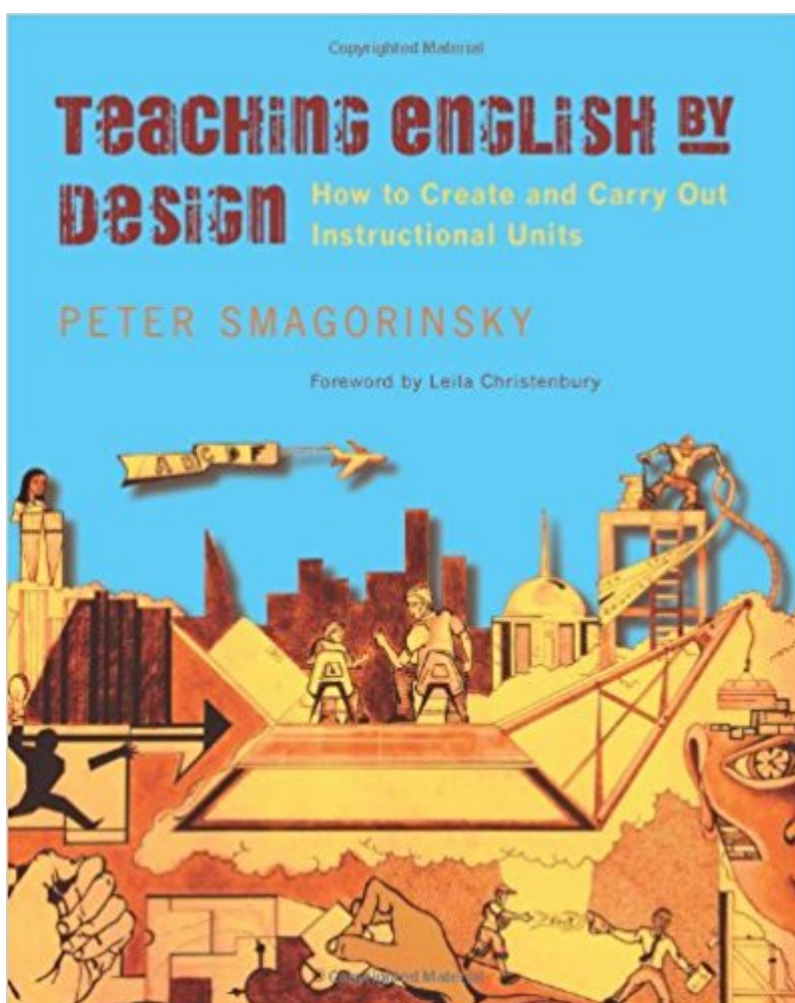


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# Teaching English By Design: How To Create And Carry Out Instructional Units



## Synopsis

The Teaching English by Design Instructor's Guide presents a flexible framework for an English Methods course. Its week-by-week suggestions for in- and out-of-class activities support students as they learn to design units for use in their first classrooms. Peter Smagorinsky, the leading scholar and researcher of his generation in the field of English education, shows English teachers how to turn every hour of classroom instruction into an authentic and powerful learning experience in his inspiring new book, *Teaching English by Design*. It's a wonderful book and represents a challenge to all of us to teach better than we usually do. Sheridan Blau Author of *The Literature Workshop* Peter Smagorinsky, a highly respected figure in English Education, here offers new teachers principled and practical ways of authoring curriculum, even in traditional settings. Randy Bomer Author of *Time for Meaning* Many books on English/language arts instruction describe the teaching of units, but how many of them actually show how to create the units, make them meaningful to students, and use them to support your curriculum from September to June? *Teaching English by Design* does it all. It helps avoid a fragmentary curriculum by providing the rationale and the process for not only teaching well but also for producing integrated units that encourage students to deepen their thinking across the school year. *Teaching English by Design* is two books in one: a primer for teaching secondary English and a comprehensive guide to creating and using four to six-week instructional units. Peter Smagorinsky shares important insight about students, how they learn, and what kinds of classrooms support their achievement in reading and writing. Then he uses those findings to open up the key ideas of unit design to every teacher. Smagorinsky's units are organized around key concepts in English, such as: reading strategies writing strategies genres periods, regions, and movements in literature themes the works of a significant author. From original idea to construction, to implementation and beyond, Smagorinsky's practical advice supports teachers in extending, connecting, and integrating their units to increase the cohesion and power of the curriculum. Incorporating curricular theory, educational psychology, and fourteen years of high school teaching experience, Peter Smagorinsky's advice is both theoretically sound and grounded in the daily realities of today's teacher. Complemented by a wealth of web-based illustrations, *Teaching English by Design* is the ideal resource for preservice teachers as well as those in the classroom who want to take charge of their curriculum and find new energy in it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Peter Smagorinsky is the coauthor of *The Dynamics of Writing Instruction* (2010) and author of *Teaching English by Design* (2007). Peter taught high school English from 1976 to 1990 in public schools outside Chicago and now teaches in the program in English Education at The University of Georgia. In 2007 he was presented with the UGA Graduate School Outstanding Mentoring Award in Humanities and Fine and Applied Arts. Peter is the author or coauthor of numerous books and articles, including the Heinemann title *Reflective Teaching, Reflective Learning*, which he coedited in 2006.

How do we create instruction that matters--that leaves a lasting impression with students while guiding them to appropriate key ELA skills and strategies. In this wonderful book, Smagorinsky offers specific, constructive architecture for units of instruction that will create important experiences for students. I have personally shared this book with newer teachers who are grappling with lesson/unit design and with veteran teachers who are reinvestigating what they do.

For the aspiring teacher this is a good reference book to ensure that you're designing your coursework in an appropriate manner. Smagorinsky discusses how a classroom is like a construction zone and that it is essential to establish the end goal before doing any work. Instructors need to start with what they want students to know and then design from there. It requires that we look at the end goals of our year or our units and then design work for students to accomplish from there. I find it helpful because he discusses why we should the way we do, what we can implement in our designs, and then proceeds to give an example of how to do it. The only reason this text

doesn't receive a higher score is because there are many people who do not and cannot function explicitly as Smagorinsky would like us to (even though he states his opinion).

I had to buy this book and so far I think it was worth the investment. I was hoping to just have to rent my textbooks (cheaper and saves me space on the bookshelf later) but it was moderately priced for a new copy. I think that I will be able to get a lot of use out of this book. Smagorinsky has a very down-to-earth writing style that is easy to understand and he provides a lot of great ideas for teaching. I plan to use this after school when I am working as a teacher. Great book!

Book required for a teaching assignment.

Of all the texts we 'had to' read for my teacher's ed program (I had already taught for 12 years in private schools and knew useless books when I read them), this may well be the most useable for everyday teaching.

Information is excellent.....a good read

Item delivered on time and as described.

Smagorinsky's book is the *plus ultra* of methods texts for preservice English Language Arts teachers. He advocates a constructivist approach to teaching language arts, and he deftly employs numerous illustrative examples to support and illustrate his ideas. Most importantly, this text is well written and accessible to teacher candidates. Smagorinsky uses pedagogical discourse fluently, and his conversational yet always professional tone helps readers to understand his ideas clearly. A staunch and unapologetic advocate of social justice education, Smagorinsky informs his teaching philosophy with empathy and equity. As my students have claimed, this text is their *bible*—they plan to keep this book dog-eared, highlighted, and annotated as they develop their teaching repertoires. They've let me know that they plan to rely heavily on the theory and strategies in this text throughout their student teaching experience and well into the remainder of their careers. What stronger endorsement could there be?

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