



Course Overview

This course is part of a series of short courses from the Understanding Language Initiative at Stanford University that facilitates the analysis and improvement of the communicative features of activities in English language development (ELD) lessons.

Communicativeness means that rather than focusing on memorizing grammar rules and word meanings to give the appearance of language learning and use, activities actually require and foster communication--they motivate and support students in using language to get interesting and meaningful things done.

Each course in the series highlights strategies to incorporate communication into a different skill, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and conversation. This course focuses on written communication. This includes answering questions on quizzes, essays, quickwrites, posters, web sites, etc. We zoom in on how to improve students' clarity and strength as they communicate their ideas to others in writing.

We hope this series will benefit educators looking for engaging ways to enhance both content and language learning for students, especially English Language Learners.

Goals & Purpose: This course focuses on written communication, specifically how to improve the clarity and strength of students' writing as they communicate their ideas to others in writing.

Session 1 – Welcome to Communication-Focused Writing

This session serves as an introduction to the course.

Session 2 – Instructional Videos

This section features videos containing examples of real-life teachers in real-life classrooms.

Session 3 – Recommended Readings

This section contains background and complementary resources that help to deepen your understanding of the course content.

Session 4 – Assignment

This section contains the assignment of the course. The assignment asks you to design a communicative writing task and then reflect on how communicative it is/was when it is used with real students.

Session 5 – Course Wrap-Up and Certificate

This section is a conclusion to the course.

Throughout the course, opportunities are provided for you to connect your learning across sessions and to explicitly consider the implications of your learning for your classroom practice. You will also be able to revisit your work and reflections by viewing your individual Course Portfolios.