

EDU 455/EDCI 555 Language Study for Teachers in the Common Core Era

Fall 2019

2 credits



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Required Texts

1. *Getting Grammar: 150 New Ways to Teach an Old Subject* (Donna Topping) ©2006
2. *The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation* (Jane Straus) ©2014

Course description

This 2-credit, self-paced course is designed to develop participants' knowledge of English language fundamentals. We will study grammar, punctuation, and usage.

Assignments

- Discussions: 2 postings (20 points)
- Parts of Speech: 3 Lessons (30 points)
- Grammar Portfolio (30 points)
- Reflection paper (20 points)

Grading (total possible points: 100)

A	92-100%
A-	90-91%
B+	88-89%
B	82-87%
B-	80-81%
C+	78-79%
C	72-77%
C-	70-71

You only do good work when you're taking risks and pushing yourself.

Sally Hawkins

Much good work is lost for the lack of a little more.

Edward H. Harriman

Whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well.

Lord Chesterfield

1. Parts of Speech: 3 lessons (30 points)

Study the Topping book. Decide what three parts of speech* you want to learn more about. Read those portions of the Topping text (consult the table of contents and index) and design 3 lessons—using Donna Topping’s ideas. Each lesson should reference the page in the Topping book where you found the teaching idea, include an objective, hook, procedures, and evaluation component. The lesson should be complete in the sense that a substitute teacher could look at all components and know how to teach it.

*8 Parts of speech: nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, interjections, and conjunctions.

2. Discussions: 2 postings (20 pts.)

Write an introductory post during week one. Then during weeks 3 and 5, respond to the two discussion prompts, which are intended to help you make connections between what you are learning in this class and how these understandings will help you teach grammar to students.

Discussion Requirements

Original/initial posting requirements

1. There is a sense in the posting that ideas lead to each other and connections are being made.
2. The initial post integrates readings with the world of practice.
3. The initial post meets the length specification (at least 300 words.)
4. There are no distracting English language conventions that would interfere with the meaning the writer wants to convey and the meaning the reader is seeking.

3. Grammar Portfolio (30 points) Complete the following 6 activities using our Blue Book (author: Jane Strauss) text as your to-go-to resource. The detailed table of contents and index will help you locate specific information. Each activity is worth 5 points.

- Title each activity. For example: “Activity One: Alphabet ABCs” or “Activity Two: Nouns! Nouns! Nouns!”
- Word-process all responses.



- Your goal: Have fun while practicing these grammar elements. Make this project into something you're proud of and would use with students.
- Evaluation is based on content accuracy and professional presentation.

1. Alphabet ABCs



For each letter of the alphabet, be creative and write a word that fits into a particular category; use a dictionary if that is helpful. For example, you might list adjectives that describe children, nouns that involve hunting, or action verbs that describe a sport, such as tennis. Consider how you'll format and use graphics to finish this assignment. See the examples posted to the Moodle course homepage so you avoid over-simplifying this activity.

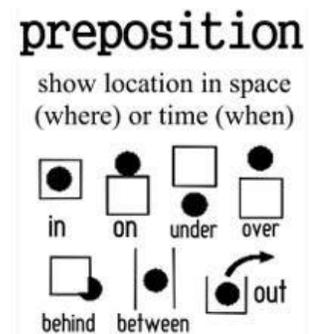
2. Nouns! Nouns! Nouns!

Use authentic text and search for nouns—at least 30. Remember that a “noun” is a person, place, thing, or idea. Photocopy the text or if it is a newspaper article, paste it neatly onto another sheet of paper for the purpose of presentation. Use three different colored highlighters to “sort” the nouns as you work through and highlight the text selection. Create a key to explain what each highlighted color means. For example: Yellow = common, concrete nouns; Blue = Proper nouns; Pink = Abstract nouns. Then on a separate page, type three categories and list your nouns in the proper category (at least 10/category):

- Common, concrete nouns
- Proper nouns
- Abstract nouns

3. What's the Phrase? Prepositional or Infinitive

Find a newspaper or magazine article. Print it and paste it onto another paper for presentation purposes. Then scan the article, searching for these two types of phrases. Use one color of highlighter and identify all the prepositional phrases. Now use another colored highlighter and identify all the infinitive phrases (remember: infinitives = TO + a verb.) **OR** Search newspaper captions for prepositional and infinitive phrases. They are everywhere! Cut out and categorize these word sets into two categories—prepositional phrases, infinitive phrases—using a T-chart set-up.



4. Preposition Fun

List 30 single-word prepositions. Now list 15 compound prepositions. (Consult the *Blue Book* resource.) Now write a how-to paragraph for starting a car, putting on skis, making a smoothie, or _____. But stop—there's a catch. You must do this without using ANY prepositional phrases. Yes, your paragraph will be very choppy and sound dreadful. That's the first step. Read on for step two.

Prof. Ellsworth's abbreviated example:

I looked outside and realized the grass needed mowing. I remembered that the mower needed gas, so I added it and was careful as I poured the gas. Then I adjusted my safety goggles and baseball hat. I was ready. As I leaned down, I grasped the cord to start the machine. Nothing happened. So I did it again and this time the machine roared. Unfortunately, I had forgotten to pick up twigs and other debris. Mumbling, I shut off the machine and proceeded to collect the loose branches. Once again the machine obeyed my wishes as I pulled the cord. I was careful so that I wouldn't miss any spots as I went back and forth. Thirty minutes later, I was finished. The lawn mower was cleaned, and I was sitting down and smiling.

Now revise this paragraph and rewrite it using at least 10 different prepositional phrases. Highlight (or underline) all the prepositional phrases you've included. Don't underline infinitive phrases!

I looked outside and realized the grass needed mowing. Luckily, I remembered that the mower needed gas and carefully poured it into the narrow opening. Then I screwed on the lid and wiped my hands with a rag. After pushing the mower to the middle of the driveway, I put on my safety goggles and adjusted my baseball hat. I was ready for action. As I leaned down, I grasped the cord to start the machine. Nothing happened. So I did it again, and this time the machine roared to life. Unfortunately, despite my preparations, I had forgotten to pick up twigs and other debris from last night's rainstorm. Mumbling under my breath, I shut off the machine and proceeded to collect the loose branches. Once again the machine obeyed my wishes as I yanked at the cord. Near the rose bushes at the southwest corner of my yard, I took extra care so that I wouldn't miss any spots as I went back and forth. Thirty minutes later, I was finished. The lawn mower was cleaned and stowed in the garage, and I was sitting on the front stoop with a tall glass of lemonade, smiling in satisfaction at my work.

5. Conjunction Junction—What's Your Function?

Select one or two authentic text selections and search for conjunctions. Make a T-chart with these categories: *Coordinating/FANBOYS* and *Subordinating/AAWWUBBIS*. Now find example sentences from your text selection(s) and carefully cut out the sentences, placing them in the correct category. Highlight the conjunction in each sentence. Next to each sentence, identify what sentence parts it is linking—for example, two nouns, two verbs, two independent clauses, one dependent clause and one independent clause, etc.

A few examples follow. In the first two examples, the underlined subordinating conjunction joins one dependent and independent clause. In the third and fourth examples, the underlined coordinating conjunction joins two verbs and nouns, respectively.

Example 1:

Even though Beth is tall, she isn't very skilled on the basketball court. OR
Beth isn't very skilled on the basketball court even though she is tall.

Example 2:

Since Harry was late, we couldn't go to the movie. OR We couldn't go to the movie since Harry was late.

Example 3:

Mike played football and scored the winning touchdown.

While in Hawaii, I walked the beach and went swimming every day.

Example 4:

When I was in high school, I studied French, but not Spanish.

At the fair, we bought cotton candy and honey-roasted peanuts.

6. Hyphen Alert! Wanted: Compound adjectives

Search for at least 10 different compounded adjectives from a couple of authentic text selections—for example, a newspaper or magazine. Paste the text onto another paper for presentation purposes. Highlight or underline each hyphenated (compounded) adjective and circle the noun it describes. *Caution: Avoid hyphenated nouns such as *ex-president*, *self-respect*, *self-responsible*, *brother-in-law*. These are nouns, not adjectives. Correct examples follow:*

high-rise apartment, second-year teacher, at-risk community, search-and-rescue team, high-protein energy drink, stem-cell biologist, broad-spectrum antibiotic, part-time jo

Reflection Paper (20 pts.)

For graduate-level participants only. Drawing from our readings and course material, prepare a 2-3 page (d.s.) reflection that discusses what you've learned about grammar instruction and what constitutes effective instruction. Reflect on what changes you plan to make in your instruction and explain how you might realize these goals.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

As this is a self-paced class, your primary responsibility is to read chapters 1-7 in the Topping book and complete the required assignments (2 discussion postings, 3 parts of speech lessons, grammar portfolio, and reflection paper.)

IN WHAT ORDER you do these is up to you. This class is set up to work around your busy schedules. 😊

Week	Topics	Assignment
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions and course overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board Introductions.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of speech: nouns, pronouns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Topping, chapters 1-2
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of speech: adjectives, adverbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board post #1 of 2. One original post and at least one reply. (10 pts.) • Read Topping, chapters 3-4
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of speech: interjections, prepositions, conjunctions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of Speech—3 lessons due • Read Topping, chapters 5-6
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently confused words • Homophones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board post 2 of 2. One original post and at least one reply. (10 pts.) • Read Topping, chapter 7
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mnemonics • Ideas for helping students understand tricky aspects of English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Topping, Appendix A • Take the Test, see Appendix B; self-evaluate with answer key, Appendix F.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keys to learning: meaningful use, repetition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar Portfolio due (30)
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert instruction in ELA, grammar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection Paper due (20 pts.) 2-3 double-spaced pages minimum. Reference course material, APA style.

