

## Independent Study Course Syllabus

**Course Number: LIT 908**  
**Course Title: Poetry for Children**

Online     Distance Learning

**Instructor:** Luetta Reimer  
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**Website:** www.pdcourses.com

**Units: 3**  
**Grade Level: K-8**

### Course Description:

Children naturally love poetry. As toddlers, they thrill to the predictability of nursery rhymes and repeated phrases in simple stories. In kindergarten, they love to do finger plays to "Itsy-Bitsy Spider," and easily memorize the words. As children mature, so does the potential for poetry. It may enrich their lives with its vivid imagery and sound experience. It may complement their learning in almost every subject area. And it may enhance their understanding of complex intellectual and emotional concepts.

This course is designed to help teachers gain confidence in the teaching of poetry--both reading and writing. It introduces rationale, techniques and strategies for sharing poems with children. Teachers will discover the potential of poetry to enrich their classrooms plus practical ideas to inspire and encourage children to enjoy reading and writing poetry themselves.

This course is built on a balance of reading and classroom experience. The texts present both theoretical justification (why it is important to share poems with children, what happens to children when they read poetry, how poems work) and pedagogical suggestions (how to help children enjoy reading poetry, how to encourage children to write poetry, how to choose poetry for the classroom).

In addition to reading and responding to the texts, teachers may select from a series of classroom activities designed to help them create settings and opportunities for their students to both read and write poetry in a positive, affirming learning atmosphere.

The Common Core State Standards for Language Arts as well as the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards have provided the guiding principles and philosophical basis for this course. Participants may be asked to make connections between course work and these standards or the standards of their own states.

**Course Dates:**

Self-paced; students may enroll at any time and take up to one year to complete assignments.

You have up to one year from the date of registration, and no less than three weeks (one week per credit), to complete the course.

**Course Materials:**

**Texts:**

Heard, Georgia. *Awakening The Heart: Exploring Poetry In Elementary And Middle School*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999.

Prelutsky, Jack, ed. *The Random House Book of Poetry for Children*. New York: Random House, 1983.

Materials include a folder with instructions for completing this course, information about Fresno Pacific University, the Center of Professional Development, and the instructor, plus specifics on course policies and procedures.

**Course Requirements:**

To successfully complete this course, participants must submit

1. a one page description of the poetry center selected for use.
2. a lesson plan using the five-day format in Chapter Two, plus an evaluation of the lesson.
3. a one or two page report on two poetry activities as illustrated in Chapter Two.
4. a one page analysis of the poetry "door" best suited for your classroom.
5. a "toolbox" of the five poetry tools used in your classroom.

See the "Schedule of Topics and Assignments" for more details on these assignments.

All work should be typed and sent to the instructor at one time when the course is completed. Please keep a copy; work will not be returned. Students have one full year to finish the course but should not send completed work in less than three weeks from registration.

**Send completed work by email attachments to: [Lmreimer@fresno.edu](mailto:Lmreimer@fresno.edu)**

**OR**

**Mail all the above items to:**

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### **National Standards:**

This course is designed to reinforce and support the English Language Arts Standards of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSS). The Anchor Standards for Reading (Grades K-8) are listed here:

### **Key Ideas and Details**

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

### **Craft and Structure**

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

### **Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

## **National Board for Professional Teaching Standards:**

### **Five Core Propositions**

In addition to the content standards referenced above, this course supports the following core propositions that characterize National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs).

#### **Proposition 1: Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning**

- NBCTs are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They believe all students can learn.
- They treat students equitably. They recognize the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another and they take account for these differences in their practice.
- NBCTs understand how students develop and learn.
- They respect the cultural and family differences students bring to their classroom.
- They are concerned with their students' self-concept, their motivation and the effects of learning on peer relationships.

#### **Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students.**

- NBCTs have mastery over the subject(s) they teach. They have a deep understanding of the history structure and real-world applications of the subject.
- They have skill and experience in teaching it, and they are very familiar with the skills gaps and preconceptions students may bring to the subject.
- They are able to use diverse instructional strategies to teach for understanding.

#### **Proposition 3: Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning.**

- NBCTs deliver effective instruction. They move fluently through a range of instructional techniques, keeping students motivated, engaged and focused.
- They know how to engage students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to meet instructional goals.
- NBCTs know how to assess the progress of individual students as well as the class as a whole.
- They use multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding, and they can clearly explain student performance to parents.

#### **Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience.**

- NBCTs model what it means to be an educated person—they read, they question, they create and they are willing to try new things.
- They are familiar with learning theories and instructional strategies and stay abreast of current issues in American education.

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- They critically examine their practice on a regular basis to deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate new findings into their practice.

**Proposition 5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities.**

- NBCTs collaborate with others to improve student learning.
- They are leaders and actively know how to seek and build partnerships with community groups and businesses.
- They work with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development and staff development.
- They can evaluate school progress and the allocation of resources in order to meet state and local education objectives.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Teachers who enroll in this course will be able to

- 1) define and discuss poetic forms and devices. (CCSS 4, 5 & 6; NBPTS 2, 3 & 4)
- 2) utilize a range of techniques and strategies for teaching poetry with confidence. (CCSS 3 & 7; NBPTS 1-4)
- 3) increase enthusiasm for poetry and its role in the classroom. (NBPTS 2-4)
- 4) integrate poetry throughout the curriculum. (CCSS 1, 2, 3, 7 & 9; NBPTS 1-4)
- 5) select appropriate resources and materials for teaching poetry. (CCSS 1, 2, 3 & 9; NBPTS 4)
- 6) prepare lesson plans to effectively share poetry in the classroom. (NBPTS 2-4)
- 7) connect lessons to state or national standards. (NBPTS Prop 5)

**Schedule of Topics and Assignments**

Teaching Poetry

1. Read the entire text, *Awakening The Heart: Exploring Poetry In Elementary And Middle School*, by Georgia Heard. The reading may be most valuable for students who first scan the assignments based on Chapters 1-4.
2. Read the introduction to *The Random House Book of Poetry for Children*. Scan the rest of the book noting the poems by great traditional authors such as Frost, Blake, and Lewis Carroll mixed with many by more contemporary writers, all organized into useful sections.
3. On pages 7-15 of *Awakening The Heart: Exploring Poetry In Elementary And Middle School*, Heard describes ten possible poetry "centers." Select one to replicate in your own classroom. In a one-page reflection, describe your center, identifying materials used, instructions given to students, and procedures followed. How did your students respond?\*
4. Consider the "A Poem as Unfolding Bud" format illustrated on pages 30-34 in Heard. The example shows a five-day unit using a Langston Hughes poem. Select any poem appropriate for your class and design a similar unit.

You may follow the accepted lesson plan format for your district or a format that is functional for your teaching situation. While it should be specific and detailed, it need not be more than one or two pages. Each plan should include the following elements:

- a. Grade level
- b. Title and author of poem
- c. Learning objectives
- d. Outline for five-day presentation
- e. Methods for evaluating or assessing student progress and growth
- f. State or national standards addressed

Evaluate\* the success of this lesson. Write a short paragraph responding to each of these questions.

- a. How fully were your objectives met?
  - b. How did students respond?
  - c. How might you adjust the lesson or reinforce the concepts taught?
5. Select and try two of the other activities in Chapter Two. Consider "Performing Poetry," "Poetry Rituals," "Poem as Gifts," "Poems on Desks," "Self-Portrait Anthology," and "Craft Groups."

In a one or two page report, describe the activities selected and the procedures followed. How did students respond?\*

6. Which of the "doors" discussed in Chapter Three might work best for your class? Why? Write a one-page analysis of your choice.
7. Select five of the "tools" listed by Heard on page 65 in the "Poetry Toolboxes" section. Develop and use activities or mini-lessons to help your students understand and utilize these five "tools." Identify each activity selected, describe how each was presented, and report on student responses.\*

**\*NOTE: If you are completing this course on summer break or if you are not currently teaching, you may omit the student responses called for in #3, #4, #5, and #7 (but prepare all of the activities for future use). Instead of teaching and evaluating the activities, compile and include a short annotated bibliography of five or six poetry collections that would be useful in your classroom.**

**Evidence of Learning:**

- Instructor observed evidence of understanding of course objectives as demonstrated through student's reflective writing assignments. (Assignments 4-7)
- Instructor observed evidence of understanding literary concepts and terminology as demonstrated through student's reflective writing assignments. (Assignments 4-8)
- Student included the use of critical thinking skills. (Assignments 4-8)
- Student demonstrated an understanding of course objectives by identifying how course content and terminology may be used in his/her teaching. (Assignments 4-8)
- Student demonstrated his/her understanding of effective design of lesson plans and made connections to state content and/or professional teaching standards. (Assignments 5, 6, & 8)

**Grading Policies and Rubric:**

Grades will be determined using the following percentages:

Assignment 3:	15%
Assignment 4:	25%
Assignment 5:	20%
Assignment 6:	10%
Assignment 7:	30%

Total scores determine the final grade:

90 - 100% = A

80 - 89% = B

79% or below = no credit

All coursework must reflect a minimum "B" quality to receive credit. The discernment between an A and a B is at the discretion of the instructor, based on the quality of work submitted (see assignment rubric). Participants may request either a letter grade (A or B) or credit (CR). Coursework falling short of a "B" or CR grade will be returned with further instructions. Every person with a score of 80% or above will receive three semester units of credit.

**Final Course Grade and Transcripts:**

When all work for the course has been completed, students will need to log on to the Center for Professional Development website (<http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd>) to "Submit Grade Form". Once the instructor fills out the grade form online, students may log back in to request their Grade Report as well as order transcripts online. Please allow at least two weeks for the final grade to be posted. For more information see the Independent Studies Policies and Procedures that were sent to you when you received your course materials, or in your online course. They are available, also at <http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd> - under General Information > CPD Policies.

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<b>Scoring Rubric Type of Assignment</b>	<b>90 – 100 points Exceptional</b>	<b>80 – 89 points Adequate</b>	<b>70 – 79 points Not Acceptable</b>
Written responses	Student's written responses show an exceptional investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. The work submitted by the student is original and thorough. The student effectively organizes key insights and demonstrates evidence of interaction with the texts.	Student's written responses show an adequate investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. The work submitted by the student is complete, but lacks thoroughness and originality. The student sufficiently organizes insights and demonstrates evidence of interaction with the readings.	Student's written responses show little investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. The work submitted by the student does not show adequate thought or effort.
Lesson design	Lesson plans show an exceptional investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. Student consistently makes connections to local instructional goals/standards and implements research-based strategies and approaches.	Lesson plans show an adequate investment of time, energy and thoughtful reflection. Student makes some connections to local instructional goals/standards and research-based strategies and approaches.	Lesson plans submitted by the student do not show adequate thought or effort, and may not address specific goals.
Lesson evaluations	Student includes the use of critical thinking and reflection in the evaluation of lessons implemented.	Student includes the use of reflection in the evaluation of lessons implemented, but may lack sufficient detailed analysis.	Student does not demonstrate critical thinking or reflection in the evaluation of lessons implemented.
Presentation	Student effectively organizes key insights into a thoughtful and well-written presentation.	Student includes several key insights in an adequately written response.	Student response lacks key insights and is carelessly written.

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### Instructor/Student Contact

Students are warmly invited to contact the instructor at any time with concerns, questions, or comments related to course work. They are specifically asked to do so after the completion of Assignment 4. At the completion of the course, the instructor will comment on the student's work and make suggestions, if needed.

### Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

All people participating in the educational process at Fresno Pacific University are expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be handled according to the procedures set forth in the Fresno Pacific University Catalogue. URL <http://www.fresno.edu>.

### CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

CE 1. Demonstrate proficient written communication by articulating a clear focus, synthesizing arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to inform and persuade others, and present information applicable to targeted use.
CE 2. Demonstrate comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.
CE 3. Reflect on their personal and professional growth and provide evidence of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and professional improvement.
CE 4. Apply critical thinking competencies by generating probing questions, recognizing underlying assumptions, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, and applying their understandings to the professional setting.
CE 5. Reflect on values that inspire high standards of professional and ethical behavior as they pursue excellence in applying new learning to their chosen field.
CE 6. Identify information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, organize that information, identify the best sources of information for a given enquiry, locate and critically evaluate sources, and accurately and effectively share that information.

### FRESNO PACIFIC UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

<b>Student Learning Outcomes Oral Communication:</b> Students will <i>exhibit</i> clear, engaging, and confident oral communication – in both individual and group settings – and will critically <i>evaluate</i> content and delivery components.
<b>Written Communication:</b> Students will <i>demonstrate</i> proficient written communication by <i>articulating</i> a clear focus, <i>synthesizing</i> arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to <i>inform</i> and <i>persuade</i> others.
<b>Content Knowledge:</b> Students will <i>demonstrate</i> comprehension of content-specific knowledge

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and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.
<b>Reflection:</b> Students will <i>reflect</i> on their personal and professional growth and <i>provide evidence</i> of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and vocational improvement.
<b>Critical Thinking:</b> Students will <i>apply</i> critical thinking competencies by <i>generating</i> probing questions, <i>recognizing</i> underlying assumptions, <i>interpreting</i> and <i>evaluating</i> relevant information, and <i>applying</i> their understandings to new situations.
<b>Moral Reasoning:</b> Students will <i>identify</i> and <i>apply</i> moral reasoning and ethical decision-making skills, and <i>articulate</i> the norms and principles underlying a Christian world-view.
<b>Service:</b> Students will <i>demonstrate</i> service and reconciliation as a way of leadership.
<b>Cultural and Global Perspective:</b> Students will <i>identify</i> personal, cultural, and global perspectives and will employ these perspectives to <i>evaluate</i> complex systems.
<b>Quantitative Reasoning:</b> Students will accurately <i>compute</i> calculations and symbolic operations and <i>explain</i> their use in a field of study.
<b>Information Literacy:</b> Students will <i>identify</i> information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, <i>explain</i> how that information is organized, <i>identify</i> the best sources of information for a given enquiry, <i>locate</i> and critically <i>evaluate</i> sources, and accurately and effectively <i>share</i> that information.