

SYLLABUS

ED-LTCY/UNIV 120 Comprehension of Textbooks and Text Structure (3 credit hours)

FALL 2009

M W F

10:40-11:30

Room E525

Instructors

- ❖ Jamie Armstrong: E-511, 426-3974, jarmstr@boisestate.edu

OFFICE HOURS:

M 2:45 – 3:45

W 1:40 – 3:30

Th 10:30 – 11:15

And by appointment

- ❖ Linda Kirby (Assistant): Education 508, 426-4186, Linda525K@aol.com

Catalog Description

ED-LTCY 120 COMPREHENSION OF TEXTBOOKS AND TEXT STRUCTURES (3-0-3) (F/S). Emphasizes comprehension, vocabulary, and study strategies based on the organizational patterns found in college textbook chapters, informational essays, and news magazine articles. Direct applications of strategies to the reading materials in students' current university courses. PREREQ: Advisor referral and permission of instructor. Cross-listed with UNIV 120.

Course Objectives

The major objectives for students in this course are as follows:

- I. To increase your ability to comprehend and study printed text;
- II. To increase your reading vocabulary;
- III. To develop and/or maintain positive attitudes toward reading and other academic work.

In other words, the purpose of this course is to increase your comprehension, ease and enjoyment of reading. By the end of this semester we hope that you can say, "I'm a reader" and be glad of it. We want you to get the most from your university education!

Required Texts

1. Armstrong, J. (2007). *Patterns and Connections* (Rev. ed). New York: McGraw-Hill Primis.
2. Armstrong, J. *Supplement: ED-LTCY 120 UNIV 120: Comprehension of text structures*. Boise, ID: Boise State University.
3. ***Newsweek*. *Newsweek* is a required text for this class, just like the ones you buy at the bookstore. You may download and print out required articles from the *Newsweek* website (see page 2), or you may subscribe to the printed magazine by following the 5 steps (see page 3).**

To download and print out copies of individual articles (instead of subscribing):

1. Go to <http://www.newsweek.com> and find an article that is at least two pages long.
2. You may select an article on the "front page" or click on one of the red tabs under the NEWSWEEK name (in very large block letters). Then select an article.

3. Scroll down to the bottom of the article on that page to make sure that it continues to a page 2. The numbers of the pages and “Next Page” will be listed in the lower right (just above boxes titled “Recommended” and “Discuss”).
4. Print off a copy of the article.
5. After you discuss your article in class, hand in your paper copy of the article.

To subscribe to the printed magazine.

Please sign up for your subscription this week, so that you begin to receive your first copy at the right time to use in class. Allow a minimum of 2 weeks for your first magazine to arrive. You may subscribe at the student discount rate of 27 issues for \$25; a one-year subscription is \$40. To arrange your subscription, please follow these steps:

1. Call *Newsweek's* Customer Service number: 1-800-631-1040.
2. When the automated voice prompts you, say: “I want to order.” You’ll be transferred to a customer service representative.
3. Tell the representative that you want to start receiving *Newsweek* as soon as possible.
4. You’ll need to provide the representative with your name, the address where you want your subscription sent, and a credit card number to be charged for your subscription.

Optional Texts

- Agnes, M, & Sparks, A. (2002). *Webster's New World Compact School and Office Dictionary* (4th ed.). Cleveland, OH: Wiley. This is a fine dictionary and is the one I'll use to evaluate your Latin Prefixes assignments (see Syllabus, p. 3).
- Cornog, M. (1998). *Merriam-Webster's Vocabulary Builder*. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.
- Pabis, D., & Hamer, A. (2008). 2nd ed. *Building College Vocabulary Strategies*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Evaluation

A grade for the course is determined by the quality and punctuality of completed assignments, and attendance, according to the following percentages:

20%	Attendance & Class Participation
20%	Vocabulary Assignments & Vocabulary Quizzes
40%	Individual Projects
20%	Reading Assignments & Assessments of Reading

Please note: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments will be accepted but, for each class day late, they will drop a grade (for example, from 90% to 80%, from 9 to 8 points, or + to \surd). I also use the following scale for short assignments:

+, \surd^+ , \surd , \surd^- , - 0. At the end of the semester, I convert these symbols into the following number equivalents (on a 100-point scale): + = 96, \surd^+ = 88, \surd = 80, \surd^- = 72, - = 64, 0 (Assignments not turned in receive 0 points).

A letter grade for each student will be determined by the following grading scale:

90-100	A
81-90	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
Below 60	F

ATTENDANCE & CLASS PARTICIPATION (20%)

Instruction and learning take place in class, so both are important for you to achieve the goals of this course. Please check with the instructors about making up any absences that you have from class. Class participation involves both discussion and writing. During class, I expect each student to be attentive and not to make distracting sounds or actions, so that everyone can learn. Thus, I expect that electronic devices will be on silent mode, that no text messaging will be going on, and that all of us will do our part to create a class atmosphere of mutual respect.

Class discussion involves talking and listening to other students as well as the teacher on a variety of course topics and includes being prepared for the weekly discussion of a *Newsweek* article. Writing involves Postings and Comments (replies to postings) to the class blog.

To participate in the class blog, follow these steps:

- ❖ On the Internet go to this site: <http://wordpress.com>
- ❖ Click on the “Sign Up Now!” button or the Sign Up tab at the top of the page.
 - Fill in the required information. Use an email address that you’re likely to use and write down your user name and password (You’ll use them for future Log-ins.).
 - At the bottom of the page, you have a choice:
 - Just a user name, please. [Choose this if you don’t want to start your own blog but want to contribute to other blogs, such as our class blog.]
 - Gimme a blog! [Choose this if you want to start your own blog and contribute to other blogs, such as our class blog]
 - **Send me an email from the email address you used when you signed up at wordpress.com**
 - I’ll invite you to be a Contributor to our class blog.
 - Then, whenever you Log in to wordpress.com, you’ll see a link on the left where you can click on [jarmstr](#). This will take you to our class blog site.

In class, I’ll direct you to the blog posting that has specific guidelines. Over the course of the semester, you’ll be asked to write about your experiences in learning and applying course strategies, such as Preview, Read and Mark (P-R-M), identifying text structures, Cmaps, working with Latin Prefixes, and so on. You’ll also be asked to read and reply to blog postings by several other classmates. The purpose of these writings is to improve your knowledge of strategies and to improve your ability to reflect and problem-solve in relationship to using course strategies.

VOCABULARY ASSIGNMENTS & QUIZZES (20%)

- I. Latin Roots will be presented in class. Students are required to learn these combining forms and keep notes on them. Quizzes will be given regularly on them.
- II. Latin Prefixes will be presented in class. Students are required to collect 80 words, each one starting with a Latin prefix. Words may be collected from any source, preferably from texts required in your courses this semester. Other than having a prefix, the only other requirements are these:
 - A. Target words containing Latin Prefixes must be taken from sentences in a source text.
 - B. Include the sentence containing the target word AND the sentence EITHER before OR AFTER the sentence containing the target word. Examples follow the Standard Formats. You may want to save yourself the time and effort of typing out the sentences. Instead, you may photocopy the pages with the text that contains the target words. Each page must have at least 5 target words clearly

marked and numbered on them and must include the title of the text. A sample will be provided in class.

- C. Number the target words consecutively from 1-80.
- D. For each of the five assignments, turn in an updated, alphabetized “master list” of all of the target words you’ve used to that point for all of the assignments. This will ensure that you don’t use the same word more than once.
- E. Use the standard format below for presenting each word and related information.

STANDARD FORMAT FOR SELF-COLLECTION OF PREFIXES

Target word number, 1-80. Target word

- a. Definition and [Latin origin]
- b. Prefix and its meaning
- c. *Sentence containing the target word AND the sentence EITHER before OR AFTER the sentence containing the target word.
- d. *Title and page number of text where word is found; include dates when source is a periodical

*Note: c and d may be accomplished by using photocopied pages from the text, with the text title identified and the target words clearly marked and numbered. Identify a minimum of 5 target words per photocopied page.

Sample 1 (Dictionary “a”)

1. Reflect
 - a. To think seriously (*on* or *upon*) [L. *re-*, back, *flectere*, to bend]
 - b. Re-: once more; back
 - c. “Rats can reflect on their internal mental states,” says Crystal. “They know when they don’t know.”
 - d. “Know Thyself—Man, Rat, or Bot,” *Newsweek*, April 23, 2007, p. 51.

Sample 2 (Dictionary “b”)

2. Increase
 - a. To become greater or larger [Lat. *increscere* : *in-*, in + *crescere*, to grow]
 - b. In-: in
 - c. Reading is one way to increase your number of exposures. Each time you read you increase your knowledge of it, however slightly, and eventually you’ll acquire full knowledge of it.
 - d. *Patterns and Connections*, p. 30.

Sample 3 (Dictionary “c”)

3. Commensurate
 - a. Corresponding in size or degree; in proportion [from late Latin *commensuratus*, from *com-* ‘together’ + *mensuratus*, past participle of *mensurare* ‘to measure’]
 - b. Com-: together
 - c. So this award is only mine in trust. It will not be difficult to find a dedication for the money part of it commensurate with the purpose and significance of its origin.
 - d. *Patterns and Connections*, p. 291.

INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS (40%)

You are required to complete one of the following Individual Projects, based on an area of reading and vocabulary that you would like to focus on for 10 weeks. Detailed information about each project is included in the course supplement and will be provided in class as needed

1. *Vocabulary Building*. Choose EITHER Project A OR Project B.
 - A. Complete the first 8 chapters of *Building College Vocabulary Strategies*. Every two weeks you are required to provide evidence of completing in each assigned chapter the Practice Exercises (except for the Short Answer exercises) in Parts A, B and Power Words and Puzzle Fun in the Review Exercises. From time to time you will be asked to complete a VARK exercise. At the end of the 5th and 10th weeks of the project, you will take cumulative tests on the chapters you have studied up to that point. You will be responsible for making up the tests in Microsoft Word using questions from the Fill in the Blank, Multiple Choice, and Correct or Incorrect ? exercises in the assigned chapters and submitting them as file attachments in e-mail attachments to the instructor.
 - B. Complete the reading, Exercises, and Comprehensive Tests in *The Least You Should Know About College Vocabulary Building*. Every week you are required to provide evidence of completing the Practice Exercises. At the 4th and 10th weeks of the projects, you will write a reflection on what you've learned from the project.
 - C. Complete any 4 units in *Merriam-Webster's Vocabulary Builder*. Every two weeks you are required to provide evidence of completing the quizzes in each unit. At the end of the 5th and 10th weeks of the project, you will take cumulative tests on the units you have studied up to that point. You will be responsible for making up the tests in Microsoft Word using a multiple-choice format (based on the quizzes in the book) and submitting them as file attachments in e-mail attachments to the instructor.
2. *Reading Comprehension*. On readings of your choice (from textbook chapters—minimum of a major section, essays, articles, short stories, and/or novels), incorporate reading strategies as appropriate into your reading process from “Strategy-Use Questionnaire.” Complete a free recall of the content and a map or outline of the author’s “thread of meaning” from your readings during weeks 1-3 and 6, 8 and 9. Reflections are due during weeks 4, 7, and 10 of the project.
3. *Reading Rate*. Select a book (novel or non-fiction) with a DRP rating close to your Independent Level DRP score from the Degrees of Reading Power assessment. Read for a minimum of 20 minutes a day on four days each week (7days). During the first week, establish a baseline reading rate. Then push yourself to read 10% faster until you can read at your new rate without losing comprehension. Maintain a Reading Log of your reading sessions and calculations of reading rate (words per minute). Considering your progress and challenges in improving your reading rate, write brief reflections, which are due at the end of the 3rd, 7th, and 10th weeks of the project.

READING ASSIGNMENTS & READING ASSESSMENTS (20%)

Reading Assignments (15%).

See Preliminary Calendar (handout).

Reading Assessments (5%)

1. During the semester your reading may be assessed by having you read a selection and answer questions about content. Your reading rate will also be determined.
2. During the semester you will practice one or more speed reading techniques, and your reading rate will be determined.

Being a Self-Starter

If you're a self starter and make your education a high priority in your life, you're going to be successful and have satisfaction as a university student. The following checklist gives you some suggestions for being a self starter. No one except you can give you a "self-start" button. However, if you are a self starter—that means doing 90% of these actions 90% of the time—then you will be awarded a "self-start button" (a key tag with "self-start" printed on it) as a symbol of your achievement and your dedication to being an excellent student.

Self-Starter Checklist

First Week of the Semester	
_____ 1. Read the syllabus for each course.	For each course, decide what strategies you're likely to use to learn all of the important information and to review it for tests.
_____ 2. Buy your books for each course.	If you can't buy your books right away, arrange to have access to them.
_____ 3. Start a calendar for the whole semester.	Highlight the major test dates and major-assignment due dates in all your classes.
_____ 4. Exchange contact information with a "study buddy" in each course.	Cover for each other if one of you has to miss class.
The Rest of the Semester	
_____ 1. Stay caught up with assignments.	If you can't read the assignment before class, at least preview it. If you don't understand course material, see your professor during office hours or make an appointment, if necessary.
_____ 2. Attend class unless you have an emergency.	If you have to miss class, find out in detail what you missed. Get the notes from a "study buddy" or, after you return to class, contact your professor about what you missed. (You can't study the information if you don't have it!)
_____ 3. Plan at least a week ahead.	Plan for study time, work schedule, family responsibilities, social time, and other life events. If you're caught up with your assignments, you'll also have some flexibility to do things that come up spontaneously or to take care of situations that arise suddenly.
_____ 4. Start papers and projects the day they're assigned.	Break down larger tasks into smaller, manageable parts. Work steadily on these major tasks till they're done. Don't let more than 1 day go by without working at least a little bit on them.
_____ 5. Start reviewing for tests at least 5 days before the test date.	Review means that you've already finished all the reading and have all of the notes and other materials you'll need for review.