
Independent Study Course Syllabus

Course Number: LIT 912
Course Title: African Folktales

Online Distance Learning

Instructor: Luetta Reimer Phone number: (559) 255-2308 Email: Lmreimer@fresno.edu Website: www.pdcourses.com	Units: 3 Grade Level: K-8
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Course Description:

Teachers who take this course will use the texts' resources to build and teach lessons that focus on African folktales. In addition to reading the folktales in the texts, teachers will also find and incorporate tales from online sources. By gaining exposure to the variety of resources available and by incorporating African folktales into their classrooms, students of this course will discover new ways to build skills and sensitivities in reading, comprehension, vocabulary, listening, logical thinking, relationships, ethical living, cultural understanding, and geography.

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:

Mandela, Nelson. *Nelson Mandela's Favorite African Folktales*. W. W. Norton, 2002.
Vernon-Jackson, Hugh. *African Folk Tales*. Dover Publications, 1999.

Course Requirements:

To successfully complete this course, students must

- 1) read all of the folktales in the course texts and demonstrate thoughtful analyses of eight tales through brief reflective written responses
- 2) collect and analyze four (4) additional resources (from other texts or the Internet)
- 3) design and teach three lessons/projects appropriate for their teaching level, each incorporating at least one of the tales
- 4) identify national and/or state/district standards met by the lessons/projects

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

OR

Mail all the above items to:

Luetta Reimer
1549 S. Lind Avenue
Fresno, California 93727

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-12) 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

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- 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 I: 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.
- 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 complete this course will be able to

- 1) identify the unique features of the folktale genre. (CCSS 1-9)
- 2) describe and discuss the African folktale after reading the texts and supplementary resources. (CCSS 1-9; NBPTS Props. 1-4)
- 3) recognize and describe the rationale for using African folktales in the classroom. (CCSS 1-9; NBPTS Props. 1-4)
- 4) select appropriate tales to meet specific educational goals. (CCSS 1-9; NBPTS Props. 1-4)
- 5) use African folktales to teach contemporary issues, character building, and human values. (NBPTS Prop. 1)
- 6) identify how teaching the African folktale reinforces state and national standards. (NBPTS Prop. 5)
- 7) design lessons for teaching African folktales in the classroom. (CCSS 1-9; NBPTS Props. 1-4)

Schedule of Topics and Assignments:

Please note: Word count guidelines for written responses are approximate; they are provided to give you a general sense of the length expectation for each assignment.

- 1) Read all of the folktales in the course texts.
- 2) Using a literature handbook or some other reference source, define “folktale” and identify the major categories of tales, such as trickster tales, animal tales, and magical tales.
- 3) Select a total of eight tales from the two texts. For each of these selected tales, write a reflective response of approximately 250 words. Include your observations on the nature and/or characteristic traits of the tale (using categories identified in #2), what students should be able to learn from the reading, and how the tale might be used in a classroom like yours.

- 4) Prepare an annotated bibliography (including at least four items) of other folktale resources, using printed texts, Internet sites, or other sources. You may review tales themselves or sources providing information about African folktales.
- 5) Design and teach three lessons or projects, each incorporating a folktale. Deliberately select a variety of approaches or methodologies for your lessons. You may follow the accepted lesson plan format for your district or a plan 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. Date presented
 - c. Folktale used
 - d. Lesson objectives
 - e. Outline of presentation procedures
 - f. Methods for evaluating or assessing student progress and growth
 - g. State or national standards addressed
- 6) Evaluate the success of each of these lessons/projects. Write three short paragraphs responding to 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?

Note: If you are not teaching when taking this course, you may compensate for the teaching and assessment aspects of the assignments above by preparing an overlay or power point presentation highlighting the definition and characteristic traits of folktales.

Scoring Rubric	90 – 100 points Exceptional	80 – 89 points Adequate	70 – 79 points Not Acceptable
Type of Assignment			
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.

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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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Evidence of Learning:

- 1) Student demonstrated evidence of understanding of course objectives through reflective writing assignments. (Assignment 3)
- 2) Student demonstrated evidence of understanding of course objectives through presentation of lesson plans and projects. (Assignments 5 & 6)
- 3) Student demonstrated creative use of a variety of learning methodologies and strategies. (Assignment 5)
- 4) Student included the use of critical thinking skills and made connections to his or her state content and/or professional teaching standards. (Assignments 5 & 6)
- 5) Student’s writing reflected thoughtful engagement with the course readings. (Assignment 3)
- 6) Student demonstrated healthy educational perspectives on cultural and global issues. (Assignments 3 & 5)

Grading Policies and Rubric:

Grades will be determined using the following percentages:

- Written responses to eight tales: 40%
- Bibliography of African folktale resources: 20%
- Three lesson plans: 30%
- Three evaluations: 10%

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 Credit grade will be returned with further instructions. Every person with a score of 80% or above will receive three semester units of credit.

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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 finishing Assignment 2. At the completion of the course, the instructor will comment on the student's work and make suggestions, if needed.

Final Course Grade and Transcripts

When all work for the course has been completed, students will need to logon 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.

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

Student Learning Outcomes Oral Communication: Students will *exhibit* clear, engaging, and confident oral communication – in both individual and group settings – and will critically *evaluate* content and delivery components.

Written Communication: Students will *demonstrate* proficient written communication by *articulating* a clear focus, *synthesizing* arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to *inform* and *persuade* others.

Content Knowledge: Students will *demonstrate* comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.

Reflection: Students will *reflect* on their personal and professional growth and *provide evidence* of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and vocational improvement.

Critical Thinking: Students will *apply* critical thinking competencies by *generating* probing questions, *recognizing* underlying assumptions, *interpreting* and *evaluating* relevant information, and *applying* their understandings to new situations.

Moral Reasoning: Students will *identify* and *apply* moral reasoning and ethical decision-making skills, and *articulate* the norms and principles underlying a Christian world-view.

Service: Students will *demonstrate* service and reconciliation as a way of leadership.

Cultural and Global Perspective: Students will *identify* personal, cultural, and global perspectives and will employ these perspectives to *evaluate* complex systems.

Quantitative Reasoning: Students will accurately *compute* calculations and symbolic operations and *explain* their use in a field of study.

Information Literacy: Students will *identify* information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, *explain* how that information is organized, *identify* the best sources of information for a given enquiry, *locate* and critically *evaluate* sources, and accurately and effectively *share* that information.

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