Enhancing Core Reading Programs in the Bilingual Classroom
by Susan López

In January, LCE Resource Teachers Elia María Romero and Susan López facilitated a “Biliteracy Academy” focused on strategies for the implementation of the core reading program in a bilingual/dual language classroom. This event was hosted by Eugene Field Elementary and was attended by teachers from Eugene Field and Coronado elementaries. Since the district now requires all schools to utilize a core reading program, the goal of the academy was to provide on-site professional development to address the strategies and collaborative planning needed for academic success of bilingual students using a core reading program. This week-long academy included both theory and practice, providing participants with the opportunity to observe the theories and strategies in a classroom setting and the impact they have on students.

STARTING OUT…
The first day of the academy began with a session for the teachers only. The entire day was spent in an interactive discussion that provided teachers with background, methods, and strategies for Spanish and English literacy, and a conversation and reflection on appropriate pedagogy. There was an in-depth dialogue about core reading programs, their place in bilingual classrooms, and the strategies that should be used to facilitate biliteracy using these programs.

There are certain non-negotiable components of a successful dual language program: separation of languages for meaningful instruction, avoiding translation when reading and writing, and a minimum of 50% to 90% of the daily instruction in the “target” language (Spanish, in this case). Teachers must balance these components with fidelity to the requirements of the core reading program. Along with ensuring that the program has the non-negotiable components in place, the quality of instruction, including the best approaches and methods, is critical. The best practice for bilingual students is the eclectic approach, which includes: the global approach (which assumes that students learn to read best when reading begins with natural and meaningful text for students to listen to, look at, and memorize by sight), the analytic approach (which assumes that students learn to read best when reading begins with natural and meaningful text for students to listen to, look at, and memorize by sight), the analytic approach.

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This year marks the forty-year anniversary of School on Wheels, an alternative high school that is well known as a place of empowerment for students who were often unsuccessful, disengaged, or actively resisting their previous schooling. What accounts for their success, and what can be learned from it?

Two simple, powerful ideas that Principal Felipe Perea asks his teachers to uphold offer a clue:
♦ Treat the students with respect and high regard.
♦ Raise expectations of academic achievement for them.

So what does it mean to respect students and hold them in high regard? And what does it look like to effectively raise academic expectations for students? Certainly the answers would vary, depending on who is asked. From the voices of the teachers and students, a picture of what respect and raised expectations looks like at School on Wheels emerges:

**Respect is...**
♦ reflecting on one's thinking, assumptions and beliefs about the students and the community;
♦ constructing learning with students, tapping into their knowledge and experience, and rejecting the idea that we are saving students from a “culture of poverty” or any other perceived deficit creating an inability to learn;
♦ acknowledging the language, life ways, and cultural literacy of students and revamping Euro-centric curriculum so that it is inclusive and culturally and socially relevant; and
♦ speaking to students honestly and without sarcasm, derision, or in a way that places the teacher above the students or damages the forming of healthy relationships.

**Raising expectations means...**
♦ matching support to the level of expectations. Instructional support (scaffolding, differentiated instruction, etc.) increases as the curriculum becomes more challenging rather than considering these strategies to be remedial (“They won’t get that help in college”);
♦ turning over responsibility for students’ learning to the students as they become more adept at constructing knowledge and utilizing strategies by themselves;
♦ encouraging students to see each other as resources; and
♦ teachers talking to each other about practice, sharing what they know, observing each other, and collaborating in planning, implementing, and evaluating curriculum.

School on Wheels teachers offer some ideas on the two guiding ideas they support. They reflect on the students and their teaching:

There are probably a lot more, but here are a few of the projects our team has worked on with our students:
♦ For the past 3 years, students have presented an activity at the ABQ-Bernalillo County Children’s Water Festival (each year at least 125 kids have participated in this activity); in addition, students acted as reporters and photographers for this festival and they wrote articles that were published in the ABQ Journal and on the ABQ Water Utility Authority’s website.
♦ For the past 9 years, students installed and monitor every month two Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Project sites and the Rio Grande as part of their science curriculum.
♦ In 2005, students designed and installed a 3000 square foot xeriscape garden by harnessing the help of over 150 volunteers from the school community.
♦ In the past few years students have presented their learning experiences at local, state, and national educational conferences including the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science, North American Association of Environmental Education, and the Coalition of Essential Schools conferences.
♦ Last year, students invited and trained 20 Rio Grande students in water quality monitoring techniques in partnership with Amigos Bravos and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department as part of the “Acequia Monitoring and OutReach” (AMOR) project.
♦ Students are beginning an oral history project on the 40 years of our school’s existence where they will interview former members of our school community.
More student diversity would help us do that even more; I think that is a growth area for us.

—Jim Silva

And finally, the following excerpts from paragraphs written by School on Wheels students describe their experience with the school and how it has made a difference in their lives:

"This school is my family; everyone helps out, listens and participates. There are no fights before, after, or during school because that's how well we get along..."

—Jasmine Sosa

"If I hadn’t had the chance to be in this school, I would be a drop out because I always would ask myself: why bother being at school if I always try, and end up a failure?"

—Andres Zambrano

"In comparison to regular high school, I think the teachers here are more focused on us than themselves."

—Heberth Vicente

"La comparación de las escuelas regulares a esta escuela es el respeto y la comunicación de los maestros a los alumnos que les importa tu bienestar y que salgas adelante con los estudios y como ser humano."

—Ruth Elias

"I came to School on Wheels because I was a drop out and really behind on credits...If it wasn’t for School on Wheels I would be wandering the streets of Belen a drop out, and a loser."

—Vincent Vallejos

"I came to School on Wheels so I can finish school, graduate and go to college... it was my last chance for school."

—Britney Rose Gallegos

"If it was not for School on Wheels I would most likely be in trouble and not proving that I have the ability to graduate."

—Michael Vialpando

"I came to School on Wheels because I needed hope... The teachers here are very caring and focused on their students... this school brought my hopes back."

—Vanessa

Editors’ Note: Felipe Perea, Principal of SOW, passed away unexpectedly in early March.
Hablar de la clase de matemáticas bilingüe de la Sra. Cilian Pérez en la escuela secundaria Van Buren es hablar de grandes retos y dificultades, pero también de grandes logros en la manera de enseñar a pensar, resolver y comprender los problemas matemáticos que se les presentan a los estudiantes día a día.

El mayor desafío con el que se enfrenta la señora Pérez en sus clases de matemáticas bilingües es la falta de utilización de representaciones gráficas del conocimiento. Al iniciar el año escolar, el objetivo central de nuestras reuniones de colaboración fue analizar estas dificultades pedagógicas. Es aquí donde las nueve estrategias de Marzano (2005) se presentaron como una herramienta efectiva para expresar y representar las relaciones de los conceptos y problemas matemáticos así como su resolución.

A continuación presentamos las nueve estrategias propuestas por Marzano empleadas en la clase de matemáticas bilingüe de la señora Pérez. A través de estas estrategias se ha logrado proporcionar diversas oportunidades de aprendizaje a los estudiantes para mejorar su rendimiento académico y motivarlos a profundizar en sus conocimientos matemáticos.

1. Resumen de la información y toma de notas:
A los estudiantes se les propuso tomar notas con la técnica de Cornell. Con ella, los estudiantes logran tomar apuntes de forma enfocada y organizada. De esta manera consiguen sintetizar los conceptos y representar el proceso cognitivo del pensamiento a la hora de resolver problemas matemáticos. Al finalizar la toma de notas, logran analizar la información, captar las ideas centrales y los detalles.

II. Identificación de similitudes y diferencias de los conceptos matemáticos:
Esta estrategia consiste en utilizar los procesos mentales para comprender la información. En las actividades de la señora Pérez, los estudiantes logran identificar las similitudes y diferencias entre diversos conceptos matemáticos a través de la comparación, la clasificación y el uso de analogías matemáticas.

III. Reconocimiento del esfuerzo realizado y de los logros obtenidos:
Es muy importante para la señora Pérez proporcionar reconocimiento inmediato del esfuerzo y de los logros de los estudiantes en la clase de matemáticas. Igualmente, les escribe comentarios constructivos que les ayudan a estar más motivados y ser conscientes de su progreso y sus dificultades.

IV. Tarea y práctica:
Aquí se les ofrece a los estudiantes la oportunidad de practicar, revisar y aplicar conocimientos. Según Marzano, Pickering, y Pollock (ASCD 2001), los estudiantes necesitan practicar una habilidad un mínimo de 24 veces para llegar al 80% de competencia. En este

El trabajo cooperativo es la mejor estrategia de enseñanza para adquirir los conocimientos matemáticos.
sentido, la señora Pérez siempre marca un objetivo a conseguir en las tareas diarias: les pide a los estudiantes que elaboren una amplia respuesta sobre cómo lograron resolver los problemas. Otro aspecto de esta estrategia es la autoevaluación. Los estudiantes llevan un registro de sus progresos y dificultades. Necesitan escribir en sus diarios “yo puedo”, “he logrado…”, “necesito ayuda en…”, etc.

V. Aprendizaje cooperativo:
La señora Pérez tiene sus clases organizadas en grupos cooperativos de 3 ó 4 estudiantes donde éstos interactúan de manera activa y colaborativa.

VI. Representaciones no-lingüísticas:
Esta estrategia funciona de manera efectiva cuando los estudiantes representan los problemas con imágenes mentales, modelos físicos, dibujos o actividades sinestésicas.

VII. Establecimiento de objetivos y retroalimentación del aprendizaje:
Cada día se plantean objetivos a alcanzar y cómo se van a alcanzar. Al finalizar la clase, se hace un resumen de lo aprendido y cómo se aprendió. Esto proporciona a los estudiantes una retroalimentación de los conceptos aprendidos y de sus dificultades en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

Los organizadores gráficos son el mejor instrumento para organizar el conocimiento y los conceptos matemáticos.

Un estudiante de la clase de matemáticas utilizando la estrategia de tomar notas.

VIII. Generar y probar hipótesis:
Aquí la señora Pérez propone cada día un problema donde se asegura que los estudiantes utilicen el razonamiento inductivo y deductivo. Les presenta un modelo de cómo ellos pueden generar hipótesis que resuelvan el problema matemático. En conjunto prueban una hipótesis y posteriormente la aceptan o la rechazan.

IX. Pistas, preguntas y aplicación de organizadores gráficos avanzados:
Diariamente, la señora Pérez formula la pregunta esencial del día con ideas principales y definiciones de problemas matemáticos. Utiliza la taxonomía de Bloom para realizar las preguntas, animando siempre a los estudiantes a hacérselas a ellos mismos y a dialogar con otros. Como resultado de este diálogo, cada problema o serie de ejercicios se plasma en organizadores gráficos avanzados. Al final se consigue que todos los estudiantes aprendan a aprender de sus logros y dificultades.

Para el Departamento de Equidad Lingüística y Cultural es un placer colaborar con maestros como la señora Pérez. Esta labor es un gran ejemplo de colaboración y desarrollo profesional efectivo y continuado con resultados concretos y perceptibles en el progreso académico de los estudiantes.
On September 25th and 26th, 2009, twenty-one Native American students from Wilson Middle School and five chaperones experienced hands-on learning in a way they probably never will again. The Native American Studies classes journeyed to Chaco Culture National Historical Park to visit the ancestral lands of the Anasazi Pueblo People of Chaco Canyon.

The U.S. National Park Service granted the Indian Education Department monies for teachers who wanted to visit national parks in New Mexico. The grants paid for all expenses as long as the visits followed our department’s literacy or culture themes. I presented the idea to my students, and they jumped at the experience. So the trip was planned and approved, and we started our work in class to prepare for the journey.

**Preparing and Learning**
The APS NAS classes are geared towards learning reading through the native culture and literature. The trip fit perfectly into our method of learning. Students are of mixed tribal cultures, the majority being Navajo students. This would be a small hurdle because of the Navajo taboo of visiting places where the dead dwell. But it worked out for most students, and the few who couldn’t go still learned online.

Each of the four classes started by filling out personal KWL charts, then group KWL charts. We compared and contrasted what they knew on a large graphic organizer. Next, students put together questions they wanted answers for. I created the big question, ”Why is Chaco Canyon phenomenal?” This spurred more questions. At this point most students knew nothing of the Anasazi. The few students who had previously visited were too young to remember the experience. So everyone would learn something on this trip. Our goal was to gain appreciation of the scientific and cultural achievements of the first Pueblo People in the area.

This project was designed to relate Chaco with curricular literacy and cultural components. In our classes, students learn about and practice native values which are intertwined with how we live as tribal people. As a result, we could not help but look at the spiritual aspects of the journey. In fact, this aspect spiraled off to question many theories about our culture— theories which are not our own. Students thoroughly questioned how we are looked at. Discovery was a big aspect in their learning. Respect was another.

This project involved multiple disciplines and concepts, including:

1. Earth and Space Science: scientific inquiry, tracking the sun’s cycle for planting and harvesting, the equinox and solstice, cardinal directions, phases of the moon, astronomy, archeoastronomy.

2. Social Studies: how location and resources define each other, petroglyphs, Pueblo culture.

3. Language Arts: reading and listening to traditional stories, researching the Anasazi, writing journals, thematic projects, viewing videos, reading and researching books.

4. Art: creating a visual presentation, creating dioramas, creating petroglyphs.

In preparation for the trip, students generated questions they wanted answered; illustrated vocabulary webs for 52 important words to be able to understand the videos on Chaco Canyon; and mapped the drive there. They watched two videos on Chaco Canyon and took Cornell notes, comparing theories and key ideas. Finally, they generated questions and key ideas to research on the field trip to Chaco Canyon and reviewed project-based formats.

**Setting out on the Journey**
Students boarded the chartered bus at 8:30 am on Friday morning for the four hour ride to

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Making Connections—March ‘10

Chaco. As we traveled, students noticed how the landscape changed from urban to rural, but most students knew this since they are Navajo and travel this route weekly to visit family on their reservation. Pueblo students from Zuni, Acoma, and Laguna also travel this route home often to participate in their tribal activities.

Our bus driver took a shortcut through the back country. He also was Navajo. This was a nice surprise because he was able to tell us about the area. The trip was uneventful until just before we arrived. The road was very uneven, causing the bus to bounce a lot (which the students enjoyed immensely!). They noticed many desert animals we had read about in the books they researched before the trip.

A few miles outside the canyon, Fajada Butte struck them with amazement. Something they had only read about, seen in pictures and film, was actually staring at them. It stuck out like a giant mammoth in the flat earth. This major land form was beautiful. Everyone was taking pictures as fast as they could before we lost sight of it. Happily, arriving at the Chaco Center, we could still see it from afar. We found out that visitors are not allowed there anymore because people cause erosion, shifting the landmark and its purpose. We had learned the purpose and its significance, so we were glad to know it was being protected now.

Experiencing the Ancient Pueblo
After lunch, groups headed out to different places. We wanted to see as much as we could before we had to leave at sunset. We had time to see the largest pueblos: Pueblo Bonito and Chetro Ketle. Loaded with cameras and journals, and with partners, the students were able to see, touch, smell, and hear the sounds of the Canyon. Why was Chaco phenomenal? We were finding out. It was huge! Standing next to the walls of the old pueblos, we could image how tall the buildings had been. When we returned to the school, students compared Pueblo Bonito to the apartment building next to the school. This made them realize how big the actual place could have been.

Although we saw only one small portion of the whole Chaco Canyon ruins, students walked through many, many rooms; however, ceremonial chambers were not accessible. They saw strange corner windows, short doorways, small uninhabitable rooms, and the outside blocked doorways. These matched the theories we read and heard about in the books and films, including native perspectives about Chaco. Students saw ancient petroglyphs on rock walls and the destruction some people have caused. The students became very sensitive about this.

The students questioned the guides about many things they knew and some things they didn’t know. The students saw the masonry of the buildings and how it was different in places because the engineers were discovering how to construct it better. They saw the astronomical alignment of the buildings to the other places. You could see the impact of this ancient place on the students’ faces. Each new thing they discovered was backed by what they knew or were learning. They realized that it took a large, intelligent civilization to undertake this endeavor. Their respect for their ancestors grew by leaps and bounds.

Only too soon the trip ended. We took the two hour ride to Gallup in silence: tired or amazed? Students updated their journals and made their

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Scholars from across Mexico and the U.S. met in Mexico City in January for an unprecedented bi-national conference to share research, ideas, and information on issues relating to immigration and educating children whose lives are shaped by both countries. The conference, “The Students We Share,” was held at the Casa de la Universidad de California in Mexico City, with the goal to address the lack of formal education policies between Mexico and the U.S., who share millions of students yet have two markedly different educational systems.

Conference organizer and UCLA Professor Patricia Gándara, who is co-director of the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles, a co-host of the event, commented: “It is very exciting to see how eager those studying these students on both sides of the border are to share information and to seek more informed answers. The scale of this collaboration... is a first, and is one we’re hoping will yield some effective solutions.”

According to the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles, Mexico estimated that one in five Mexican citizens will live in the United States at some time during their lives. Today, a tenth of U.S. students—more than 5 million—are children of Mexican immigrants. At the same time, it is estimated that half a million U.S.-educated students currently attend schools in Mexico.

Civil Rights Project data also showed that Latino students in the U.S. are typically several years behind their European-American peers on indicators of academic achievement: At least one out of 5 Latino students does not finish high school—in urban centers, one out of every two Latino students drops out.

Specific to New Mexico, 2007-2008 4-Year Cohort High School Graduation Rates for the Class of 2008 showed 71.3% for African American students, 49.8% for American Indian students, 76.8% for Asian students, Caucasian students, 73.6%, and Hispanic graduation rates of 56.0%.

A major social policy challenge facing Mexico is expanding lower and upper secondary enrollments while, at the same time, improving quality in under-resourced schools, principally in rural and indigenous communities with stagnant economic productivity. Across Mexico, about two in five of 15 year-old children are not enrolled in school.

Sponsoring the bi-national conference was the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles at UCLA, in collaboration with the American Educational Research Association (AERA) in the U.S., and El Consejo Mexican de Investigación Educativa (COMIE) in Mexico, the Foundation for Child Development, Arizona State University, and the Secretary of Education of Mexico.

Michael Fix, Director of the Migration Policy Institute in Washington D.C. noted, "Despite much hard, thoughtful work at many levels, serious issues remain in educating the "children we share" in U.S. schools.” Felipe Martínez Rizo, founding director of Mexico’s National Institute for Educational Evaluation, added that bi-national cooperation can be a powerful way to address “very serious 21st century problems,” within the Mexican educational system. “These are problems whose resolution will determine, without exaggeration, whether Mexico is to be counted among developed nations.”

Over thirty speakers presented research relevant to binational study of education, advances in public education in Mexico, schooling of Mexican Americans in the United States, early education of Mexican and Mexican American children, and adolescents’ high school completion and college access in the United States and Mexico.

For details about the conference and research presented, please visit: http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/convenings/binational10/index.html.


Collaborating for the Educational Success of the Students We Share
by Ginger Looney
last comments about the field trip. On Saturday morning, we ate a small breakfast, packed, and left on the bus about 11:30 a.m., arriving back at Wilson at 1:30 pm.

CONTINUING THE LEARNING

Students learned why Chaco Canyon is a phenomenal place. They felt the presence of their ancestors on the trip, and they learned more about the scientific and cultural achievements of the Anasazi.

To represent their learning and their experience, students chose from nine formats to complete a project on Chaco Canyon. These were: construct a realistic diorama; create an illustrated dictionary of 20 new words; design a poster of an important event or artifact; write three different types of poems; create an archeologist’s journal; create an illustrated timeline; design a power point presentation; write a song or rap explaining the archeological theories; create a factual board or card game. All projects had a visual component, and students presented their projects, which were peer evaluated. They also completed personal and group KWL charts and created individual clay petroglyphs, based on those at Chaco.

In the studies leading up to the trip, the trip itself, and the culminating projects, native values were the central point. These values are part of the APS Indian Education Values Rubric: These are: belonging, mastery, independence, and responsibility.

Students made "Plus/Delta" comments about the trip. Some of their comments were:

• “I learned that my ancestors helped build Chaco and were here first.”
• “I learned why Fajada Butte is special and protected.
• “I like that my teacher set up this trip for all of us to know where our roots are.”
• “I felt like a researcher, taking pictures, drawing, and writing down notes.”
• “I loved that we were in groups we selected.”
• “I felt different in this place.”
• “I liked everything about Chaco: the view, weather, buildings, rocks, mesa, canyon, and the quiet.”

Students all mentioned that they enjoyed having a comfortable bus, being able to watch movies, staying in a nice hotel, swimming and eating together, and being together as friends and native students. They also would have liked to: camp overnight at the ruins, speak with Pueblo elders about Chaco, visit more places in Chaco, hike the canyon, climb the manmade stairs, and visit Fajada Butte—all plans for the next trip.

Footnote: Afterwards, I learned that the 7th grade social studies classes were also studying Chaco at this time. The teacher told me that all my students who went on the field trip received an A for that grade period. They were most knowledgeable about the information presented in her class. She had my students present their projects for her classes for extra credit. They did excellent work—what a wonderful result!
that begins with the smallest segment of speech and builds, or synthesizes, these parts into syllables and words).

The core reading program used by Eugene Field and Coronado is Villa Cuentos/Story Town. The following elements are included: the eclectic approach, oral language, fluency/reading comprehension, phonics, phonemic awareness, holistic approach, cultural relevance, long-term planning, thematic instruction, and cooperative groups. Given that the program includes the components necessary for implementation in a successful dual language classroom, just the "How to implement?" question remains.

The remainder of the first day gave teachers the opportunity to collaborate, share their prior knowledge, and address concerns they were encountering as they implemented the core program. It also gave them time to learn new concepts and strategies, based on G.L.A.D. (Guided Language Acquisition Design) and ideas for implementing Literatura Infantil and Freire's strategies for Spanish and English language literacy instruction. For most of the teachers these strategies were new, so they were excited to see them implemented in the classroom along with the core reading program.

**Working in the Classroom...**

During the next three days, teachers convened in Mr. José Manuel Robles' dual language second grade classroom at Eugene Field. Elia María and Susan demonstrated using the core reading program and implementing the strategies that were introduced Monday. The morning was divided in half with Elia María providing the Spanish Language Arts instruction and Susan teaching English Language Arts. The participants of the Biliteracy Academy were seated around the room with an observation form on which to reflect and take notes on their observations. They noticed how the students worked and responded to the instruction, and they identified the strategies presented on Monday.

Each day's instruction was based on Lesson 16 of the second grade level of Villa Cuentos/Story Town. The anthology story for this lesson, “Señor Putter y Tabi escriben un libro” / "Mr. Putter and Tabby Write the Book,” involved an old man and his old cat trying to write a book, because it was winter and snowing and neither one could go out because of the bad weather. Tabby, Mr. Putter's cat, was a major character in the story, and winter played a major role in the activities happening in the story. Therefore, Elia María used the topic of cats, integrating science and teaching about mammals, for her Spanish language instruction, while Susan used winter for her theme, emphasizing descriptive writing for the English language instruction. This division of themes enabled the teachers to observe one way a core program, having both the English and Spanish versions, can be taught without translating and teaching the same concept twice.

During their instruction, Susan and Elia followed the lesson plan components outlined in the guide Question of the Day, Read Aloud, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, High Frequency and Robust Vocabulary, Modeled Writing, Comprehension and Critical Thinking. Each morning began with the question of the day, alternating the language of instruction. They adapted G.L.A.D. strategies (the cognitive dictionary, big book read alouds, observation charts, realia, graphic organizers, flexible grouping, chants, poems, and a sentence patterning chart) to the core program, as well as other strategies (ola de palabras, biografía de las sílabas, palabra generadora, y escribiendo caligramas) specifically used in the instruction of Spanish language arts. These can be used with any language. Teachers observed the enthusiasm and success the students experienced as they participated during these three days and how consistent use of these strategies positively impacted student learning.

As an opening motivator, students viewed observation charts showing varieties of the cat family in different settings, doing different activities. During Elia María’s lesson about cats, one of the students and her mother brought their pet cat to class. Students had the opportunity to ask questions and talk about the cat as mammals, discussing their qualities...
and needs, as well as best practices in caring for cats as pets. Also, students listened as Elia read aloud a big book, *Lo más importante de los gatos*, which introduced the academic vocabulary and scientific concepts.

An article from the core program, “Cómo ser poeta,” was used to create a big book which was shared with the class. As Elia read this big book aloud, she discussed what was needed to become a poet, such as having the right materials, having a suitable place to write, and using words that “draw” a picture of what the writer is trying to say. This lesson was based on the fact that Mr. Putter was trying to write a book because he could not go outside due to the weather, and so he talked about everything with Tabby, his constant companion. Students demonstrated what they had learned by creating an art project with sentences and *caligramas* using rhyming words about cats, which they enjoyed reading to the class and the teachers.

Susan used observation charts about winter to gain the interest of the students. Students viewed different activities, clothing, foods, and celebrations in a variety of winter pictures. As they discussed the pictures, they shared their favorite activities. Of course, one of their favorite activities was building a snowman. This provided a basis for some of the lessons from the core program on adjectives and writing a “How To…” paragraph. Students discussed adjectives describing snowmen and winter, and they worked in small groups writing adjectives on large snowman charts. They used those words when working as a whole group with a sentence patterning chart to create more detailed and descriptive sentences. Finally, a discussion on how to make a snowman led to the group working together to write a paragraph entitled “How To Make a Snowman.”

Students also participated in an activity that produced snow from a powder and experienced feeling and describing the powder and the snow it produced. They compared and contrasted this with snow that had been produced earlier and refrigerated. These activities provided much excitement, conversation, and questioning that led to a more complete understanding of the concepts. Susan also did a read-aloud of the anthology story in preparation for small group guided reading.

**Reflection and Collaboration…**

Three half-days of demonstration were not sufficient to provide instruction for the entire lesson in the core reading program. However, this was a good beginning and an opportunity for teachers to observe the process in the reality of the classroom. This last day, again with teachers only, allowed for further reflection and discussion on their professional development experience and the impact it would have on their teaching. It also gave them the opportunity to collaborate and make some of the materials they would need to implement the strategies they had observed.

The teachers who participated in this week’s work stated that seeing the theories and strategies implemented in the classroom with students made a tremendous difference in their understanding of the entire process. Observing how the students responded and the specifics of implementation gave them a feeling of “I can do this!” It eased some of their concerns about using a core reading program with fidelity while giving the students the hands-on, art, music and personal experiences that we all know children need to be successful learners. It really is true that realia can make a big impact. The "realia" of this professional development apparently did just that for these teachers!
Coming Events

❖ **INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONVENTION** — Reading in Many Languages: April 25-28, 2010, in Chicago, Illinois. To learn more about the conference, visit IRA’s conference website at wwwираconvention.org.

❖ **AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGE POLICY RESEARCH AND TEACHER TRAINING CENTER** — International Indigenous Language Policy Research Conference: April 26-27, 2010, at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. For more information about the conference, please contact Dr. Christine Sims (505.277.3175 or csims@unm.edu) or Dr. Penny Bird (505.277.0537 or cpbirdsd@unm.edu).

❖ **ALLIANCE FOR MULTILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION** — Equal Educational Access and Opportunity—Children First: Policies, Practices, Pedagogies: May 19-21, 2010, at the Convention Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This is AMME’s inaugural conference. Early registration discounts are available now! For more information, visit AMME’s website at conference.ammeglobal.org.

❖ **HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL’S ANNUAL POWWOW** — This event will be held in the Highland gym on April 21. Grand entry is at 6:30. There will be native foods for sale, several groups of singers, and recognition of Native American students. For more information, contact John Williams at Highland High School, 265.3711.

Don’t forget that LCE’s website, www.lcequity.com has archived issues of Making Connections. Check it out!

Cross Cultural Resource Library

Monday through Friday: 8:00-5:00
Closed daily for lunch: 1:00-1:30

Library Specialist: Karen Hedstrom

Please call 880.8249, ext. 154, before making the trip to be sure the library is open.

FYI...

Be sure to ask Karen Hedstrom about the new kits available at the Cross Cultural Resource Library! These may include books, cassettes, teacher’s guides, manipulatives, etc. They’re available in Spanish, English, or both, so check them out next time you’re at the library.

ESL Endorsement—2010 ESL Summer Institute

Sponsored by UNM and APS, the 12th annual ESL Summer Institute will be held at La Mesa Elementary School from June 1 to July 9, running Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The institute is designed to help in-service and pre-service teachers at all levels secure ESL endorsements.

The application deadline for the institute is April 5, 2010. If you have questions about the 2010 ESL Summer Institute, course offerings and prerequisites, or would like to register, please call 277-8961 or email Holbrook Mahn at hmahn@unm.edu.

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