

Literacy Journeys with English Language Learners

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2010

English Language Learners in the USA

- Between 1996 and 2006, the numbers of ELLs in K-12 schools grew over 57% to more than five million.
- Resource: Comprehension and English Language Learners by Michael F. Optiz (2009)

What we MUST know about teaching ELLs

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- The report Developing Literacy in Second Language Learners (August and Shanahan 2006) carried out by the National Literacy Panel reported that the development of oral language is important for growth in reading and writing.
- Resource: Comprehension and English Language Learners by Michael F. Optiz (2009)

What we MUST know about teaching ELLs

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Levels of English Language Proficiency

- TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) recognizes five levels of English proficiency:
 - Starting
 - Emerging
 - Developing
 - Expanding
 - Bridging

What we MUST know about teaching ELLs

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- BICS vs. CALP
 - BICS Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills.
 - CALP Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency.
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- Learning a language is a process that takes TIME.
 - Learning to read in L2 is a process that takes TIME.
 - Learning to write in L2 is a process that takes TIME.
 - Becoming a proficient reader/writer in L2 is a process that takes TIME.

HOWEVER...

- ELLs are expected to learn to write and read at the same level as native English speakers.

• So...

- Are we giving our ELLs enough time to go through these different learning processes?
 - Are we providing enough opportunities in our classroom for ELLs to develop their Oral Language Proficiency?
 - Are we engaging and differentiating our literacy instruction to support the learning and growth of our ELLs?
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- Teaching with Intentions by Debbie Miller reminded me of the importance of being aware of our teaching beliefs and aligning them with what we do in our classroom, in our everyday teaching life.

- Top 10 Activities that Promote Oral Language Development

- Read Aloud
- Book Talks
- Story Retellings
- Literature Circle
- Book Buddies
- Reader's Theater
- Shared Reading
- Interactive Writing
- Interactive Read Alouds
- Poetry Reading

Read Alouds and English Language Learners Benefits

- * enhances their listening skills
- *improves their listening comprehension
- *provides them with opportunities to use spoken English
- *helps them with the acquisition of vocabulary
- *improves their reading comprehension

Resource: Comprehension and English Language Learners by Michael F. Optiz (2009)

Suggestions

- Using Visuals of your learning goals serve as reminders for your students of what you are working on.
- It also provides the academic language of what the students are learning. .

Suggestions (cont.)

- *Provide the language structure that you want your students to use to discuss or talk about the book.
- Have fun with the stories you read together. Make it memorable!



Nicolas getting ready to enjoy “a slice of toast with a great deal of butter on it” as part of our celebration for finishing *Mercy Watson Goes For A Ride* by Kate DiCamillo.

Shared Reading and English Language Learners

Benefits

- Reading a story several times help students build fluency and comprehension.
- It reinforces new words they’ve learned
- It helps them learn concepts about print.
- Resource: English Language Learners Day by Day K-6 by Christina M. Celic (2009)

Get Creative with the stories!

- By putting the story on sentence strips and giving ELLs time to practice independently.

Provide Time for Individual Practice.

Providing them with Practice Time gives YOU time to observe them.

Make time for some DRAMA.

Through Dramatization students can learn about Intonation, Punctuation & Body Language.

Shared and Performed Reading

- They provide an authentic opportunity to reread texts
- They provide an opportunity to practice reading AND understanding a text
- They provide an opportunity to practice pronouncing English words correctly

Resource: Teaching for Comprehension and Fluency by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (2006).



Daiana working on her Self-Portrait Poetry Poster

Teaching for Fluency

- If the goal of the instruction is fluency, then look for...
- Texts with memorable language
- Texts with repeating phrases
- Poetry and Rhyme

- Text with natural language patterns
- Text with Dialogue

Resource: Teaching for Comprehension and Fluency by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (2006).

Model for students what is expected of them. Then provide guided practice.

Give them opportunity to play and explore language!

- “Remember that English Language Learners can usually understand more than they can perform. You can help them give voice to their understandings.”

Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell



ESL 1st grade Summer School Class-Whitehall City Schools Summer 2009