

**COURSE TITLE: LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS TO ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING**

**WA CLOCK HRS: 20**  
**OREGON PDUs: 20**  
**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48: 20**

**NO. OF CREDITS: 2 QUARTER CREDITS**  
**[semester equivalent = 1.33 credits]**

**INSTRUCTOR: Ann DeChenne**  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to empower teachers with strategies for leveraging language functions to enhance content instruction in the mainstream classroom. It emphasizes the idea that language is a crucial tool for learning and understanding academic subjects, and through this course, teachers can learn to effectively integrate five language functions into their teaching practices to support student success.

This course is appropriate for educators, coaches, and mentors working with grades 6-12.  
All required reading is online.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

1. Learned how to identify a language function and explain why it is important.
2. Familiarized themselves with function language and how it supports learning.
3. Learned how to identify function language to support students in the classroom.
4. Learned various instructional strategies and techniques for using functions in lessons to assist student learning.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

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**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

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**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
  2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
  3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%
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**CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This

information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

## **ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

No text is required. All reading is online.

None. All reading is online.

### **MATERIALS FEE**

None

## **ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

### **A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

#### **Assignment #1: Introduction**

- Review the [PowerPoint](#) presentation for this course.
- Please introduce yourself and briefly explain why you decided to take this course. (1-2 pages)

#### **Assignment #2: Identify Language Functions**

Students will learn to identify language functions and explain why they are important.

- Review the [PowerPoint](#) presentation lesson 2.
- Read the Language Function Reading [PDF](#)
- Reflect on the presentation and the reading. Was anything a surprise or an "aha" moment?
- Write at least 1-2 paragraphs and no more than 3 paragraphs..

#### **Assignment #3: The Five Language Functions**

Students will have familiarized themselves with the five function language and how it supports learning.

- Review the [PowerPoint](#) presentation for this lesson.
  1. Cause & Effect
  2. Description & Elaboration
  3. Sequence
  4. Argument & Support
  5. Compare & Contrast
- Review the Resource on Academic Language Functions [PDF](#).
- Write a reflection (1-2 pages) on what you have learned from the presentation and the resource pdf.

1. Was there anything that may have been a surprise?
2. What are your thoughts on what this may mean for your teaching?

This is a good place to pose questions you haven't expressed, things you wonder about or maybe are confused about.

#### **Assignment #4: Language Function in the Classroom**

Students will learn how to identify function language to support students in the classroom.

- Review the [PDF](#) presentation for this lesson.
- Please read the [Functions of Language](#) in the Classroom blog post.
- Read the article [The Dietary Dilemma: Weighing the Benefits of Eating Meat and Vegetarianism](#).
- Thinking about your content area, how could you integrate language functions into your lessons?

Please take some time to look at your curriculum and choose a passage or a short excerpt, and identify the main language function and a secondary language function. In a 1-2 page paper:

1. What word or phrases did you identify that pointed to the language function?
2. Please share the passage or short excerpt you chose for the assignment.

### **Assignment #5: Instructional Strategies & Techniques**

Students will learn various instructional strategies and techniques for using functions in lessons to assist student learning.

- Review the [PowerPoint](#) presentation for this lesson.
  - Read the article [The Dietary Dilemma: Weighing the Benefits of Eating Meat and Vegetarianism](#).
  - Review the language function cheat sheets provided
1. [Cause and Effect](#)
  2. [Compare and Contrast](#)
  3. [Problem/Solution and Argument/Support](#)
  4. [Sequencing](#)
- Looking at the article, The Dietary Dilemma: Weighing the Benefits of Eating Meat and Vegetarianism, and cheat sheets, what language function (aside from cause and effect) would you focus on? How would you aid the students in learning the language function you chose (graphic organizer, colored highlighter, script, etc.)?  
Write a 1-2 page reflection on how you would approach teaching with a function using the article.

## **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

### **B. LEARNING APPLICATION**

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. ?Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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### **Assignment #6: Lesson Plan**

Complete one of the following.

#### **Option A: Lesson Plan**

Develop a comprehensive lesson plan that integrates the chosen language function into your content area, keeping in mind the needs and interests of your students. A single lesson demonstrating your understanding of the language functions to aid students' comprehension and learning. Your plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Grade Level
- Content Topic
- Lesson Objective/Goals: Clearly state the objective of the lesson, focusing on both the content knowledge and the language function skill that students will acquire.
- Targeted Language Function: Identify the specific language function you have chosen to focus on for this lesson (compare and contrast, description and elaboration, sequencing, cause and effect, or argument and support). Explain why this language function is relevant to the chosen content topic.
- Lesson Materials and Resources: List all the resources and materials needed to implement the lesson successfully. Include any technology, handouts, textbooks, or supplementary materials that will support student learning.
- Instructional Strategies: Outline the step-by-step instructional strategies you will use to teach the content and the targeted

language function.

- Discussion Questions: Include any discussion questions that can be used to aid students in the acquisition of the language function.
- Activities for Multiple Group Sizes: What activities can be used for different group sizes?
- Resources (multiple print and/or digital sources)
- Evaluation of Students' Function Language Development: How will you evaluate your students' function language knowledge separate from the content knowledge?
- View THI's [Lesson Plan Design](#) for the suggested layout.
- Submit your lesson to your instructor via the lesson tab below.
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by checking the [lesson library](#) box when you submit your lesson.

**OR**

**Option B:**

Complete online research by looking up at least 3-4 professional development or academic journal articles (cite the articles) on language functions in your content area. (Google Scholar is a good place to find academic articles).

- Write a 3-4 pages summarizing what you found.
- Compare and contrast the information you found with the information you learned with your search.
- Was the article useful for your practice?

**Assignment #7: Providing Feedback**

Devise a plan for providing feedback to students on their language function skills understanding. Also, consider how you will reflect on the effectiveness of your lesson and make improvements for future instruction. (Minimum 2-3 pages)

**Assignment #8: (500 Level ONLY)**

In addition to the 400-level assignments, complete **two (2)** of the following:

*Option A)*

Teach the lesson from assignment 7 and reflect (3 to 4 pages) on the results of the lesson plan.

- List the main objectives of the 5 language functions.
- Strategies to determine student growth.
- Include any required Lesson adaptation to accommodate student understanding or engagement.
- What was the level of Student engagement?
- What worked, what did you struggle with, and why?
- Is there something you would like to change next time or add to lessons generally?
- Is there an area you still need assistance with?

**AND/OR**

**Option B)**

Design a pre-assessment activity to gauge students' prior knowledge and understanding of the content topic and the targeted language function. Based on the information gathered in the pre-assessment activity, create a formative and summative assessment to measure student progress in your language function unit.)

**AND/OR**

**Option C)**

Describe in a 2-3 page paper how you will differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of your students. Consider learners requiring additional support or extension activities, i.e., TAG, SPED, and multi-language learners.

**C. INTEGRATION PAPER**

Assignment #9: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

**SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER**

**(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)**

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?

4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
  5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?
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**INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

Ann DeChenne, M.Ed, earned a B. A from Portland State University in Social Sciences in 2006 and a Master's Degree in Education through the Bilingual Pathways Program at Portland State University in 2008. Ann is completing a Ph.D. in Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Evaluation from Walden University with a research focus on rural education and language in mathematics. She works in a small rural-fringe high school in Oregon. In addition, Ann is the Founder/Director of Little by Little Education Services, a 501c3 nonprofit working with schools, administration, teachers, and students in the USA, Chile, Mexico, and soon India. The organization's website is [www.littlebylittle-education.org](http://www.littlebylittle-education.org)

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS TO ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING**

Fenner, D. S., & Snyder, S. (2017). *Unlocking English learners; potential: Strategies for making content accessible*. Corwin Press. While language learning is for all students in all content areas, it is only in books designed for teachers of multilingual learners that provide information on language in content areas.

Walqui, A., & Bunch, G. C. (Eds.). (2019). *Amplifying the curriculum: Designing quality learning opportunities for English learners*. Teachers College Press.

Zwiers, J. (2013). *Building academic language: Essential practices for content classrooms, grades 5-12*. John Wiley & Sons.

Zwiers has written many books that provide a superb overview of academic language and how to use it in content areas. This book specifically provides a form and function view of language in the classroom.