

# AIM Pathways to Structured Literacy Course and Practicum Syllabus

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## AIM PATHWAYS

AIM Pathways is an interactive, digital, professional development platform designed to strengthen educators' knowledge and skills in the science of literacy instruction. Course content is aligned to the International Dyslexia Association's Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading. Online coursework is accessible at your convenience—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, anywhere there is an internet connection. In order to translate theoretical models into classroom practice, AIM Pathways courses are designed to follow a Learn, Practice, and Apply cycle:

- Learn – Participants acquire knowledge by interacting with video lectures, articles, animated videos, and more.
- Practice – Participants practice newly acquired knowledge through card-sorting exercises, quizzes, and surveys.
- Apply – Participants apply their understanding of the content to real-life simulations and case studies. These in-depth, multi-step scenarios give educational leaders a chance to hone their diagnostic and prescriptive decision-making skills for instructional programming.

The AIM Pathways course platform also includes a variety of downloadable and printable resources for educators to use in classroom planning and instruction, including student checklists and rubrics, systematic scope-and-sequences, instructional scripts, student manipulatives, sample lesson plans, differentiation and intervention tools, and more. These valuable resources are readily accessible to participants and easily searchable on all digital devices.

## **PATHWAYS STRUCTURED LITERACY COURSE**

*Pathways to Structured Literacy* is designed for educators who have successfully completed the *Pathways to Proficient Reading* course. Building on the knowledge developed in that prerequisite course, this coursework continues to strengthen educators' ability to translate theoretical models of reading into evidence-based instructional practices that support students' word recognition skill development. The content of the course is Orton-Gillingham based and aligned to the International Dyslexia Association's (IDA) Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading (KPS). Completion of the online *Pathways to Structured Literacy* course is estimated to take approximately 30 hours, depending on the participant's background knowledge in Structured Literacy.

Participants will learn how to deliver diagnostic, prescriptive literacy instruction that makes effective use of student assessment data in foundational reading and spelling skills. Using the results of these assessments, participants will learn how to create explicit, systematic lessons that simultaneously engage students' auditory, visual, and tactile-kinesthetic learning pathways and

guide students to discover the patterns that govern written English. These research-based instructional approaches are appropriate for general education teachers and specialists who want to learn how to provide targeted or intensive reading interventions to students of all ages.

Participants enrolling in the *Pathways to Structured Literacy* course have two options for course completion: online coursework and virtual community-of-practice meetings with or without the *Structured Literacy Practicum*. Upon completion of *Pathways to Structured Literacy* the participants will be eligible to sit for the Center for Effective Reading Instruction's Knowledge and Practice Examination for Effective Reading Instruction (KPEERI) exam which can lead to a "Structured Literacy Classroom Teacher Certificate". Upon completion of the *Structured Literacy Practicum* participants are eligible to sit for the Center for Effective Reading Instruction's KPEERI exam which can lead to a "Structured Literacy Dyslexia Interventionist Certification".

## **COURSE INTRODUCTION & PRE-COURSE KNOWLEDGE INVENTORY**

Participants will log into the AIM Pathways platform at [aimpathwaysonline.org](http://aimpathwaysonline.org). The introductory section of *Pathways to Structured Literacy* will 1) introduce participants to the digital platform 2) provide an Orientation to course content and requirements and 3) require completion of a pre-course knowledge inventory to establish a baseline of current content knowledge. When participants take the knowledge inventory, they should refrain from consulting any resources.

## **COURSE GRADES**

The *Pathways to Structured Literacy* course has a gradebook where participants can view their scores on graded assessments, including end-of-section quizzes. Grades are displayed as percentages. All graded quizzes in each section are averaged together to calculate the section grade, which is displayed within each section on the Course Content home screen. The overall course grade is an average of the participant's section grades, displayed within the participant's transcript once the course is completed.

Participants can improve their grade by retaking any graded quiz; each quiz may be taken a maximum of two times. The highest score of the two attempts will be averaged into the overall grade for that section. Prior to the second quiz attempt, the system will prompt the participant to review the recommended materials associated with the missed question(s). Participants may wish to hold off on taking a quiz for a second time until after the community-of-practice meeting or office hours so that they have an opportunity to clarify any misconceptions before their final attempt at a quiz.

## **VIRTUAL COMMUNITY-OF-PRACTICE MEETINGS**

The 9-section *Pathways to Structured Literacy* course is accompanied by a series of four 1-hour synchronous, virtual community-of-practice meetings focused on implementation. An AIM Pathways Facilitator supports the community with translating the course content knowledge into evidence-based instructional practices. Participants will be provided a customized pacing guide for completing the course sections and attending the community-of-practice meetings. The meetings are mandatory, however, in case of an unexpected conflict you are permitted one

excused absence. In order to be excused, you must email your facilitator prior to the meeting to explain your absence and make arrangements to watch the archived recording. Participants who choose to enroll in the *Structured Literacy Practicum* will have additional practicum implementation meetings to ensure fidelity of implementation.

## **COURSE CONCLUSION & POST-COURSE KNOWLEDGE INVENTORY**

Upon completion of *Pathways to Structured Literacy*, participants will take a second knowledge inventory to assess their mastery of the content and their knowledge gains from the pre-course baseline assessment. This inventory is completed independently within the concluding section of the digital course. Participants are encouraged to use their note-taking guides during the post-course knowledge inventory, which is designed to take approximately 60 minutes. Participants are allowed to use as much time as they need, although it must be taken in one sitting.

## **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION**

Once a participant completes all sections of the course with an overall grade of at least 60%, a certificate of completion becomes available under “Transcripts.” Please note that a minimum proficiency score of 60% is needed to earn a certificate. If, after completing the course, you retake any graded quiz and score higher on your second attempt than your first, the system will immediately update your overall course grade and certificate of completion. Remember, you must review recommended materials prior to taking your second and final attempt on a graded quiz, and you are encouraged to ask your facilitator any outstanding questions at community-of-practice meetings and office hours.

Successful completion of the *Pathways to Structured Literacy* course with the *Structured Literacy Practicum* requires satisfactory completion of the:

- requirements for the online course work and virtual community-of-practice meetings
- practicum requirements
- practicum assessment
- knowledge inventory

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS**

AIM Institute for Learning and Research is an approved provider of continuing education units in a growing list of states (please see our website for an up-to-date list). Educators in those states who are interested in receiving credit for *Pathways to Structured Literacy* will be provided instructions for applying upon completion of the course. The course alone counts for 30 hours and the Structured Literacy practicum counts for 60 additional hours.

## **GRADUATE CREDITS**

AIM Institute for Learning and Research has partnered with Arcadia University to offer three graduate credits for the *Pathways to Structured Literacy* online course and three graduate credits for the *Structured Literacy Practicum*. Participants who choose to earn graduate credits

for the Course and/or Practicum will be able to register directly with Arcadia. The enrollment process and per-credit costs are outlined at Arcadia's School of Education website (<https://www.arcadia.edu/school-education/community-and-partners>).

AIM assigns a grade upon completion of the course according to Arcadia University's Graduate Academic Policies. If you are taking *Pathways to Structured Literacy* for graduate credit, the grade on your official transcript is comprised of the following components:

- 70% - course grade in the AIM Pathways platform
- 15% - participation in community of practice meetings
- 15% - score on post-course knowledge inventory

Please check with your degree university or school district for their policy on grade requirements for transfer of credit.

### **PATHWAYS TO STRUCTURED LITERACY COURSE OUTLINE**

- Pre-Course Knowledge Inventory & Introduction *Approximately 1 hour*
  
- Section 1 – Understanding Reading Development *Approximately 3.5 hours*
  - Lesson 1: Reading and the Brain
  - Lesson 2: Characteristics of Skilled Reading and Reading Difficulties
    - Topic 1: Skilled Reading
    - Topic 2: Reading Difficulties
  - Lesson 3: Phases of Typical Reading Development
  
- Section 2 - Understanding Pre- and Emergent Literacy Skills *Approximately 3 hours*
  - Lesson 1: Early Language Development and Phonological Processing
  - Lesson 2: Teaching About Speech Sounds
  - Lesson 3: Teaching Print Concepts, Alphabet Knowledge, and the Alphabetic Principle
  - Lesson 4: Assessing Emerging Literacy Skills
  
- Virtual Community-of-Practice Meeting #1 *1 hour Synchronous Meeting*
  
- Section 3 - An Overview of Structured Literacy *Approximately 3.5 hours*
  - Lesson 1: The Principles of Effective Literacy Instruction
  - Lesson 2: Introduction to the Structured Literacy Lesson
  - Lesson 3: The Importance of Diagnostic, Prescriptive Instruction
  
- Section 4 - Teaching Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondences *Approximately 2 hours*
  - Lesson 1: Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondences
  
- Section 5 - Teaching Syllables and Syllable Division Patterns *Approximately 2.5 hours*
  - Lesson 1: Syllable Types
  - Lesson 2: Syllable Division Patterns
  
- Virtual Community-of-Practice Meeting #2 *1 hour Synchronous Meeting*

- Approximately 3.5 hours*
- Section 6 - The Structured Literacy Lesson Plan - Components for Review
    - Lesson 1 Foundational Skills and Lesson Drills:
    - Lesson 2: Word and Sentence Reading and Dictation
- Approximately 2 hours*
- Section 7 - The Structured Literacy Lesson Plan - Components for New Learning & Application
    - Lesson 3: New Learning (Explicit Instruction through Guided Discovery)
    - Lesson 4: Oral Reading of Connected Text
- Virtual Community-of-Practice Meeting #3 *1 hour Synchronous Meeting*
- Section 8 - Teaching Reading and Spelling Generalizations *Approximately 1.5 hour*
    - Lesson 1: Reading and Spelling Generalizations
- Section 9 - Teaching Morphology *Approximately 2.5 hours*
    - Lesson 1: Morphology
- Virtual Community-of-Practice Meeting #4 *1 hour Synchronous Meeting*
- Post-Course Knowledge Inventory *Approximately 1 hour*

## **STRUCTURED LITERACY PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS**

Practicum cohorts are offered two times per year in September and January. Participants usually have completed *Pathways to Structured Literacy* within the last five years or they are actively enrolled in *Pathways to Structured Literacy* and have completed Sections 1-5 and VCoPs 1 and 2 before beginning practicum work.

Participants who choose to enroll in the *Structured Literacy Practicum* will have the opportunity to work with a student to practice applying the research and evidence-based instructional practices while working under the guidance of a certified trainer.

### **Practicum Coursework**

- Orientation
- *Pathways to Structured Literacy* coursework
- *Pathways to Structured Literacy* pre- and post-knowledge inventories
- Additional practicum readings and participation on discussion boards
- Practicum assessment

## **Practicum Instruction with Student**

- 1 Student (maximum of 1 student change due to attrition); Small groups will be considered with permission from the Practicum Supervisor
- Minimum of three, 45 minute, sessions per week,
- Minimum of 12 weeks of student contact per semester (minimum of 24 weeks total)
- Minimum of 50 student intervention sessions
- Pre- and post-assessment sessions
- Candidates must have 3 formal observations that meet the satisfactory requirements; if the candidate requires an additional observation beyond 3, remediation will be provided and one additional observation will be granted as needed.
- Submission of lesson plans and student work

## **Practicum Work with Supervisor**

- 1 ½ hour synchronous practicum kick-off meeting
- Three, one-hour synchronous implementation meetings to ensure fidelity of implementation
- Lesson implementation video submissions & establishing instructional goals
- Meet the requirements established on the Evaluation Rubric
- Maintain a digital practicum portfolio

### **PART A: Pre-Instruction**

- Student demographics
- Record review
- Pre-assessment - results to guide instruction
- Instructional goals – developed in response to pre-assessment and record review
- Proposed scope and sequence of instruction with rationale
- Proposed progress monitoring plan

### **Part B: During Instruction**

- Lesson plans with student work and participant reflections
- Formal lesson observations completed by Practicum Supervisor with participant reflection/response
- Completed Practicum Evaluation Rubric

### **Part C: Post-Instruction**

- Post-assessment results
- Statement/discussion of impact
- Proposed recommended next steps with rationale

Successful completion of the *Structured Literacy Practicum* requires satisfactory completion of the online course work, the virtual community-of-practice sessions, and the practicum work. Depending on the participant's background knowledge in Structured Literacy, completion of the online *Pathways to Structured Literacy* coursework is estimated to take approximately 30 hours and the *Structured Literacy Practicum* requires an additional 60 hours. Ensuring that participants demonstrate the required competency at the end of the practicum will be a priority and the Practicum Supervisor may extend the practicum if necessary. The practicum is a **minimum of six months and a maximum of twelve months** (nine months unless access to practicum student over the summer is an option).

## PSL ASSIGNED READINGS

Course Section	Assigned Readings	IDA KPS*	How Facilitator Monitors Participant's Understanding
1	Birsh, J. R. (2018). <b>Chapter 1:</b> Connecting Research And Practice. In J. R. Birsh & S. Carreker(Eds.) <i>Multisensory teaching of basic language skills</i> (4th ed., pp. 2-34), Brookes Publishing.	1, 2, 4	Reading assignment quiz, facilitated discussion during virtual community-of-practice session, application of reading research knowledge in student snapshot responses, quiz on understanding word-reading development
2	Robinson, E., DeVito, C., & Trabucco, G. (2018). <b>Chapter 4:</b> Pre-kindergarten literacy. In J. R. Birsh & S. Carreker (Eds.) <i>Multisensory teaching of basic language skills</i> (4th ed., pp. 140-170), Brookes Publishing.  Allen. K.A., & Neuhaus, G.F. (2018). <b>Chapter 5:</b> Alphabet Knowledge. In J. R. Birsh & S. Carreker (Eds.) <i>Multisensory teaching of basic language skills</i> (4th ed., pp. 171-203), Brookes Publishing.	4	Quick check: Pre- and Emergent Literacy Skills quiz, application of pre- and emergent literacy skills knowledge in student snapshot responses, facilitated discussion during virtual community-of-practice session, application of assessing literacy skills knowledge in student snapshot responses, quiz on understanding pre- and emergent literacy skills
3	Farrel, M., & Cushen White, N. (2018). <b>Chapter 2:</b> Structured Literacy Instruction. In J. R. Birsh & S. Carreker (Eds.) <i>Multisensory teaching of basic language skills</i> (4th ed., pp. 35-80), Brookes Publishing.	1, 2, 4	Structured Literacy instruction student simulation, card sort with corrective feedback on identifying the Structured Literacy classroom practice, card sort with corrective feedback on identifying the Structured Literacy lesson plan routines, facilitated discussion during virtual community-of- practice session, quiz on Structured Literacy instruction
4	Carreker, S. (2018). <b>Chapter 9:</b> Teaching reading. In J.R. Birsh & S. Carreker (Eds.) <i>Multisensory teaching of basic language skills</i> (4th ed., pp. 338-383), Brookes Publishing.	1, 4	Application of phoneme grapheme correspondences knowledge in student snapshot responses, facilitated discussion during virtual community-of- practice session, quiz on teaching phoneme-grapheme correspondences
6	Birsh, J. R., Schedler, J., & Anderson Singer, R. (2018). <b>Chapter 18:</b> Designing the Learning Environment and Planning Multisensory Structured Literacy Lessons. In J. R. Birsh & S. Carreker (Eds.) <i>Multisensory teaching of basic language</i>	1, 4	Card sort with corrective feedback on symbol-to-sound correspondences, application of symbol-to-sound knowledge in student snapshot responses, card sort with corrective feedback on sound-to-symbol correspondences, application of sound-to-symbol knowledge in

	<i>skills</i> (4th ed., pp. 679-716), Brookes Publishing.		student snapshot responses, quiz on the structured literacy lesson plan, facilitated discussion during virtual community-of-practice session, application of symbol-to-sound correspondences knowledge and sound-to-symbol instructional knowledge in creating a lesson plan
8	Carreker, S. (2018). <b>Chapter 10:</b> Teaching spelling. In J.R. Birsh & S. Carreker (Eds.) <i>Multisensory teaching of basic language skills</i> (4th ed., pp. 389-430), Brookes Publishing.		Facilitated discussion during virtual community-of-practice session, quiz on spelling
9	Carreker, S. (2018). <b>Chapter 14:</b> The History and Structure of Written English In J.R. Birsh & S. Carreker (Eds.) <i>Multisensory teaching of basic language skills</i> (4th ed., pp. 540-556), Brookes Publishing.  Henry, M. K. (2017). Morphemes matter: a framework for instruction. <i>Perspectives on language and literacy</i> , 43(2), 23-26	1, 4	Facilitated discussion during virtual community-of-practice session, quiz on morphology

A full citation and reference list is available upon request.

The *Pathways to Structured Literacy* and the *Structured Literacy Practicum* courses on the AIM Pathways platform are aligned with The International Dyslexia Association's (IDA) Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading\*.

**IDA KPS Statement:** The International Dyslexia Association's (IDA) Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading Coursework is aligned with IDA's Knowledge and Practice Standards (KPS) for Teachers of Reading. The KPS outline the knowledge and skill that all teachers of reading should possess. Standard 1 addresses foundational concepts, derived from



interdisciplinary research, about reading development and reading difficulties. Standard 2 covers knowledge of diverse reading profiles, including dyslexia. Standard 3 pertains to knowledge of assessment. Standard 4 addresses Structured Literacy teaching, offering detailed guidance with regard to the nature of effective instruction in each major domain (phonological sensitivity and phoneme awareness; phonics and word recognition; reading fluency; vocabulary; listening and reading comprehension; and written work or practicum (e.g., in interpretation of assessments, planning differentiated instruction, lesson design, corrective feedback, and so forth). Standard 5 delineates ethical standards for the profession. The content of the Pathways to Structured Literacy course is aligned to these Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading (KPS).