templates to support classroom planning and instruction.

**Readings:**

- Appendix A, pages 23, the "Informational/Explanatory Writing" section (p. 23) (http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf) ]
- "Making the Most of Mentor Texts" by Kelly Gallagher, *Educational Leadership*, April 2014

## Unit 4: Writing Narrative Texts

**Objectives**
In this unit, you will explore the key elements of Common Core narrative writing.

**Outcomes**
By the end of this unit, you will be able to guide students through the process of developing Common Core narrative writing at your grade level.

**Resource:** KDS Application Toolkit related to the unit topic that provides project ideas, reading suggestions, and templates to support classroom planning and instruction.

**Readings:**

- Appendix A, pages 23-24, the "Narrative Writing" section (p. 23)
- "Common Core in Action: Narrative Writing" http://www.edutopia.org/blog/common-core-in-action-narrative-writing-heather-wolpert-gawron

## Unit 5: Research and Writing

**Objectives**
In this unit, you will explore the key elements of Common Core research writing.

**Outcomes**
By the end of this unit, you will be able to guide students through the process of developing Common Core research writing at your grade level.

**Resource:** KDS Application Toolkit related to the unit topic that provides project ideas, reading suggestions, and templates to support classroom planning and instruction.

**Readings:**

- "Revamping the Classroom Research Project", Nanci Werner-Burke, April 2014, Volume 71, Number 7

## Unit 6: Writing Across Content Areas

**Objectives**
In this unit, you will explore the Common Core approach to writing across all content areas.

**Outcomes**
By the end of this unit, you will be able to integrate writing across content areas at your grade level.

**Resource:** KDS Application Toolkit related to the unit topic that provides project ideas, reading suggestions, and templates to support classroom planning and instruction.

**Readings:**

- "Reading and Writing across the Curriculum" NCTE
  http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/CC/0203-
  mar2011/CC0203Policy.pdf

## Unit 7: Assessing Student Writing

**Objectives**
In this unit, you will explore a variety of ways to assess student writing, including baseline, formative, and summative assessments.

**Outcomes**
By the end of this unit, you will be able to use baseline, formative, and summative assessments to guide students through the writing process.

**Resource:** KDS Application Toolkit related to the unit topic that provides project ideas, reading suggestions, and templates to support classroom planning and instruction.

**Readings:**

- ASCD, The Bridge between Today's Lesson and Tomorrow's)
  http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar14/vol71/num06/The-Bridge-Between-Today's-Lesson-and-Tomorrow's.aspx

## Unit 8: Epilogue

Course closing and opportunity to reflect back on learning.
You will review the questions you had about the Common Core and writing at the start of the course to see what learning gains have occurred.