

EDU 5633/6633-030 and -040

Assessment & Intervention for Beginning Readers: Early StepsSM Practicum (Singleton)

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Logistics:

- on location in schools
- register fall semester - tutor all year - grade posts spring semester
- clinical sessions - 27 hours
- observations - 6 hours
- seminars - 5 hours
- intervention: Early Steps - approx. 50 hours
- 3 credit hours = \$450 for credit/no credit (-030); \$550 for letter grade course (-040)
- obtain advisor permission for this course to count toward degree
- presentation of university transcript to USBE earns 54 re-licensure points

Course Description and Expectations

This continuing education course is designed to help educators develop in-depth theoretical and practicum knowledge of effective research-based assessment and intervention for beginning readers at-risk for reading failure. For normally-achieving readers, these phases occur during kindergarten and 1st grade; however, many struggling readers in older grades maintain similar behaviors as a result of environmental and/or neurobiological problems.

The course follows a “practicum model,” in which educators build a conceptual framework for reading development and effective intervention through a year-long, mentored tutoring experience. The instructional framework for this course, Early Steps, is a compilation of effective, research-based assessment and intervention components, designed specifically for at-risk beginning readers.

The course is open to all educators, including, but not limited to: classroom teachers, literacy coaches, paraprofessionals, special educators, reading specialists, administrators, and English Learning (EL) personnel.

Through tutoring, observations, reading and attendance at clinical sessions and seminars, educators will be expected to extend their knowledge of the following topics: reading development, phonological awareness, concept of word, word identification, synthetic blending, decoding by analogy, basic English syllable structure, automaticity, fluency, textual scaffolding, oral language development, building/activating background knowledge, comprehension strategies, and motivation.

Most importantly, educators will be expected to use their knowledge of these topics as they provide ongoing, one-on-one assessment and intervention for at least one beginning reader.

Textbooks & Materials

****Required****

1. On the first day of training, you must have access to the **Early StepsSM Resources** (see link below). At the first training, and thereafter, we will specify which required binder materials you will need to download and print for you and your student.

- <https://uuc.utah.edu/Educators/Resources.php>

2. On the first day of training, you must also bring an **Early StepsSM Word Study Kit**. You have two options for meeting this requirement:

- **Make your own ES Word Study Kit.** If you choose to this option, you will need to photocopy the cards on card stock, laminate, cut, and organize them. This process is time-intensive, so we suggest you begin ASAP. Go to: <http://www.uurc.utah.edu/Educators/Resources.php> and download the Early StepsSM Word Study Kit. Before you do anything, carefully read the instructions and then follow them in sequence. The cost of making your own kit will vary from \$30-\$150, depending on where you laminate your materials, so we encourage you to shop around for the best price.
- **Purchase a printed, shrink-wrapped kit with laminated and already cut cardstock** from University Print and Mail Services ([2302165 UPMS Reading Clinic Flyer.pdf - Google Drive](#)). Pre-made kits save time, but you will need to sort, organize, and place the cards in envelopes BEFORE you attend your first training! Many tutors purchase a small plastic container with a handle for easy storage and transport.

The cost of a pre-made kit is approximately \$75; final cost is determined by University Printing Services.

3. On the first day of training, you must have:

- a **timer** that counts both up & down (many cell phones have this feature)
- one black permanent **marker** (e.g., Sharpie, Accent)
- one (1) **different color** permanent marker
- 1 package of 3x5 white unlined **index cards**
- 1 pair of scissors

All required materials must be ready to use on the first day of training & every day thereafter.

****Recommended****

- Morris, D.M. (2017). *The Howard Street Tutoring Manual: Teaching at-risk readers in the primary grades*. New York: Guilford Press. Available on-line.
- Brown, K.J., Patrick, K.C., Fields, M.K., & Craig, G.T. (2021). Phonological awareness materials in Utah kindergartens: A case study in the science of reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56, 249-272. DOI: 10.1002/rrq.386.
- Brown K.J. (2003). What do I say when they get stuck on a word? Aligning prompts with students' development during guided reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 56, 720-733.
- Brown, K.J. (1999/2000). What kind of text for whom, and when? Textual scaffolding for beginning readers. *The Reading Teacher*, 53, 292-307.
- Morris, D., Bloodgood, J. W., Lomax, R. G., & Perney, J. (2003). Developmental steps in learning to read: A longitudinal study in kindergarten and first grade. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 38, 302-328. doi: 10.1598/RRQ.38.3.1
- Morris, D., Tyner, B., & Perney, J. (2000). Early Steps: Replicating the effects of a first-grade reading intervention program. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92, 681-693.

Course Schedule

Clinical Sessions & Seminar: Topics and Readings

Session 1/Baseline Assessment & Choosing a Student

Overview of Early Steps: empirical research base, theoretical framework, issues in beginning reading, issues in professional development, overview of intervention model, review of assessments for identifying and placing beginning readers

Assessment: overview, modeling, and guided practice administering the University of Utah Early Reading Inventory (ERI), interpretation of scores in light of child, home, and school factors

Seminar 1 Topics: Prereading Foundations and the Role of Instruction (Blachman, 2000; Morris et al., 2003; Scarborough, & Brady, 2002)

Reading: Morris, D. (2017). Chapter 2/Assessment

Session 2/Intervention

Assessment: interpreting ERI scores to determine candidacy for Early StepsSM intervention

Lesson Format: overview of Early StepsSM Lesson Plan

Print awareness: concept of word & directionality, voice to print match and expectations for precise pointing

Assisted Familiar & New Reading: model preview to frontload background knowledge and orthographically/semantically challenging words prior to reading, prompts for echo/solo reading, helping students use initial phoneme identity as a rudimentary reading strategy, guidelines for moving up a text level, support for difficulties

Comprehension Work: narrative & expository text structures, using text structure to drive comprehension

Word Identification & Phonemic Awareness: model picture sort activities using LP, importance of initial phoneme identity in reading and spelling

Sentence Writing: model phonemic awareness, concept of word, high frequency word & spelling instruction via a partially-dictated, partially student-developed sentence

Reading:

Morris, D. (2017). Chapter 1/The Tutoring Model.

Session 3/Fast Follow-up

Print awareness: concept of word & directionality, voice to print match and expectations for precise pointing

Word Identification & Phonemic Awareness: re-model picture sort routines using LP, importance of initial phonemes in reading and spelling, harvesting high frequency words for word bank, development of writing for sounds (beginning, ending, and medial phonemes in single syllables)

Assisted Familiar & New Reading: re-model instructional routines and pacing guidelines

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to provide intervention as trainer and peers observe. Tutoring session is followed by discussion of relevant instructional issues (e.g., pacing, book level, sight word development) and opportunities for questions, remodeling, clarification.

Seminar 2: Reading Development: How Word Study and Text Change Along the Way (Beck & Juel, 1995, Ehri, 1999; Stanovich, 2000)

Reading: Morris, D. (2017). Chapter 3/Atticus, the Emergent Reader.

Session 4/High Frequency Words & Synthetic Blending

Word Identification & Phonemic Awareness: model onset-vowel routines with minimal teacher talk using LP, model harvesting high frequency words & word bank, importance of sight vocabulary, tapping as support for synthetic blending and segmentation, closed syllable structure, blends and digraphs, model pushing for ending and medial phonemes to decode and spell

Assisted Familiar & New Reading: word study to book level correspondence, pacing, moving up a text level, model support for difficulties in pointing, using sounds

Clinic: minimizing “teacher talk” during lesson, each participant has the opportunity to provide intervention as trainer and peers observe. Tutoring session is followed by discussion of relevant instructional issues (e.g., pacing, book level, sight word development) and opportunities for questions, remodeling, clarification

Seminar 3: Reading Development: How Word Study and Text Change Along the Way. (Brown, 1999-2000; Fuchs et al., 2001)

Reading:

Brown, K.J. (1999/2000). What kind of text for whom, and when? Textual scaffolding for beginning readers. *The Reading Teacher*, 53, 292-307.

Session 5/Fluency

Assisted Familiar & New Reading: model collecting accuracy data as a guide to moving up or moving laterally in text

Word Identification & Phonemic awareness: model “Make-N-Break” and “Making Words” when difficulty persists with high frequency words and closed syllables, dropping the sentence strip and reassembly

Fluency Development & Difficulties: rereading books from previous level as needed, echo reading w/prosody, the use of developmental prompts when students struggle with unfamiliar words

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to provide intervention as trainer and peers observe. Tutoring sessions are followed by discussion of relevant instructional issues (e.g., pacing, book level, sight word development) and opportunities for questions, remodeling, clarification

Reading:

Brown K.J. (2003). What do I say when they get stuck on a word? Aligning prompts with students’ development during guided reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 56, 720-733.

Session 6/Fluency & Word Id Prompts

Word Identification & Phonemic Awareness: re-model the use of tapping to blend, model mixed short vowel routines with minimal talk using LP, review closed syllable structure

Assisted Familiar & New Reading: using narrative and expository text structure to enhance comprehension, moving up a text level via accuracy check data, use of tapping vs. first sound for unfamiliar words, dropping a reread at text level 7

Fluency: rereading books from previous level as needed, echo reading w/prosody, the use of developmental prompts when students struggle with unfamiliar words

Exit students performing at grade level: Who is ready to graduate mid-year? Introduce the comprehension, transition lesson as a litmus test.

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to provide intervention as trainer and peers observe. Tutoring sessions are followed by discussion of relevant instructional issues (e.g., pacing, book level, sight word development) and opportunities for questions, remodeling, clarification.

Seminar 4: Profiles of Struggling Readers: Who Are They and What Do They Need? (Velluntino et al., 1996; Shankweiler et al., 1999)

Session 7/Transition Lesson

Transition Lesson Familiar and New Reading: model assisted reading, fluency reading using LP, collecting accuracy data, coping with longer books

Word Identification & Phonemic Awareness: review mixed short vowel routines, model accuracy checks as a means to pace word study, introduce “vowel-consonant-e” syllable structure & routines, introduce Bingo

Fluency: removing road blocks to fluency, rereading books from current/previous level as needed, prosody echo, the use of developmental prompts when students struggle with unfamiliar words

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to provide intervention as trainer and peers observe. Tutoring sessions are followed by discussion of relevant instructional issues (e.g., pacing, book level, sight word development) and opportunities for questions, remodeling, clarification.

Seminar 5: Early/Next Steps Research Findings

Reading: Morris, D. (2009). Chapter 4/Beth, the Fledgling Reader.

Session 8/Comprehension & Vocabulary in Transition Lesson

Assisted Familiar & New Reading: model collecting accuracy and rate data as a guide to moving up or moving laterally in text level, using narrative and expository text structure to enhance comprehension

Comprehension: model questioning during assisted reading to assess comprehension, literal and inferential questions, trouble-shooting comprehension difficulties, providing a model for complete answers, extending oral language through questioning and modeling

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to provide intervention as trainer and peers observe. Tutoring sessions are followed by discussion of relevant instructional issues (e.g., pacing, book level, sight word development) and opportunities for questions, remodeling, clarification.

Reading:

Brown, K.J., Patrick, K.C., Fields, M.K., & Craig, G.T. (2021). Phonological awareness materials in Utah kindergartens: A case study in the science of reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56, 249-272.
DOI: 10.1002/rrq.386.

Morris, D. (2005). Chapter 5/Kurt, the Late first to Second Grade Reader

Session 9/End-of-Year Assessment

Assessment: overview, model and practice administering UURC Reading Level Assessment (RLA) assessment (oral reading accuracy, oral reading rate, comprehension). Discussion of criteria for identifying instructional/intervention reading levels

Credit Course Criteria (EDU 5633-030-no letter grade)

To earn credit (i.e., no letter grade) for the course, participants must satisfactorily meet each criterion outlined below:

- completion of all clinical trainings, conducted by a Licensed Early StepsSM Trainer,
- completion of all formal coaching sessions conducted by a Licensed Early StepsSM Trainer
- earn satisfactory ratings for those coaching sessions
- completion of peer observations as assigned
- view 4 hour-long seminar videos on reading research/theory
- completion of at least 85 intervention sessions with an Early Steps student

Letter Grade Course Criteria (EDU 5633-040)

To earn letter-grade credit for the course, participants must satisfactorily meet each criterion outlined below:

- completion of all clinical trainings, conducted by a Licensed Early StepsSM Trainer,
- completion of all formal coaching sessions conducted by a Licensed Early StepsSM Trainer
- earn satisfactory ratings for those coaching sessions
- completion of peer observations as assigned
- view 5 hour-long seminar videos on reading research/theory
- completion of at least 85 intervention sessions with an Early Steps student
- earn a grade of Pass+ on Implementation Rubric
- earn a grade of .7 or better on Intervention Implementation and Written Case Study

Intervention Implementation Grading Rubric: Intervention implementation during the practicum will earn pass +, pass -, or fail as UURC staff conduct formal and informal observations.

The criteria are:

Pass + = Satisfactory to strong intervention implementation for most of the practicum. Satisfactory to strong ability to analyze and respond to student performance. Satisfactory - strong preparation and management of intervention materials. Satisfactory - strong ability to integrate trainer feedback into intervention implementation. Satisfactory - strong contribution to training and debriefing sessions.

Pass - = Less than satisfactory intervention implementation for most of practicum. Less than satisfactory ability to analyze and respond to student performance. Less than satisfactory preparation and management of intervention materials. Less than satisfactory ability to integrate trainer feedback into intervention execution. Less than satisfactory contribution to training and debriefing sessions.

It is important to note that failure to meet a majority of the criteria listed above under Pass + constitutes grounds for a score of Pass -."

Intervention Implementation Grade Conversions: Pass + = 4.0/A

Pass - = 2.0/C

Case Study Guidelines: Early Steps

Participants who register for letter-grade university credit must complete a written assignment, in addition to other practicum requirements.

Choose one of the students you tutored during the Early Steps practicum as the subject for a written case study. The case study should include:

1. Summary and analysis of the student's foundation for reading success at baseline.

This is more than simply "reporting the data." In addition to describing the student's baseline abilities in foundational reading skills (concept of word, alphabet knowledge, phonemic awareness, and word recognition), you must discuss his/her abilities in relation to chronological grade level. Specifically, at baseline, where is this child in relation to where s/he should be? Is s/he at risk for reading difficulties? Why?

2. Summary and analysis of the intervention.

Describe the intervention you provided for this child. Briefly describe each component (rereading for fluency, word study, writing for sounds, guided reading). Did any component seem to offer more difficulty or ease than others? Why? What, if any, adjustments did you make in the intervention?

3. Summary and analysis of the student's reading abilities at posttest.

After administering the posttest and analyzing the data, describe your student's reading abilities at the close of the intervention. Discuss your student's posttest scores in passage reading, word recognition and spelling in relation to chronological grade level. If indicated, make specific recommendations for future instruction/intervention.

4. Summary and analysis of your own teaching practices.

As an educator, what have you learned about reading development and instruction/intervention from your practicum experience? How has this learning informed your practice? Provide specific examples.

This case study must be typed, double-spaced, and **must** include the following information:

- your full name
- semester and year you registered for the course (e.g., Fall, 2025)
- course name, course number, section number (e.g., EDU 6633-040)
- your employing school and district (e.g., Sandy Elementary, Jordan District)

A separate cover page is not necessary; identifying information may be placed at the top of page 1.

The case study should be no longer than 7-10 pages in length. It must meet university standards for writing style and mechanics. As such, students are encouraged to have their papers proofread for appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

