

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELAX)

ELAX 500 Activating Creativity through Literacy in ELA (6-12) 3 credits

Creativity is often undervalued in schools because it isn't a requirement of K–12 education. However, as we standardize the definition of creativity through initiatives such as the Partnership for 21st Century Learning, we can propel creative thinking forward as a skill that helps students meet Common Core English Language Arts (ELA) standards and prepares them for college and careers. Creative literacy is the ability to participate in creative processes and use creative thinking to see beyond what exists. Students who are creative can synthesize information to form new ideas, ask complex questions to build on concepts, view problems through multiple lenses, and present innovative solutions to challenges. In this course, you will gain the tools, techniques, and resources you need to build creative literacy into your ELA curriculum. You will also learn strategies to help students become independent, self-directed learners who can use creative thinking to explore, discover, problem solve, and innovate while developing literacy skills that will help them succeed beyond the classroom. By the end of the course, you will be able to design literacy units, projects, and assessments that foster student creativity in your middle or high school classroom, and offer feedback on creative works in ways that support students' continued growth. This course is offered through Advancement Course.

ELAX 501 Activating Creativity through Literacy in ELA (K-5) 3 credits

Creativity is often undervalued in schools because it isn't a requirement of K–12 education. However, as we standardize the definition of creativity through initiatives such as the Partnership for 21st Century Learning, we can propel creative thinking forward as a skill that helps students meet Common Core English Language Arts (ELA) standards and prepares them for college and careers. At the elementary level, students can cultivate creativity through reading, writing, drawing, play, and imagination. Students who are creative can synthesize information to form new ideas, ask complex questions to build on concepts, view problems through multiple lenses, and present innovative solutions to challenges. In this course, you will gain the tools, techniques, and resources you need to build creative literacy into your ELA curriculum. You will also learn strategies to help students become independent, self-directed learners who can use creative thinking to explore, discover, problem solve, and innovate while developing literacy skills that will help them succeed beyond the classroom. By the end of the course, you will be able to design literacy units, projects, and assessments that foster student creativity in your K–5 classroom, and offer feedback on creative works in ways that support students' continued growth. This course is offered through Advancement Course.

ELAX 502 Active Reading vs Passive Reading: Teaching Students to Become Better Readers 3 credits

Reading involves so much more than passing one's eyes over rows of printed words, whether the words are on paper or in digital form. Reading with an active and engaged brain is the crux of learning through reading. This course will explore the elements of the brain used in reading, according to the latest brain research. Strategies to engage students' brains in active processing during letter/word decoding, fluency development, vocabulary acquisition and elaboration, and comprehension of text at different levels of meaning will be shared. The similarities and differences between reading in print and electronic formats will be investigated, especially in relationship to active reading. Methods to inspire passive readers and struggling readers will be examined, with the end goal to build active reading strategies in every student. This course is offered through Advancement Course.

ELAX 503 Close Reading 3 credits

Close reading skills are essential for students' success not just in language arts, but in all content areas. As students navigate both print and digital texts, these skills enable them to be critical consumers of information. A key requirement of the Common Core State Standards, close reading teaches students to examine different aspects of a text over multiple readings. In this course, you will explore the definition, practice, and importance of close reading in the classroom. You'll develop strategies for modeling close reading to your students, reading fiction and nonfiction, and tackling complex and rigorous texts. In addition, you'll learn how to apply close reading techniques to visual and digital texts as students take in more and more information online. Using the tools and techniques from this course, you will be able to teach your students to be lifelong, critical readers who can confidently interpret any type of text they encounter. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 504 Comprehension Strategies for Effective Reader 3 credits

Reading is not a passive activity and should be full of thinking, questions, reflections and synthesizing whether reading print or digital texts. The need for students to become effective readers goes beyond the expectations of Common Core Standards and state testing. Effective readers are also strong problem solvers, talented writers and deep thinkers. Teaching comprehension strategies is one way to empower your students to become effective readers. This course will explore several comprehension strategies and their application in the classroom. You will also learn techniques for implementing the strategies during all phases of reading; before, during and after. Finally, you will investigate the power of think a-louds and read a-louds and gain insight into how to successfully utilize them in your classroom. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 505 Enabling Self-Regulated Learning Through Journalin 3 credits

Self-regulated learning (SRL) theory and research empowers us to equip our students with 21st-century learning skills. With SRL, we can train students to be cognizant of and, most importantly, be in control of their thinking processes, behavior, and motivations for and feelings about learning. These are skills that all students can acquire and that will serve them well for the rest of their lives. In this course, you will examine self-regulation by interacting with the ideas of 20th-century American educator and progressive thinker John Dewey, whose theories about cognition and teaching practice continue to influence current-day pedagogy. You'll explore the phases of SRL and how you can use journaling to capture, organize, and reflect on the thinking both you and your students already do. In addition, you'll cultivate techniques to help students take responsibility for their own learning and to create a classroom environment where students feel comfortable learning from their mistakes. Using the strategies from this course, you will be able to instill in your students the skills and motivation they need to plan, monitor, and reflect upon their own learning. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 506 Everyone Has a Story to Tell: Narrative in the Classroom 3 credits

Stories are how we connect as a culture. By infusing personal stories, or narrative, into the curriculum, a teacher can inspire students to be creative and expressive, while supporting their connection to those around them and their literacy skills. This course is designed to engage fifth- to 12th-grade teachers of all disciplines in teaching personal narrative in the classroom. You will learn what narrative writing is and how it supports students' reading, writing, and comprehension as well as critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills. You will cultivate techniques for teaching the components of effective narrative essays and how to build richly crafted personal narratives. In addition, you will learn about the writing process, group work, peer review, formative and summative assessment, and lesson planning. Using the tools from this course, both you and your students will learn the power, joy, and versatility of narrative in the classroom. After all, everyone has a story to tell. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 507 Helping Kids Write 3 credits

Writing is a complex activity. Many students think of it as a skill or a talent (one that they may or may not possess), but writing is much more than that. Writing is a means of investigation and expression for learning in all grades and disciplines. Therefore, it is essential for every student to know how to write effectively. In recent years, ideas about why and how to teach writing have evolved dramatically. In this course, you will examine effective approaches and best practices for helping students learn to write. You'll learn how to reframe writing as a process that everyone can master, and provide the tools for guiding students through this process, including identifying structure, purpose, and audience. In addition, you will develop standards-based lessons that also engage students' creativity and expression. Writing can enrich learning and provide meaningful learning experiences. Using the tools from this course, you'll be able to build the fluency of your students' writing and effectively assess writing to direct instruction. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 508 Implementing Creative Projects in Literacy 3 credits

Our students will be entering a world and job market that is full of unforeseen challenges that require brand-new solutions. We can't teach them the answers to unknown problems; we can only teach them how to think creatively, so they can strategically approach and effectively address these challenges as they arise. Creativity is so important that it is embedded in many of the local, state, and national standards we use in our schools, including the Common Core State Standards. In this course, you will explore the connection between literacy and creativity to better understand how students in elementary English language arts classrooms can effectively articulate their ideas, collaborate, and communicate with one another. You will learn the positive outcomes associated with creativity, including improved communication, cooperation, self-esteem, and critical-thinking skills. To help improve your students' creativity, you will study best practices for developing and implementing creative literacy projects that integrate the arts, tips for offering constructive feedback, and strategies that allow students to work independently. With the knowledge you gain from this course, you will be equipped to teach creatively in your language arts classroom and prepare students for dynamic and creative lives and careers. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 509 Integrating Common Core Literacy Standards Across Subjects, Grades 6-12 3 credits

Literacy is an essential skill no matter what subject students are learning or what career field they're going into. But when you already have a great deal of important content to teach students about your subject area, adding Common Core literacy standards can feel daunting. However, when done well, integrating literacy into your lessons can improve both students' reading skills and their subject area proficiencies. In this course, you will review the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for literacy and how they impact non-English Language Arts subjects such as math, science, and social studies. You'll cultivate practical resources and best practices that will help you integrate literacy into your classroom to achieve these new standards. For example, you'll see how you can revise existing lessons and prompts to integrate meaningful literacy activities that reflect CCSS, and develop assessments that determine and monitor students' fluency in literacy. Using the techniques from this course, you'll be able to seamlessly and effectively blend Common Core literacy standards into your subject area to set your students up for educational and career success. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 510 Literature to Teach Life Lessons 3 credits

A person's emotional intelligence is shaped by his or her childhood experience. If nurtured and strengthened, social-emotional development benefits a student's health, relationships, and academic achievement. On the other hand, if a student's emotional intelligence is not developed, it can lead to severe personal deficits and possible societal costs. In this course, you will learn how to assess your students' social-emotional intelligence and use classroom strategies to support their development. You will discover the power of using literature to teach valuable life lessons, and how to create an affective, literature-rich curriculum that promotes social-emotional intelligence. Promoting social-emotional development in the entire school as well as at home amplifies the impact of your efforts in the classroom, so you will also cultivate several techniques to initiate these changes. With the strategies from this course, you will be prepared to use stories to enrich your students' lives and learning and give them social and emotional skills that will benefit them in the classroom and beyond. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 511 Makerspaces in the School Library 3 credits

So much of our culture is about consumption. We spend hours consuming social media posts and streaming content, and our students also spend many hours of their school days consuming information to reproduce on a test. That's why makerspaces are so important: They provide a time and space for students to create rather than consume, and they give students opportunities to develop innovative skills that will serve them in academia and beyond. In this course, you will learn how to plan, create, manage, and facilitate your own unique, meaningful, and relevant makerspace. You'll develop strategies to design both physical and digital tools for your makerspace; incorporate assessment and digital badging; and choose effective, budget-friendly makerspace products. Through a survey of academic literature and real-life examples, you will examine best practices for establishing makerspaces and gather several ideas for makerspace challenges and prompts to inspire students to create. Using the resources and techniques from this course, you'll be able to nurture your students' creativity and foster a culture of making and creating in your library. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 513 Preparing Students for College: Teaching Writing Across Content Areas 3 credits

Although students often think of writing as an activity they encounter only in English Language Arts class, we know that students need to be able to write about any subject area to succeed in college and their future careers. In this course, you will examine the methods and materials that are best-suited for teaching writing in diverse content areas to prepare students for college-level writing. You will review theories and best practices of teaching writing across content areas, including the foundational concepts and history of Writing Across the Curriculum. You'll create writing assignments that bring together students' writing skills and their knowledge of your subject area. In addition, you'll cultivate strategies for offering helpful, supportive feedback on students' writing. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to implement engaging writing assignments in your classroom, regardless of what subject area you teach, to help prepare your students to communicate successfully in college and beyond. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 514 Read Out! Building Students' Literacy and Love of Reading Through Read Alouds 3 credits

You've probably heard all about the benefits of reading aloud to your students. But what if you've never made time for read alouds before, or if you have, how do you know if they're having the impact you hope? In this course, you will learn how build your read-aloud times from the ground up. You'll develop strategies for choosing the right texts, structuring your time, and engaging diverse learners. Whether you're looking to motivate reluctant readers or challenge skilled readers (or a little bit of both), you'll be able to create a plan for enhancing comprehension skills, building vocabulary, and developing students' love of reading. Regardless of what subject you teach, you can use the tools from this course to create a robust read-aloud classroom environment and inspire greater engagement in reading. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 515 Reimagining Literature: Using Graphic Novels in the Classroom 3 credits

Often, teachers don't consider including graphic novels in their curriculum because they believe they lack the academic rigor and relevance found in traditional literature. However, this literary form has tremendous educational potential in secondary English language arts (ELA) classrooms. In this course, you'll learn how graphic novels can provide you with opportunities to develop your students' media literacy, teach essential nonfiction and fiction standards, engage your students in high-level analysis and discussions, and foster your students' creativity and enthusiasm for reading. You'll acquire tools that will help you successfully integrate graphic novels into your ELA curriculum and study specific techniques for reaching English language learners. In addition, you'll examine how to use the form's unique access points to expand your students' proficiency with language, close reading strategies, critical thinking and analysis, and literacy skills. By the end of the course, you'll recognize the scholastic value of graphic novels and be ready to incorporate them into your ELA instruction. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 516 Sustained Silent Reading 3 credits

Reading is an essential part of all school subjects and one of the most vital life skills with which you can equip children. But with so many distractions competing for students' attention, how do you ensure that they gain the skills they need to become strong, independent readers? A silent sustained reading program (SSR) refers to setting aside a quiet, uninterrupted period of time, either daily or weekly, in which students choose something to read that is of high interest to them. The well-documented positive outcomes of SSR include: increased reading comprehension and critical thinking skills, enhanced vocabulary and spelling abilities, and, perhaps most significantly, the instilling of a lifelong love of reading. In this course, you will learn techniques for how to schedule consistent SSR time, help students select texts, and ensure that the program is building their comprehension skills. Whether you're new or experienced with SSR, you will leave this course knowing how to implement a successful SSR program to motivate, excite, and benefit readers of all levels. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 517 Teaching Media Literacy in a Post-Truth World 3 credits

There's no denying the role media plays in our lives. From advances in mobile technology to the expansion of social media and more, we're bombarded with news and people's reactions to it around the clock. Although topics in media can be contentious, they also open doors to powerful social and educational experiences. If you can teach today's students to engage in media with a fair and open mindset, you will set them up for success not only in their educational pursuits but also in their social lives. This course has a few key goals. First, you will explore how to evaluate and respond to media. You'll examine what about media conversations makes you comfortable or uncomfortable and how your responses to media can impact your position. Next, you will learn how to evaluate media, both for credibility and bias. There's a wealth of information available online, so what steps can you take to ensure that it's credible? That is, how do we identify legitimate news? Finally, you'll explore strategies for bringing these media conversations into the classroom. From the design of the learning environment to expectation setting and more, it's critical to create an environment in which all students, regardless of their opinions or background, have an opportunity to fairly express their thoughts. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 518 Teaching Research Writing in the Digital Age 3 credits

Arguably the Internet's greatest strength and greatest weakness are one in the same: Anyone can post anything for anyone to see. Your middle and high school students have access to an unprecedented amount of information, but it's up to you to teach them how to vet sources for academic credibility and present their findings ethically and effectively. In this course, you will learn how to guide students through the entire process of writing a research paper, including how to develop research ideas, gather valid information, analyze relevant data, organize disparate materials, craft a well-reasoned report, and fine-tune a presentation. In addition to reviewing information specific to writing research reports, you will have the opportunity to practice instructional techniques such as modeling, scaffolding, paraphrasing, and discovery. With the principles you learn in this course, you'll be able to equip students to write research reports for businesses and nonprofits so they will be prepared to thrive in the workplace. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 519 The Common Core for English Language Arts: Theory & Practice in the 6-12 Classroom 3 credits

The Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) provide a basis for the content and skills that middle and high school students must know to prepare for college and careers. However, the standards do not capture the art and science of teaching, or the knowledge of students and the community that only a teacher can bring to the classroom. This course will help you bridge that gap. In this course, you will become thoroughly familiar with the Common Core's content and philosophy, including shifts toward informational text, complex text, and evidence-based thinking. You will create actionable strategies for connecting the Common Core standards to classroom practices in reading, writing, language, and speaking and listening. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to cultivate resources and ideas for connecting with teachers and topics in other disciplines. With the techniques and knowledge you gain in this course, you will be able to transform the ELA Common Core standards into practical lessons and activities that will set up your students for future academic and career success. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 520 The Common Core for English Language Arts: Theory & Practice in the K-5 Classroom 3 credits

The Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) provide a basis for the content and skills that elementary students must know to prepare for high school, college, and careers. However, the standards do not capture the art and science of teaching, or the knowledge of students and the community that only a teacher can bring to the classroom. This course will help you bridge that gap. In this course, you will become thoroughly familiar with the Common Core's content and philosophy, including shifts toward informational text, complex text, and evidence-based thinking. You will create actionable strategies for connecting the Common Core standards to classroom practices in reading, writing, language, and speaking and listening. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to cultivate resources for appropriate reading and instructional materials that you can start using in your classroom immediately. With the techniques and knowledge you gain in this course, you will be able to transform the ELA Common Core standards into practical lessons and activities that will set up your students for future academic and career success. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 521 The Personal Essay: Knowledge, Power, and the College Application 3 credits

A personal essay tells an illuminating story about its author, its central character in a narrative about self-discovery. Developing and writing a personal essay engages the writer in purposeful critical thinking and creative writing; the writer analyzes herself as subject of a particular story, deciphering her behaviors and their consequences, in order to reveal character and growth. Therefore, it's not surprising that colleges require a personal essay for admission, as it provides a platform for the student to illustrate herself as a maturing and self-aware citizen of the world. From this course, the teacher will learn best practices for facilitating the multiple steps of personal narrative development, from writing as a strong narrator to editing and revising. Course activities introduce and reinforce strategies for helping students find and explore the right topics, extend their narrative-writing skills, embrace the support of rubrics, and be their own editors. By the end of the course, the teacher will be able to support students, those college-bound or otherwise, as they write rewarding personal narrative essays. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 522 Why Argue: Teaching the Art of Oral and Written Argument 3 credits

In this time of social debate and rapid innovation, it's more important than ever to teach students how to take a position and argue effectively for it. In this course, you will learn best practices for engaging students in rich argument development, from class-wide inquiries to small-group data analysis to individual writing tasks. You will create exercises for helping students articulate claims, gather evidence, and construct rebuttals and counterarguments. Over time, students will learn to argue relevant concerns with increasing complexity and express their arguments elegantly and logically. With the techniques from this course, you will be able to equip your students to think critically, make sound judgements, and articulate their arguments in a way that makes the world a better, more well-rounded place. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 523 Writing About Literature: Teaching Literary Analysis 3 credits

Guiding students from mere reading comprehension and summarization to full literary analysis can be challenging. Analysis requires students to think beyond the facts of the text and create their own argument or thesis about what the text means, which can be a brand-new critical thought process for some students. In this course, you will learn to engage students in "writing to read"—or using writing to explore responses to literature, query those responses, scrutinize form, and analyze content. You will cultivate techniques for guiding students through the entire analysis process, from using the formal vocabularies of different genres to pre-writing to writing a polished, final draft. Genres covered include fiction, drama, graphic narratives, and poetry. You will explore critical approaches to making sense of literature, and design engaging activities to help students write their way to comprehension and appreciation of literary texts. Using the techniques from this course, you will be equipped to help students master Common Core State Standards in reading and writing, and learn analysis skills they'll be able to use for life. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 524 Writing Well or Good Writing? An Educator's Guide to Teaching Grammar 3 credits

In the past, grammar instruction meant boring worksheets and tedious activities, which can lead even the most diligent students to cringe at the thought of learning “grammar.” The good news is that teaching grammar doesn't have to be this way. In this course, you'll discover fun and engaging ways to improve students' writing through hands-on grammar instruction. You'll learn the most common grammar mistakes students make, why they make them, and strategies for fixing them. Simple techniques such as explaining the relevance of a grammar rule can go a long way in helping students internalize the content. By combining direct instruction with activities that reach multiple learning styles, you'll be able to engage all the students in your class and give them effective feedback to help them move forward. When taught correctly, grammar can be much more than dull worksheets and rote memorization. Using the techniques from this course, you'll be able to help students focus on the skills they need to become great writers and communicators in your class and beyond. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 525 Writing Workshop Model in the Classroom 3 credits

Too many writing exercises focus exclusively on improving the piece—and not the writer. However, writing workshops are an excellent opportunity to help students take ownership of their writing and their learning by giving them the time and direction they need to reflect and grow in their craft. In this course, you will reflect on and evaluate your own writing instruction and determine areas where you might be able to improve. You'll develop strategies for helping students succeed during every phase of writing, including prewriting, actual writing time, and sharing and feedback. In addition, you'll learn how to avoid common pitfalls that take away from students' agency in their writing, such as correcting students' errors too quickly, telling them what their piece needs (rather than helping them discover it), and taking up too much time with direct instruction. Using techniques from this course, you will be able to conduct a successful writing workshop that helps your students grow as writers and in their love for the craft. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

ELAX 528 Phonics: Foundations of Literacy 3 credits

Although many methods of teaching emergent literacy exist, phonics is a big part of understanding letters, the sounds they make, and how to read and write. Phonics not only works with individual letter sounds, but also addresses how to make sense of groups of letters or syllables when reading and writing. In this course, learners will examine the brain processes involved in reading, as well as how to diagnose and intervene when students have trouble mastering the five components of effective reading. Learners will develop an understanding of how to incorporate age-appropriate phonics instruction into existing reading and writing lessons for large and small groups. In addition, the module will explore methods of assessing students' mastery of phonics and phonological awareness skills, as well as how to create differentiated instruction to address student weaknesses. By the end of the course, learners will be equipped to create highly effective and engaging lessons in basic, intermediate, and advanced phonics to prepare students to be excellent readers and communicators.

ELAX 529 Culturally Sustaining Literature 1 credit

Literature is powerful. It can serve as both a window into other worlds and a mirror into our understanding of self. Its ability to achieve both of those things—inspiring introspection and extrospection—depends heavily on educators' ability to teach about a large range of texts. In this course, we'll use the lens of culturally sustaining pedagogy to examine the importance of texts that are both culturally responsive and culturally representative. You will explore how to select texts for curriculum and classroom libraries that are reflective of your students and that include a wider lens of diversity to introduce students to a world that is full of beautiful differences. Throughout your learning, you will critically evaluate canon and form a better understanding of the potential and limitations of different pieces of literature. Using the techniques and resources from this course, you'll be able to diversify your classroom literature to broaden your students' understanding of this great big world.

ELAX 530 Using Diagnostic Assessments to Differentiate Literacy Instruction 2 credits

Reading is foundational for success in school and adult life. However, many students show a complete lack of interest in reading and struggle with key skills such as phonics, decoding, vocabulary, and fluency. It's essential for teachers to be able to diagnose these issues and provide the right support to create strong readers. In this course, you'll learn how to evaluate K–6 students' needs in reading and develop a research-based and workable plan for growing their skills. Through the use of diagnostic assessments, you'll monitor students' knowledge and conceptual understanding throughout a reading program. Then, based on the assessment results, you'll learn how to develop your students' skills by choosing the right intervention strategies and reading materials. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to create an equitable reading program that supports students of every background and skill level, including those with learning, memory, and attention difficulties.