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Improving Writing Skills through Autobiographical Application

Syllabus



Dr. Anne F. Goiran-Bevelhimer

IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS THROUGH AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL APPLICATION

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| Address: | P.O. Box 312, Galeton, CO 80622 |
| Graduate Credit: | 3.0 sem. hrs. graduate credits/ 4.5 CEU |
| Graduate Prefix: | See accrediting university for prefix and number |
| Course Schedule: | Asynchronous. |

6-week minimum enrollment to one year maximum, from your date of registration.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Improve writing skills through autobiographical writing activities for teachers and their students, using photographs and writing prompts, to promote personalizing history, and the writing process.

*This course meets **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** for K-12 Anchor Standards for Writing 3, 4,5,6,7,8,9, and 10.*

Teachers taking this course will focus on their grade level or content area expectations of the CCSS and their State Standards.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify and gather relevant resources from print and digital sources as well as oral interviews to develop autobiographical stories.
2. Interpret the value of content and writing structure of a variety of autobiographical genres: biographies, autobiographies, memoirs and creative nonfiction.
3. Use a variety of writing genres to transform personal narratives into clear and coherent writing to entertain and inform a variety of audiences.

4. Demonstrate the process of improving writing skills through brainstorming, planning drafting, revising and editing.
5. Analyze effective writing techniques, “well-chosen details and well-structured event sequence” (CCSS W3) to write autobiographical stories.
6. Explore how point of view, values, attitudes represented in the genre of ones’ autobiographical writing can impact comprehension, sympathy, and “discriminate and justify a position” (Colorado Standard RR: 4)
7. Summarize the value of reading and writing autobiographical stories as a personal point of view related to the larger view of the history of mankind.
8. Evaluate the process of improving writing skills as a writer through reading, researching, and writing autobiographical stories.
9. Synthesis the value of using autobiographical applications (researching, reading and writing) in the classroom as a way to help students meet the rigor of the CCSS for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening.

TEXTS, READINGS, INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:

Improving Writing Skills through Autobiographical Application by Anne Goiran-Bevelhimer, Ed.D.

The text will be sent upon registration.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

This course is delivered asynchronously; you may start anytime and will work one-on-one with the instructor. You are expected to invest 90 hours of independent study to this course. You can submit all work and complete the course anytime between 6 weeks to one year from date of registration.

Use the text, outside readings, activities and writing assignments to complete the following course requirements:

- I. Writing Project: Use the exercises in the text to develop the Autobiographical Writing Project. A minimum of 10 stories is required of the 17 possible suggestions. Each story is worth 10 pts.**
 - Recognize the wealth of writing ideas from one’s life experiences and the connection to others, events, time and place in history.
 - Gather biographical information from a variety of sources, evaluating the quality and relevance of the sources.
 - Acquire resources from electronic, print and interviews; gather photographs, documents, newspaper articles, and other family memorabilia to document one’s history and writing with credibility and accuracy.
 - Choose from an assortment of people, places, and events in one’s history to develop autobiographical narratives.
 - Produce autobiographical narratives using clear and coherent writing, supported by documents.
 - Apply writing skills to create autobiographical narratives that entertain, inform and provide documentation to support claims.

- Transform personal history into narratives (or creative nonfiction) in a variety of writing genres.
- Demonstrate the writing process: research and evaluating information, brainstorming ideas and text structure, journaling, drafting, editing and revision, and final publication.

Writing Project: Culminate the writing exercises in the text in a formal presentation, either print or digital, showing a minimum of 10 autobiographical narratives of a minimum of 1-2 pages each, using effective writing crafts, with appropriate details and sequence of events, prepared for a variety of audiences, showing a minimum of one autobiographical narrative rewritten for publication. A minimum of 10 stories valued at 10 pts. each, is required to earn a grade for this course.

II. Classroom Application: 30 pts.

Create a lesson plan or unit plan that includes the following:

- Instruction on gathering and sorting primary, secondary and tertiary sources of information on biographical history from a wide variety of resources: print, digital and oral interviews.
- Use autobiographical stories as mentor texts for writing skills. Use autobiographical stories from personal collection, outside reading, and student examples. Highlight writing structure and crafts.
- Use technology and print sources to produce and publish autobiographical writings to share with others.
- Submit a written lesson plan / unit plan. (1-2 pages)

III. Outside Reading and Writing Assignments: Total 45 pts.

1. **Two Autobiographies/Biographies: 15 pts. each for a total of 30 pts.** Explore point of view, values, attitudes represented in autobiographical and biographical writing by reading a minimum of 2 autobiographies or biographical works. Write a 2-4-page paper summarizing content and comparing writing styles and points of view. What did you learn that was valuable to writing autobiographical stories? How can these texts be used as mentor texts for your writing program? What skills, crafts and structures did you learn that you could use in your writing or teaching of writing?
2. **Review of Writing Strategies: 15 pts.** Investigate outside sources on writing strategies specific to the genre of autobiographical or biographical writing. Choose a minimum of 1 book or 3 journal articles on the topic of autobiographical writing. Summarize findings, and focus the review on what you learned and could use in your own writing and teaching of writing. 2-4 pages.

IV. Reflective Essay: 25 pts.

Write a personal and professional reflection essay on the value of writing autobiographical stories. Write a 5-page paper, commenting on the following topics. Focus on autobiographical writing as an authentic and practical form of writing that connects with other writing genres.

- Teacher as Writer: Appraise the value of improving your writing skills through writing autobiographical stories.

- Teacher of Writing: Reflect how writing autobiographical stories engages students in authentic writing and helps them improve their writing skills to meet grade level state or Common Core standards.
- Summarize the value of writing autobiographical stories in the scope of all genres of writing: narrative, informational writing and the genre of creative nonfiction.

Autobiographical writing leads to integrating other people’s life histories with our own. Writing our life story helps us to recognize the uniqueness and universality of the human experience. Our stories matter; the good ones, the happy ones, the sad ones and the ones full of pain. We matter to our immediate family and to the human family.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND SCALE:

Grade Distribution:

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| I. Writing Project | 100 - 170 pts. |
| II. Classroom Application: Lesson Plan / Unit Plan | 30 pts. |
| III. Outside Reading and Writing Assignments: | |
| a. 2 autobiographies/ biographies - 15 pts. each x 2 | 30 pts. |
| b. Review of Writing Strategies | 15 pts. |
| IV. Reflective Essay | 25 pts. |

Total

200 points

Grade Scale:

100 points must be represented the “Writing Project” for any grade to be assigned. The balance of the grade is represented by a percentage of the completion of the classroom application, written review of outside reading and reflection essay.

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| A | 91-100% | 100 pts. min. required +100 pts. for balance of assignments. |
| B | 81-90% | 100 pts. min. required + 81-90 pts. for balance of assignments. |
| C | 71-80% | 100 pts. min. required + 71-80 pts. for balance of assignments |
| D | 61-70% | 100 pts. min. required + 61-70 pts. for balance of assignments |
| F | Less than 60 % | 100 pts. min. required + less than 60 pts. for balance of assignments |
| Incomplete | | Less than 100 pts. min. for ‘Writing Project’ |

If you register for graduate credit, you will earn a grade based on the grade scale and distribution described in the syllabus. If you register for Continuing Education Units you will be graded Pass/Fail based on the completion of your work. If you do not register for credit, you will receive a Certificate of Completion from College Courses Online.