

**EDU 5633-030 or 6633-030**  
**ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION FOR BEGINNERS**  
**AT-RISK FOR READING DIFFICULTIES: EARLY STEPS PRACTICUM**

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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 = \$300
- university transcript specifies credit/no credit; no letter grade
- obtain advisor permission for this course to count toward degree
- presentation of university transcript to USOE earns 54 re-licensure points

**Course Description and Expectations**

This credit/no-credit continuing education course is designed to help educators develop in-depth theoretical and practical knowledge of effective, research-based assessment and intervention for beginning readers at-risk for reading failure. 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 course is open to all educators, including, but not limited to: classroom teachers, literacy coaches, paraprofessionals, special educators, reading specialists, administrators, and English-Language-Learning (ELL) 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. 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.

## **Textbooks & Materials**

Participants must make and assemble all materials for conducting tutoring lessons. A master binder of black-line masters is available from the Early Steps coordinator in each school.

### **\*\*Recommended\*\***

Morris, D.M. (2005). *The Howard Street Tutoring Manual: Teaching at-risk readers in the primary grades*. New York: Guilford Press.

## **Course Schedule**

### **Clinical Sessions & Seminar: Topics and Readings**

#### **Session 1/Baseline Assessment**

Overview of Early Steps: empirical research base, theoretical framework, issues in beginning reading, issues in professional development, overview of intervention model, demonstration of assessment for at-risk beginning readers.

Assessment: overview, modeling, and guided practice administering the Early Reading Screening Instrument (ERSI), interpretation of scores in light of other child, home, and school factors

Reading: Morris, D. (1998). Assessing printed word knowledge in beginning readers: The Early Reading Screening Instrument (ERSI).

Seminar 1: Prereading Foundations and the Role of Instruction (Blachman, 2000; Scarborough, & Brady, 2002)

Reading: Morris, D. (2005). Chapter 2/Assessment. In, *The Howard Street Tutoring Manual*.

#### **Session 2/Intervention**

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

Word Identification & Phonological awareness: helping students use initial phoneme identity as a rudimentary reading and spelling strategy

Lesson Format: Overview, modeling, and practice of Early Steps Lesson: repeated reading, word study, writing for sounds, reassembling sentence, guided reading of new book

Reading: Morris, D. (2005). Chapter 3/Atticus, the Emergent Reader. In, *The Howard Street Tutoring Manual*.

### **Session 3/Fast Follow-up**

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

Word Identification & Phonological Awareness: using initial phonemes, harvesting sight words, word bank, rhyming short vowel study, synthetic blending, blends and digraphs, writing for sounds (beginning, ending, and attempting medial sounds)

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to tutor one student in front of mentor and peers. 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)

### **Session 4/High Frequency Words & Synthetic Blending**

Word Identification & Phonological awareness: helping students use ending and medial phonemes during reading and spelling, synthetic blending, closed syllable structure, importance of sight vocabulary, word banks, using “Make-N-Break” and “Make-A-Word” when difficulty persists with high frequency and short vowel words, respectively.

Guided reading: word study to book level correspondence, pacing, moving up a text level, echo reading as support and the transition to independence

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to tutor one student in front of supervisor and peers. 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: Morris, D. (2005). Chapter 1/The tutoring model. In, *The Howard Street Tutoring Manual*.

### **Session 5/Chunking & Fluency**

Word Identification & Phonological awareness: helping students use blending and chunking during reading and spelling, closed syllable structure, “Make-N-Break”, “Making Words,” dropping the word bank and sentence reassembly.

Guided reading: word study to book level correspondence, pacing, moving up a text level, echo reading as support and the transition to independence

Fluency development: rereading books from previous level, echo reading w/expression, the use of developmental prompts when students struggle with unfamiliar words.

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to tutor one student in front of supervisor and peers. Tutoring sessions are followed by discussion of relevant instructional issues (e.g., pacing, book level, sight word development) and opportunities for questions, remodeling, clarification.

### **Session 6/Fluency & Word Id Prompts**

Word Identification & Phonological awareness: helping students use blending and chunking, solidifying short vowel foundation with mixed sorts, closed syllable structure, reducing “teacher talk” during lesson, providing developmental prompts when students struggle with unfamiliar words.

Guided reading: word study to book level correspondence, pacing, moving up a text level via accuracy check data, echo reading as support and the transition to independence.

Fluency: partner reading, rereading books from previous level, echo reading w/expression, prompts and help during guided reading.

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

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to tutor one student in front of supervisor and peers. 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, Brown, 2003)

### **Session 7/Transition Lesson**

Word Identification: reviewing mixed, nonrhyming short vowels, moving to long vowel patterns, “vowel-consonant-e” syllable structure, Bingo, reducing “teacher talk” during lesson, dropping the sentence writing.

Fluency: partner reading, rereading books from previous level, echo reading w/expression, prompts and support during guided reading

Guided reading: word study to book level correspondence, pacing, moving up a text level via accuracy check data, echo reading as support and the transition to independence, coping with longer books in 30 minutes.

Transition Lesson Format: guided reading, word study, fluency development.

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to tutor one student in front of supervisor and peers. 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 Steps and Next Steps: Empirical Evidence (Morris, Shaw & Perney, 1986; Brown, Morris & Fields, 2005; Santa & Hoiem, 1999)

Reading: Morris, D. (2005). Chapter 4/Beth, the Fledgling Reader. In, *The Howard Street Tutoring Manual*.

### **Session 8/Comprehension & Vocabulary in Transition Lesson**

Fluency: partner reading, rereading books from previous level, echo reading w/expression, prompts and support during guided reading.

Guided reading: word study to book level correspondence, pacing, moving up a text level via accuracy check data, echo and partner reading as support and the transition to independence.

Transition Lesson Format: guided reading w/ focus on comprehension & vocabulary, word study, fluency development

Clinic: each participant has the opportunity to tutor one student in front of supervisor and peers. 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: Morris, D. (2005). Chapter 5/Kurt, the Late first to Second Grade Reader. In, *The Howard Street Tutoring Manual*, (also, Pressley, 2000; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000)

### **Session 9/End-of-Year Assessment**

Assessment: overview, modeling, and guided practice administering informal end-of-year assessments (word identification, developmental spelling, passage reading). Discussion of criteria for identifying instructional/intervention reading levels.

### **Course Credit Criteria**

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

- completion of at least 8 of 9 possible half-day clinical trainings, conducted by a Licensed Early Steps Trainer,

- completion of at least 4 of 6 possible formal observations conducted by a Licensed Early Steps Trainer or a certified Early Steps Tutor working in a support capacity under a Licensed Early Steps Trainer,
- earn satisfactory ratings for at least 2 of those observations, with 1 of those satisfactory ratings earned within the final 2 observations,
- completion of at least 4 of 6 possible peer observations,
- view 5 hour-long seminar DVDs on reading research/theory, and
- completion of at least 85 intervention sessions with an Early Steps student.