

Nellie Edge Online Seminars

Practicum Suggestions for University Credit Option

Course Numbers

Seminar #1: Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion: Building the Reading Brain

PEDU9008 (DEVELOPING NEW IDEAS IN EDUCATION PRACTICUM (1), (2) OR (3) CREDITS)

Seminar #2: Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters!

PEDU9014 (CREATING PRACTICAL STRATEGIES AND IDEAS (1), (2) OR (3) CREDITS)

Seminar #3: Accelerate Literacy with High-Frequency Sight Words: Make Learning Visible! (We Call These “Heart Words”)

PEDU9009 (ACTIVITIES TO ACCELERATE LEARNING (1), (2) OR (3) CREDITS)

Up to three semester units of post-baccalaureate professional development credits are available through the University of the Pacific in California for each Nellie Edge Online Seminar. (3 semester units = 4.5 quarter hours.) An additional \$62 fee per credit is required, payable on the day of the seminar. Details and registration forms for direct enrollment are available for each online seminar. You will mail the registration, fee, and practicum projects directly to the university. Nellie Edge Online Seminars is **not involved** in reading your papers or assigning grades. You are responsible directly to the university.

Follow-up practicum projects require 15 hours per semester credit. This is acceptable where local school districts approve and are applicable to state licensure where such activities are approved. We recommend that you always check with your literacy director or university counselor to verify the appropriateness of all professional development opportunities for your teaching credentials. For other credit questions please call Dr. Allen Lifson at 1-800-479-1995 (www.teacherfriendly.com).

Frequently Asked Questions:

How long do I have to complete the projects?

After you send in your registration (which is available once you register for each online seminar), you have four months, and if necessary, you can request an extension from the University of the Pacific.

What kind of project should I complete?

Whatever will be the most relevant to you! We have included a list of specific practicum suggestions; however, you are welcome to design a personal project that fits your professional needs. Dr. Lifson and Nellie Edge want this project to meet your professional development goals. You need not write an essay unless it fits your professional needs.

How do I decide on a project?

- Watch the online seminar, and review the seminar Power Guide eBook, Self-Assessment Guidelines, and Practicum Suggestions.
- Reflect on what will take your teaching to a higher level. Set personal goals to organize and develop curriculum ideas that you will implement. (You have unlimited access to the online seminar.)
- Take photos, or make copies of your work. (Consider saving a copy of your documentation for your professional portfolio: these projects have supported many teachers in pursuing National Board Certification.)
- Each practicum project that you develop could easily take you 15 hours; some may take much longer.

As a result of each online seminar, what would you like to be doing in your classroom one week, one month, and four months from now?

Nellie Edge (updated 12/2015)

Nellie Edge Online Seminar #1 – Practicum Suggestions


University Credit Option – Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion

15 hours of practicum project work is required for each unit of credit.

Nellie Edge Online Seminar #1 may be taken for up to 3 units of credits.

1. Keep an Observation/Reflection Journal of Your Experiences Teaching ASL (American Sign Language) and Fingerspelling

Teach the ***ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!*** song picture book to a small or large group of children and monitor progress. What did you notice?

What do you notice when you begin singing and signing this song? How are your children responding? Are they teaching each other? How do parents respond? How do you systematically use this signing song to accelerate literacy? See ASL instructional  Video Clips at www.nellieedge.com to practice. Use the ***Self-Assessment Guidelines for Excellence: Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion.***

2. Study the ASL Instructional Videos from Sign2Me

Practice with the videos until you are confident fingerspelling a-z and signing the key phonics symbols. Download the free Family Reference Chart to use for frequent reviews, or use the book, *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* by Nellie Edge (available at your library or from Sign2Me or amazon).

3. Develop Your Parents as Partners Program

Use or adapt the parent letters for the ABC/phonics program and develop a plan for how you will encourage parent involvement in *Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion*. How will you involve families in nightly review of the song to accelerate your teaching effectiveness? Some schools actually present the program to parents when they register their child for kindergarten in the spring. Parents are encouraged to practice over the summer using the free video clips. Other teachers present the program to parents at Back-to-School night and provide direct links to the ASL videos from their school-to-home website.

- Describe your plan for parent collaboration, communication and education. Adapt any Nellie Edge parent letter to meet your teaching needs. See: *Parents and Partners: Family Connections That Multiply Our Teaching Effectiveness*, by Nellie Edge, updated 2015.
- Develop a Parent Information Notebook (each of our literacy manuals contains articles that you may want to include). Plan how you will develop your parent lending library.
- How will parents be encouraged to be a part of your classroom community and a partner in meaningful learning projects at home?
- Plan for monthly “Good News” post cards to go home to families.
- Send home the monthly Family Learning Calendar.

4. Preview the SMILE Approach to Joyful Accelerated Literacy: Self-Assessment Guidelines

Use this detailed document to assess your current teaching of ABC/phonics skills. What are your goals and what specific steps will you take to implement a more systematic, multisensory approach to alphabetic skills? Take the challenge: 20 Days to 20 Letters and Sounds. Document observations and evaluate.

5. Introduce the book, *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* in rich literary detail to an individual or small or large group of children

Invite the children to echo read after you, page by page. Use animation and dramatic flair to deeply engage the children in learning 4 to 8 letters, sounds, and signs at a time. Examine the photos and drawings for text features and details. Notice Common Core vocabulary, nouns, verbs, and transition words. How does “saying and doing” language increase comprehension? Record your observation and experience as you teach the entire program.

6. **Prepare your environment to optimize the ABC and Phonics Immersion program and integrate consistent visual supports across the curriculum**

Set up a vertical teaching chart close to your large group shared literacy space. Post A-Z Wall Cards. Use miniature charts (free on ABC Phonics tab at neellieedge.com) in your literacy centers; print free writing Dictionary Pages for writing folders and Family ABC Phonics Reference Charts. Collect puppets, make games, create additional props (e.g. ABC Mastery Cape).

7. **Use these multisensory learning strategies to enhance your current (district mandated) literacy program**

- Learn to fingerspell, and add that to your literacy framework.
- Create your own class book of ABC sign language experts, using photos of children fingerspelling the first letter of their names.
- Sing, sign, and send your program home for nightly review.
- Celebrate mastery as each child is able to fingerspell and name each letter and sound. This will dramatically increase learning!

8. **Create a growth mindset with specific empowering language.**

- Create a culture of “I can!”
- *You already know the letters of your name! **Wow! How did you learn them?***
- *You already learned a-g. **Keep practicing** and soon you’ll be an ABC/Phonics Expert!*
- *You learned the whole alphabet: letter, sound and sign! **Aren’t you proud of your hard work?***
- ***You worked hard to learn all those letters!** Let’s take your picture with the Master of the Alphabet crown!*
- *Wow! You **almost** know every letter and sound! Keep practicing the last six letters: u through z! **Soon you will be an expert of the whole alphabet!***
- Consider reading ***Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*** by Carol Dweck.

9. **Make learning visible. Have high expectations. Teach children to work hard toward their individual learning goals. Celebrate their accomplishments.**

- **Clearly define your goal or target** for all children with Parents as Partners: *Kindergarten Friends, we are going to learn every letter and sound a-z (ABC Phonics), and we will learn to sing, sign, and read! We already know a, b, c, d: let’s review! Now we get to practice e, f, g, and h.*
- **Teachers, children and parents know what the next individual ABC/Phonics target is:** Ongoing assessments allow children to take pride in their progress.
- For less experience learners the Special Education or Response to Intervention (R.T.I.) team provides additional multisensory and writing-to-read support consistent with these “best practices.”
- Consider reading ***Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*** by John Hattie.

10. **Take the Next Step to National Board Certification — Kindergarten Teachers as Researchers and Literacy Leaders: Use Self-Assessment Guidelines**

- Articulate to the school community why Multisensory ABC and Phonics Immersion works!
 - *The reason we are learning to fingerspell is that multisensory teaching helps the brain remember the letters and sounds, and fingerspelling builds writing muscles!*
- Video your children performing *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* Are they cutting off the consonant sounds crisply? Study the corresponding Nellie Edge Online Seminar.
- Incorporate ABC/Phonics review into brain breaks and transitions.
- Provide opportunities for more proficient students to read the *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, Spell and Read!* book during Read-to-Self and Buddy Reading time. Provide guided reading with sets of the book.
- Integrate ABC Phonics fingerspelling and symbols into the curriculum throughout the day.

Choose any one suggestion to develop an in-depth practicum or any combination of meaningful projects that would allow you to apply the skills shared in this seminar in the most useful and relevant way. How can you use the content of this Nellie Edge Online Seminar to make your teaching more effective and powerful to the lives of your students? What do you want to be doing in your classroom one week and one month from now as a result of this seminar?

Dr. Lifson at the University of the Pacific always allows teachers to design their own practicum project that meets their unique teaching and learning needs.

Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2 – Practicum Suggestions

University Credit Option – Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters!

**15 hours of practicum project work is required for each unit of credit.
Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2 may be taken for up to 3 units of credits.**

If handwriting motions are not automatic, it interferes with the whole writing process.

Watch the online seminar repeatedly, read through the Power Guide documents, self-assessment guidelines, and Nellie Edge Handwriting Blogs. Define goals and projects that are most meaningful for you. The following practicum ideas are only suggestions. You are always welcome to design a special project that meets your unique professional development goals relating to the online seminar topic.

1. **Analyze your current name writing program:** How can you make it more intentional, systematic, and successful? How do you make the learning goals visible to each child? Include name writing guides for families, and support materials for instructional aides and classroom volunteers.
2. **Connect kindergarten-friendly handwriting with teaching of high-frequency “heart words.”** Efficient handwriting motions for the words “I love you” provides the anchor sentence that children will write over and over again. Notice that the pink and purple “heart words” and related sentences provide authentic handwriting practice for all of the lowercase letters except p, q, x, and z! Have high expectations that children are capable of remembering what their target letters are, verbalizing the language for letter formation, working hard, and getting it right!
3. **Develop a “Parents as Partners” in Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting and Fine Motor Development Activities** packet to share with families. Use the Nellie Edge Handwriting Blogs and Pinterest Fine Motor Development and Kindergarten Handwriting boards for additional finger dexterity building activities. Stress how helpful it is for the children to practice these skills in the classroom and at home. Remember — fingerspelling the ABCs is one of the best strategies for fine motor skills development!
4. **Learn the Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting songs and chants from the *Sing, Sign, Spell, and Read!* CD.** Teach them to the children with passion and dramatic flair! Remind the children of the key handwriting positive affirmation “I always start my letters at the top!”
5. **Enhance handwriting skills by teaching children to draw and explore shapes.** Provide lessons that teach the child how to make a twinkling star (lift-the-pen motion), a spiral van Gogh-like star (continuous motion), and a five point star to help children integrate movement patterns. What do you notice? Are the children using rich art related language such as “a Van Gogh-like star”?
6. **Read the excerpts from handwriting research.** Google additional resources. Write a paper on why handwriting matters for children today. Share the paper with kindergarten colleagues, parents, and your school primary team.
7. **Coordinate with preK-2 teachers,** special education and literacy coaches in your school or district to develop a consistent approach to handwriting for young children. What resources will you use?
8. **Read excerpts from *Choice Words*** by Peter Johnston (Stenhouse, 2012), pages 172-173 from ***Kindergarten Writing and the Common Core*** by Nellie Edge, 2015 and the pages on *How to Talk to Children about Their Handwriting* in the Teacher’s Guide to ***Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting, Word Work and Phonics Skills*** pages 13 and 26. Create a list of empowering ways to talk about student handwriting progress. Stress that *hard work is valued* in your classroom.

Praise effort, hard work, and movement toward a handwriting goal—not how smart children are!

9. **Provide ABC Brain Exercises for fluency** (pages 56-58 of the Teacher's Guide). Notice which children will benefit from more intentional abc work for quick visual retrieval of letters from long-term memory.
10. Read ***Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*** by John Hattie (Routledge, 2012). Discuss how you will use the practices shared in this Nellie Edge Online Seminar to make the learning of efficient handwriting practices visible for each student and their parents beginning with name writing. How will you involve students in self-evaluation and what is necessary to celebrate mastery?

Choose any one suggestion to develop an in-depth practicum or any combination of meaningful projects that would allow you to apply the skills shared in this seminar in the most useful and relevant way. How can you use the content of this Nellie Edge Online Seminar to make your teaching more effective and powerful to the lives of your students? What do you want to be doing in your classroom one week and one month from now as a result of this seminar?

Dr. Lifson at the University of the Pacific always allows teachers to design their own practicum project that meets their unique teaching and learning needs.

Handwriting practice is woven into authentic writing experiences that have meaning to the child — not isolated drill!

Nellie Edge Online Seminar #3 - Practicum Suggestions

University Credit Option –Teaching High-Frequency Sight Words (“Heart Words”)

**15 hours of practicum project work is required for each unit of credit.
Nellie Edge Online Seminar #3 may be taken for up to 3 units of credits.**

Listen to the online seminar repeatedly, read through the Power Guide, and study the self-assessment guidelines and practicum suggestions. Define goals that are most meaningful for you. The following practicum ideas are only suggestions. You are always welcome to design a unique project that meets your professional development goals relating to the online seminar topic, or write a three-page action-research paper.

1. **Document your high expectations for students and parents with clear learning targets.** How will your students know there are two kinds of words: Words they will learn “by heart” and words they can listen to, stretch out, and write the sounds for? Teach for mastery with clearly visible goals of 15-16 color-coded words. Use the words selected in our action-research, or create your own word lists in collaboration with school staff.
2. **Document how you provide multisensory, memorable teaching of high-frequency words and make learning visible.** Have your high-frequency word wall visible from the front and sides of the room. Create “heart word” posters: pink, yellow, purple, and green. (You may to choose your own favorite colors and images as long as you are consistent!) Color coordinate miniature “heart words,” floor charts and word wall words.
3. **Plan with the first and second grade teachers, special education and reading teachers** in your building or district so there is one consistent set of clear learning targets for children K-2. Many kindergartners by mid-year have already mastered the first 62 words. They delight themselves in the challenge of going on to first and second grade level words or their own personalized set of words. Make color specific sets of small “heart words” ahead and have a system for sending them home.
4. **Plan your “Parents as Partners” program.** Send home the first set of pink “heart words” in a small box after you have introduced most of the words. Explain your system of family support so that parents understand how to support “heart word” practice in a positive, engaging way. (Each child gets to take home the next set of colored “heart words” to add to their box as soon as the previous set is mastered!) *Our expectation for pink and purple “heart words” is for children to be able to read, write, and spell them conventionally.* Consider sending home word/fingerspelling cards and/or “I Can Read” Anthology pages for the first 32 words. Permission is granted for teachers to send home copies of the *Sing, Sign, Spell, and Read!* CD, anthologies, and word cards for family literacy and listening enjoyment.
5. **Create an ongoing organization and assessment system that drives instruction. Celebrate mastery!** Create a folder or notebook with individual student assessment forms, parent letters, “heart word” templates, and your *Hip Hip Hooray* book pages to celebrate learning. Create your own class book that honors student achievement.
6. **Integrate high-frequency “heart word” work throughout the curriculum.** Connect pink and purple “heart words” with your handwriting instruction. Create independent writing/drawing/book making totes that provide authentic practice writing “heart word” sentences. Expect children to write a growing number of “heart word” sentences each morning during settling-in time.
7. **Read excerpts from John Hattie’s meta-analysis of 15 years of educational research on Making Learning Visible.** Review the online seminar again and write about how this approach to teaching high-frequency

sight words is consistent with the evidence-based research documented in this important book. How does this systematic approach to teaching sight words set high expectations for student achievement, make learning visible, differentiate learning, and take advantage of how the brain learns best?

Choose any one suggestion to develop an in-depth practicum or any combination of meaningful projects that would allow you to apply the skills shared in this seminar in the most useful and relevant way. How can you use the content of this Nellie Edge Online Seminar to make your teaching more effective and powerful to the lives of your students? What do you want to be doing in your classroom one week and one month from now as a result of this seminar?

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