

**COURSE TITLE:** READ FOR PLEASURE & INSPIRATION: Fire up Your Life & Work  
**NO. OF CREDITS:** 6 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 4.00 credits]

**INSTRUCTOR:** Suzanne Warner  
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**WA CLOCK HRS:** 60  
**OREGON PDUs:** 60  
**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 60

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

How often as professionals do we get to simply read for pleasure and inspiration in ways that enrich our lives and our work? And what are our youth reading today which is both constructive and engaging? In this course for all teachers K-12, you may select from a wide range of reading lists, such as Goodreads, NY Times best sellers, Bill Gates reading list—and many more, to choose the books that suit your personal and professional needs. We will also reflect on the importance of enjoyment to better engage our students in productive reading. Text(s) cost depends on choice of books.

“You can find magic wherever you look. Sit back and relax, all you need is a book.” – Dr. Seuss

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

- Learned about the benefits of reading for pleasure.
- Delved into the neuroscience of how the brain reacts during and after reading.
- Educated themselves about the importance of reading for pleasure for all ages.
- Explore why students tend to read for pleasure less as they get older
- Experienced the process of reading for pleasure and inspiration.
- Enjoyed a good book or two!

**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**

There is no required text ~ you choose which books you want to read!

None. All reading is online.

### **MATERIALS FEE**

Text(s) cost depends on choice of book(s).

## **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: COURSE FORUM – INTRODUCTION**

Introduce yourself – who you are, where you teach, and share the types of books you read and how you typically choose the books you read.

In selecting the books you will read for this course, reflect on what type of books you typically read and consider possible alternatives, either in style, subject or genre. To help you make the optimum choice of books, contemplate the following:

- Is there a burning contemporary issue that you would like to learn about more?
- Any subject that you've been meaning to explore?
- Any book that's been on your "to read" list for a long time, that you need a bit of motivation to actually sit and read?
- Is there a classroom management technique that you've been meaning to research?
- Are there any topics of personal interest that affect you, your family or your students?
- Does a particular time period, culture, religion, society, nation, etc... pique your interest?
- Are you embarking on a new phase of your life and want to do some research and learning?

To also help you select your books, you may want to look ahead at the various assignments so you are sure to select books that will work for you.

Share your 250-300 word response and feel free to respond to any other posting from educators taking this course.

#### **Assignment #2: COURSE FORUM – RESEARCHING BOOKS**

Spend some time reviewing the following book lists:

- Amazon's Books to Read in a Lifetime: <https://www.amazon.com/b?node=8192263011>
- Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD) Books: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/browse-by-author.aspx>
- Bill Gates Books: <https://www.gatesnotes.com/Books#All>
- Goodreads Book List: <https://www.goodreads.com/list/tag/best>
- Library of Congress Booklist: <http://read.gov/adults/>
- New York Times Best Sellers: [https://www.nytimes.com/books/best-sellers/?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/books/best-sellers/?_r=0)
- Top 10 Books on the Science of Creating A Compassionate World: <http://www.yesmagazine.org/happiness/the-science-of-creating-a-compassionate-world-10-best-books-of-2016-20161230>
- 100 Notable Books of 2020: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/notable-books.html>

After looking through the lists and others you may have found, select 3 - 5 candidates for your readings for this course. As you delve deeper into the summary of each book, think about the following questions as they pertain to each potential book (you will select three of these to be answered in Assignments 6 & 7):

1. What were the "aha" moments for you as you read the books?
2. What types of questions did you have while reading the books? Were you able to find the answers? If so, how?
3. Did you find yourself making connections to other areas of your life? Such as?
4. Did any of the characters resonate with you or remind you of you or someone you know? Describe.
5. What were your expectations prior to reading the books? Were these expectations met?

Also consider selecting different types of books so you can determine if there is a type of book that provides more benefits of pleasure reading for you than another type. Once you select your books, please post your selections in the COURSE FORUM stating the name of the book, the author, number of pages, and a short summary (this can be copied from Amazon or whatever source you've chosen). Also briefly share (a sentence or two) why you selected the books. If reading more than one book, do this for each book.

Please follow this format for posting each book:

*The Well-Balanced Teacher: How to Work Smarter and Stay Sane Inside the Classroom and Out* by Mike Anderson, 115 pages. From Amazon: You've probably heard the advice put on your own oxygen mask before assisting others. This is true both in airplanes and in classrooms. You have to take care of yourself before you can help someone else. If teachers are stressed out and exhausted, how can they have the patience, positive energy, and enthusiasm to provide the best instruction for students? Author Mike Anderson asked that question as a teacher himself, and the answers he found form the basis of *The Well-Balanced Teacher*. He found that teachers need to take care of themselves in five key areas to keep themselves in shape to care for their students.

In addition to paying proper attention to their basic needs for nutrition, hydration, sleep, exercise, and emotional and spiritual refreshment, teachers also need

Belonging: Teachers need to feel positive connections with other people, both in school and outside school.

Significance: Teachers want to know that they make a positive difference through the work they do.

Positive engagement: When teachers enjoy their work, they have great energy and passion for their teaching.

Balance: Healthy teachers set boundaries and create routines so that they can have rich lives both in the classroom and at home.

Anderson devotes a chapter to each of these needs, describing in frank detail his own struggles and offering a multitude of practical tips to help readers find solutions that will work for them. When teachers find ways to take care of their own needs, they will be healthier and happier, and they will have the positive energy and stamina needed to help their students learn and grow into healthy adults.

I choose this book because.....

Feel free to respond to any other posting from educators taking this course.

### Assignment #3: BENEFITS OF READING FOR PLEASURE & THE NEUROSCIENCE OF READING

1. Read the following online articles on the benefits of reading for pleasure and the neuroscience of reading:

- <http://whytoread.com/why-to-read-10-reasons-why-reading-books-will-save-your-life/>
- <https://www.edutopia.org/article/benefits-reading-pleasure>
- <http://oedb.org/librarian/your-brain-on-books-10-things-that-happen-to-our-minds-when-we-read/>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-athletes-way/201401/reading-fiction-improves-brain-connectivity-and-function>
- <https://www.inc.com/melanie-curtin/yale-researchers-say-doing-this-simple-activity-can-add-2-years-to-your-life-its-not-exercise.html>

2. Complete the Review Questions.

3. In 200-300 words, summarize and reflect on the readings, responding to such questions as:

- How does reading impact the state of our mind?
- What are some of the benefits of reading? Have you experienced any if these benefits, and if so, describe.
- What are some of the brain's responses to reading?
- How does reading a book differ from reading short snippets of articles in terms of benefits and brain activity?

### Assignment #4: IMPORTANCE OF READING FOR PLEASURE

1. Watch the YouTube video by Dr. Alice Sullivan regarding the lifelong benefits of reading for pleasure (the first half is the lecture, the second half a Q & A session):

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/DBmRT3d4fd8?autoplay=1&controls=1&showinfo=0>

2. Read the following online articles on the importance of reading for pleasure.

<https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/article/the-power-of-a-good-book>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/benefits-reading-pleasure>

<https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2014/jun/03/how-to-encourage-students-read-for-pleasure-teacher-top-tips>

3. In 200 – 300 words, describe the parallels of reading for pleasure between children/students and adults. Reflect on your own experience as a reader as a child/student and now as an adult – what similarities/differences are there? Does your experience as a child and now as an adult reader reflect what you have read in Assignment 3 & 4? In considering your students, have you observed any of the characteristics you've read about in the online articles and video? Such as?

### **Assignment #5: WHY AREN'T TEENS READING BOOKS FOR PLEASURE ANYMORE?**

1. Read the following online articles on the decline of teenagers reading for pleasure:

• <http://www.npr.org/2014/05/12/311111701/why-arent-teens-reading-like-they-used-to>

• <http://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/books-smell-like-old-people-the-decline-of-teen-reading>

2. In 200-300 words, summarize and reflect on the readings, responding to such questions as:

- Have you noticed a decline in your students/children read less as they get older?
- What are some reasons cited as why students are reading less?
- Do you agree or disagree that advances in technology are part of the problem? Why or why not?
- Do you see this trend continuing? How do you see reading for pleasure progressing over the next decade?
- Share your ideas and experiences with being able to successfully engage students in reading books which interest them.

Feel free to respond to postings from any other educators taking this course.

### **Assignment #6: COURSE FORUM – BOOK 1 REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

For each book you have read for this course, in 250 – 500 words, briefly (no more than 1 -2 paragraphs) summarize the book and storyline. The remainder of your response should focus on your experience of the process of reading in terms of the additional readings and the YouTube video. In addition, select three of the five questions from Assignment 2 to answer in depth. As a reminder, the five questions follow:

1. What were the “aha” moments for you as you read the books?
2. What types of questions did you have while reading the books? Were you able to find the answers? If so, how?
3. Did you find yourself making connections to other areas of your life? Such as?
4. Did any of the characters resonate with you or remind you of someone you know? Describe.
5. What were your expectations prior to reading the books? Were these expectations met?

Take a look at other posting from fellow educators. Are there any books that you've also read? Feel free to add your impressions and thoughts as well.

### **Assignment #7: COURSE FORUM – BOOK 2 REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

For each book you have read for this course, in 250 – 500 words, briefly (no more than 1 -2 paragraphs) summarize the book and storyline. The remainder of your response should focus on your experience of the process of reading in terms of the additional readings and the YouTube video. In addition, select three of the five questions from Assignment 2 to answer in depth. As a reminder, the five questions follow:

1. What were the “aha” moments for you as you read the books?
2. What types of questions did you have while reading the books? Were you able to find the answers? If so, how?
3. Did you find yourself making connections to other areas of your life? Such as?
4. Did any of the characters resonate with you or remind you of someone you know? Describe.
5. What were your expectations prior to reading the books? Were these expectations met?

Take a look at other posting from fellow educators. Are there any books that you've also read? Feel free to add your impressions and thoughts as well.

### Assignment #8: CULMINATING PAPER

Write a 500+ work culminating paper considering your thoughts, experiences and feelings as you read the two (or more) books you selected for this course. Consider the following:

- Did you find that one genre or type of book provided more relaxation or enjoyment? Why?
- Does the reading of these books prompt you to read more books for pleasure? Why or why not?
- Which book that you read was more interesting to you and why?
- Did one book have more impact on you? If so, in what way?
- Where do you see your personal reading going from here?

### 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 #9: COURSE FORUM – CREATE READING GROUP QUESTIONS

Independent of any reading group guide that may have been in the book you read, please create five or more questions about the book that would inspire deep, rich, and meaningful conversation among fellow readers. List your five questions first, then please answer each question from your own perspective.

Please follow this format for posting:

Name of book (ex: [The Well-Balanced Teacher: How to Work Smarter and Stay Sane Inside the Classroom and Out](#) by Mike Anderson)

Questions:

- 1.
- 2.
- ....

My responses:

- 1.
- 2.
- ...

Share your response in 500+ words. Take a look at other posting from fellow educators. Are there any books that you've also read? If so, please responds to one or more of the reading group questions(s) posted as well.

#### Assignment #10: LESSON PLAN CREATION

Choose one of the following possibilities:

- A. If you chose to read a book that is useful in your professional situation:  
Create a lesson plan (you may use any lesson plan template you'd like - and are welcome to use the [Heritage Lesson Plan Template](#)) reflecting what you learned in the book, either in its entirety or a particular section.  
If possible, teach your newly created lesson, summarizing and reflecting on the experience for both you and your students. Submit your lesson along with samples of exemplary student work (via video, photos, scans of essays, etc) and include any rubric used for assessment purposes. Once your lesson is done, upload it to The Heritage Institute [lesson library](#) following the correct methods to properly classify it.

- B. If you chose to read a book that was for simple reading pleasure and you will not use in your professional situation. Create a lesson plan of the book, either in its entirety or a particular section, for a hypothetical adult reading group/class. Submit your lesson (you may use any lesson plan template you'd like - and are welcome to use the [Heritage Lesson Plan Template](#) and upload it into The Heritage Institute [lesson library](#) following the correct methods to properly classify it.
- C. If neither Choice A or B appeals to you:  
Write a 500+ word article concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students in terms of reading for pleasure.
- Please refer to the guidelines for our blog [What Works: Teaching at its Best](#) at <https://www.hol.edu/blog> prior to writing your article.
  - When you submit your article please also email a copy to [Yvonne Hall](#) THI blog curator and media specialist.
  - Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publication on our THI website.
  - Submit your article to your instructor via Response field and The Heritage Institute [lesson library](#) via Submit Lesson.
  - As you submit your lesson, consider sharing it with other teachers taking our courses by checking the lesson library box.

### Assignment #11: (500 Level ONLY)

Choose one of the following three:

1. Create an annotated bibliography of 5 – 8 books in the same genre of the book you read.
2. Create a PowerPoint Presentation about reading for pleasure in terms of students and adults that could be used as an in-service in your school or local adult education workshop.
3. Conduct additional research via periodicals, online articles or videos (a minimum of two) in one or more of the following areas – the benefits and importance of reading for pleasure, the neuroscience behind reading, how to teach students to read for pleasure. Document the key points you learned in either a mind map or 2-page paper. Include an analysis of how this research supports or contrasts with the course text and readings.

### C. INTEGRATION PAPER

Assignment #12: (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:

**Suzanne Warner, M.S.**, received her Masters Degree in Education from the University of Rochester, New York. She has taught mathematics in the middle school, high school, and college settings, most recently in Oregon. Suzanne has been lauded by administrators, colleagues, students and parents regarding her teaching and classroom management skills. Her students enjoy learning in a respectful, productive environment, where each student is in control of her/his own learning and behaviors. She strongly believes that all students want to do well, and creates a teaching environment for them to succeed.

When not in the classroom, Suzanne enjoys spending time with her family reading, hiking, backpacking and traveling.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

#### READ FOR PLEASURE & INSPIRATION: Fire up Your Life & Work

**Armstrong, Paul B.**, *How Literature Plays with the Brain: The Neuroscience of Reading and Art*, Reprint edition, John Hopkins

Universality Press, 2014, 240 pages, ISBN: 978-1421415765. Armstrong examines the parallels between certain features of literary experience and functions of the brain. His central argument is that literature plays with the brain through experiences of harmony and dissonance which set in motion oppositions that are fundamental to the neurobiology of mental functioning. These oppositions negotiate basic tensions in the operation of the brain between the drive for pattern, synthesis, and constancy and the need for flexibility, adaptability, and openness to change.

**Cremin, Tereasa, Marilyn Mottram, Fiona Collins, Sasha Powell, Kimberly Safford**, *Building Communities of Engaged Readers: Reading for Pleasure*, 1st Edition, Routledge, 2014, 192 pages, ISBN: 978-1138777484. *Building Communities of Engaged Readers* highlights the concept of 'Reading Teachers' who are not only knowledgeable about texts for children, but are aware of their own reading identities and prepared to share their enthusiasm and understanding of what being a reader means. Sharing the processes of reading with young readers is an innovative approach to developing new generations of readers.

**Dehaene, Stanislaw**, *Reading in the Brain: The New Science of How We Read*, Reprint Edition, Penguin Books, 2010, 400 pages, ISBN: 978-0143118053. The act of reading is so easily taken for granted that we forget what an astounding feat it is. How can a few black marks on white paper evoke an entire universe of meanings? It's even more amazing when we consider that we read using a primate brain that evolved to serve an entirely different purpose. In this riveting investigation, Stanislas Dehaene explores every aspect of this human invention, from its origins to its neural underpinnings. A world authority on the subject, Dehaene reveals the hidden logic of spelling, describes pioneering research on how we process languages, and takes us into a new appreciation of the brain and its wondrous capacity to adapt.

**Jacobs, Alan**, *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*, 1st Edition, Oxford University Press, 2011, 176 pages, ISBN: 978-0199747498. In recent years, cultural commentators have sounded the alarm about the dire state of reading in America. Americans are not reading enough, they say, or reading the right books, in the right way. Jacobs's interactions with his students and the readers of his own books suggest that many readers lack confidence; they wonder whether they are reading well, with proper focus and attentiveness, with due discretion and discernment. For such people, indeed for all readers, Jacobs offers some simple, powerful, and much needed advice: read at whim, read what gives you delight, and do so without shame.

**Ulin, David L.**, *The Lost Art of Reading: Why Books Matter in a Distracted Time*, 1st Edition, Sasquatch Books, 2010, 160 pages, ISBN: 978-1570616709. Reading is a revolutionary act, an act of engagement in a culture that wants us to disengage. In *The Lost Art of Reading*, David L. Ulin asks a number of timely questions - why is literature important? What does it offer, especially now? Blending commentary with memoir, Ulin addresses the importance of the simple act of reading in an increasingly digital culture. Reading a book, flipping through hard pages, or shuffling them on screen - it doesn't matter. The key is the act of reading, and it's seriousness and depth. Ulin emphasizes the importance of reflection and pause allowed by stopping to read a book, and the accompanying focus required to let the mind run free in a world that is not one's own.