



# The Great Books Foundation Program of Professional Development

The Great Books Foundation 800-222-5870 [www.greatbooks.org](http://www.greatbooks.org)

## 200- and 300-Level Course Descriptions

All 200- and 300-level courses are half-day courses. Educators who complete four 200-level or 300-level courses (for 10 or more contact hours) are eligible to receive a certificate of proficiency in leading Shared Inquiry™. Getting Started: The Core Sequence (courses 101, 102, and 103) is a prerequisite for registration in a 200- or 300-level course.

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## 200-Level Courses [Getting Better: Strengthening Shared Inquiry](#)

Great Books professional development courses at the 200 level are designed to help you fulfill the potential of the Shared Inquiry method of learning by strengthening your questioning skills and maximizing Shared Inquiry's impact on your students' learning. All 200-level courses can be customized to address particular concerns, issues, and questions. Choose one or more of the following half-day courses to design a professional development experience that meets your needs.

## 201 Reading Comprehension Strategies

Increase the impact of Shared Inquiry on students' reading comprehension by integrating reading strategies such as asking questions, making connections, visualizing, making inferences, determining important ideas, and synthesizing. The instructor's modeling and your hands-on practice with colleagues will open up ways for you use these strategies with your students. The course materials include guided prompts to help you integrate reading comprehension strategies into your own classroom after the course.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Identify and analyze the reading comprehension strategies embedded in Great Books interpretive activities, including Shared Inquiry discussion
- Model the reading comprehension strategies for students and support and monitor their progress
- Use the Shared Inquiry method and interpretive activities to address the reading comprehension needs of students.

## 202 The Power of Students' Questions

This course will help you teach students how to pose better questions, identify different kinds of questions, and focus on the questions that will best help them build their understanding of the selection. You will learn how to stimulate students' initial curiosity about a specific text and guide them to become active partners in inquiry. The process begins with the sharing questions activity and can lead to students helping to choose effective questions for Shared Inquiry discussion and for expository writing or research after discussion.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Help students express their initial reactions to a text in the form of questions
- Teach students how to recognize different kinds of questions
- Use the power of students' questions to engage the class in exploring answers and sharing their ideas, both during discussion and in writing

## 203 The Reading-Writing Connection

This course will show you how to link reading and writing as part of Shared Inquiry. You will learn how to use interpretive questioning and Shared Inquiry discussion to fuel the writing process. You will learn techniques to help students build an essay from the ground up, with the emphasis on generating ideas and supporting them with textual evidence and reasoning. You will plan ways to help your students develop their writing skills, as they sharpen their reading comprehension and critical-thinking skills. The course materials include a step-by-step outline of the writing process and a copy of the Junior Great Books® writing rubric to help you assess students' work.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Use the Shared Inquiry method to support students through the writing process
- Guide students to develop clear expository and persuasive essays based on their interpretive and evaluative thinking about literature
- Lead students in finding original topics, developing and supporting theses, and responding to other points of view

## 204 Assessing Student Progress

Learn to use Junior Great Books assessment rubrics to evaluate students' critical thinking in discussion and to grade their written answers to an interpretive question. You will modify a rubric to fit your students' levels of achievement and correlate it with other assessments that you currently use. If possible, we will use your own students' writing for a practice grading session. The course materials include the Junior Great Books critical-thinking and writing rubrics as well as suggestions for generating ideas for an interpretive essay.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Assess students' critical thinking in Shared Inquiry discussion
- Assess a short essay based on an interpretive question
- Integrate assessment of critical thinking with other reading and writing objectives

## 205 Asking Questions: Going Deeper

Learn to develop effective focus and cluster questions for Shared Inquiry discussion and master the art of asking follow-up questions throughout a Great Books unit. You will have time for practice discussions with your colleagues and will receive feedback from the instructor. The course materials include guided instructions and suggestions for asking questions that lead students deeper into the text.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Broaden your Shared Inquiry discussions by using cluster questions that address different aspects of your focus question
- Deepen your Shared Inquiry discussions and interpretive reading activities by asking sharper, more engaging follow-up questions
- Develop your own curiosity and enjoyment as a reader and model thoughtful inquiry for your students

## 206 Modeling Shared Inquiry Discussion with Students

You will observe as your instructor models Shared Inquiry discussion and other Great Books activities with students from your school or district. You will also have time after the discussion to debrief with the instructor and to raise questions and concerns about your own classroom to help you apply what you have observed.

**Note:** This course requires that participating teachers have time to observe and debrief with the instructor and that a class of students is available to participate in the demonstration, which is usually the duration of a typical classroom period. It is recommended that teachers have attempted at least two classroom Shared Inquiry discussions prior to this course.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Use realistic strategies to adapt Shared Inquiry to your students' needs
- Recognize the specific features of Shared Inquiry and understand how Shared Inquiry promotes student learning
- Set realistic expectations for your students in Shared Inquiry discussion

## 207 Interpretive Thinking for K–2

You will apply the basic principles of Shared Inquiry to achieve realistic goals such as helping very young students listen to a story, make sensible comments about it, and ask relevant questions. You will explore ways to use simple forms of drama, drawing, and writing to help students connect with a story and to begin their interpretive thinking about it. The course materials cover basic principles underlying effective Shared Inquiry strategies for younger students and include worksheets to help you plan activities for your own class.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Help students in grades K–2 begin to respond interpretively to a story
- Use the Junior Great Books Read-Aloud activities to engage all students in the interpretive process
- Plan a Read-Aloud unit with strategies and activities tailored to your students
- Use the Shared Inquiry method to address your students' needs

## 208 Instructional Leaders: Supporting Shared Inquiry

After observing video clips of actual classroom discussions, you will identify the distinctive features of Shared Inquiry instruction, and you and your colleagues will reflect on those aspects of Shared Inquiry that you want to encourage in your own school. The course materials cover reading strategies and learning objectives embodied in Great Books activities and include a checklist that you can use to mentor teachers informally.

**Note:** This course may be scheduled in conjunction with Getting Started: The Core Sequence (10–12 hours), with Course 101: What Is Shared Inquiry? (2.5–3 hours), or with any 200-level course (2.5–3 hours).

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Recognize and encourage teacher behaviors characteristic of the Shared Inquiry stance
- Understand how these behaviors foster students' critical thinking about a text
- Support teachers who are learning to use Shared Inquiry in a Great Books program

## 300-Level Courses    Going for Great: Developing Expertise

In the 300-level courses, Great Books consultants will help teachers develop the expertise to extend the benefits of Shared Inquiry to various genres of literature, to content-area reading, and to teacher coaching or mentoring. To support your own growth and development as a Shared Inquiry leader, choose one or more of the following half-day courses.

## 301 Shared Inquiry Discussion Across the Curriculum

This course is the most customized training offering. It can be tailored to meet a variety of needs. For example, teachers in schools that encourage an integrated curriculum, or who teach multiple subjects, can learn how to use the Shared Inquiry method with disciplines other than language arts, such as social studies and science. Or teachers of different disciplines can work with colleagues to strengthen their Shared Inquiry discussion skills to encourage inquiry learning across the school curricula.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Prepare for a Shared Inquiry discussion in a curriculum content area other than language arts
- Use Great Books active reading and questioning skills across the curriculum
- Recognize how Shared Inquiry develops students' reading comprehension, critical-thinking, and writing skills across the curriculum

## 302 Inquiry Reading in the Content Areas

Learn how Great Books active reading strategies—rereading, close reading, note taking, and questioning—help students comprehend text in any content area. You will apply the reading strategies to materials that are already part of your curriculum to help your students become active readers and better thinkers.

### **After this course you will be able to:**

- Use a proven method to engage the whole class in working through a challenging text
- Use questioning strategies to increase students' comprehension and critical thinking
- Identify students' comprehension needs and choose the most effective strategies to address them

- 303 Shared Inquiry and Novels**
- 304 Shared Inquiry and Poetry**
- 305 Shared Inquiry and Drama**
- 306 Shared Inquiry with Primary Sources and Other Nonfiction**
- 307 Shared Inquiry and Current Events**
- 308 Shared Inquiry and Film**
- 309 Shared Inquiry and Art**

Courses 303–309 focus on how to adapt and use the Shared Inquiry method to interpret and discuss different genres or subjects. If you wish to use your own curriculum materials for one of these courses, the selections must be open to interpretation and be made available to the instructor no less than three weeks prior to the course.

**After one of these courses you will be able to:**

- Determine how to select a work or a topic in your genre that is suitable for Shared Inquiry discussion
- Apply Shared Inquiry questioning strategies to the work or a topic
- Lead an interpretive discussion about the work or topic

### **310 Peer Coaching and Mentoring**

The peer coaching and mentoring course is designed to help teachers support one another's growth and development as Shared Inquiry leaders and to enable them to better meet the objectives of their Great Books program. This course is a valuable addition to a supportive learning community that actively encourages ongoing professional growth, especially where a Great Books program is a regular part of the language arts curriculum or where Great Books programs are used across the curriculum.

**After this course you will be able to:**

- Define objectives and set your own goals for growth as a Shared Inquiry leader
- Use a Shared Inquiry discussion checklist to observe a fellow teacher leading a discussion, and provide feedback responsive to the leader's learning goals
- Analyze leader and student behaviors to agree upon future goals