At Valle Vista Elementary School, we are in the process of adopting a school-wide core reading program. The programs that we have chosen are the Macmilan-McGraw Hill Treasures and Lectura. To begin implementation, we have had to reconcile fidelity to the 50:50, simultaneous biliteracy development dual language program model and fidelity to the core reading programs. The biggest issues, of course, are centered on scheduling—how to fit everything from the core reading program into daily schedules that have limited time in each language. What follows is a discussion of considerations and decisions that we have made in beginning this journey. Our hope is that it sparks a continuing professional dialogue among dual language schools as we approach the reading adoption year.

**Whole Group Versus Small Group Reading Instruction**

The core reading programs are organized around whole group and small group reading instruction. This organization is consistent with a continuum of high to low teacher support (Mooney, 1990):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Support</th>
<th>Low Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher in Charge</td>
<td>Teacher demonstrates, guides, and shares the hard parts with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student in Charge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore, we decided to alternate the whole group and small group reading components of the core reading programs on a weekly basis between the two languages of instruction, as is shown below in Table I.

**Table I. Whole Group and Small Group Reading Instruction Schedule for a 6-Week Unit Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks 1, 3, and 5</th>
<th>Weeks 2, 4, and 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treasures whole group reading lessons</td>
<td>Treasures small group reading lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectura small group reading lessons</td>
<td>Lectura whole group reading lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This schedule ensures that every student has access to the core reading selection and objectives in both programs—either as part of whole group instruction or small group.

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**Also in this issue...**

- Estrategias para crear un ambiente placentero para la lectura
- ...Reinvigorating Sheltered Instruction at AHS
- Deepening Sheltered Instruction
- African American Performing Arts Center and Exhibit Hall Opens
- I Can’t Read This!
- Bilingual Education for People who are Deaf...
- Making More Connections!
—continued from page 1—

instruction and, therefore, fidelity to the core reading programs is maintained (i.e., the weekly pacing of the core reading selections and the scope and sequence of the core reading objectives in both programs are implemented). The alternating weekly small group reading lessons also provide the means for the differentiated instruction that is required for dual language students.

Because small group reading instruction is so time intensive (4 groups of 5 students at 15 - 20 minutes/group = 1 hour +), we have determined that the teacher will meet daily with the lowest two groups but only twice a week with the upper two groups. The alternating schedule also ensures that on a daily basis students do not receive redundant instruction (e.g., whole group reading in English in the morning and then whole group reading in Spanish in the afternoon).

**Phonemic Awareness/Phonics/Spelling in Both Languages on a Daily Basis**

The difference between teaching reading in English and teaching reading in Spanish lies in how we teach decoding (e.g., phonemic awareness, phonics, and spelling). Therefore, we have decided that every day, each student should receive the phonics part of both the English and Spanish core reading programs.

**Integration of Writing**

Both of the core reading programs have writing and grammar components that include a writers’ workshop 5-day writing process plan (Day 1 – Plan, Day 2 – Draft, Day 3 – Revise, Day 4 – Edit, Day 5 – Publish) which overlaps in scope and sequence (e.g., Unit 1 focus is personal narrative in both Treasures and Lectura). We have chosen to integrate this component with the whole group reading instruction. Therefore, it is the only part of the programs that will not be implemented in both languages but, over the course of the 6-week unit, 3 weeks of writing workshop lesson plans will be in English and 3 weeks will be in Spanish. This alternating of writing workshop weekly by language will also ensure that the daily literacy lessons are not redundant (e.g., a student will not receive writing workshop in the morning in English and writing workshop in the afternoon in Spanish).

Given these considerations, the following guidelines for daily schedules have been developed (Table II, below).

Table II. Dual Language 50:50 Schedule for a 6-Week Unit Plan from Treasures and Lectura

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks 1, 3, and 5</th>
<th>Weeks 2, 4, and 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treasures whole group reading lessons including phonics/spelling (45 minutes)</td>
<td>Treasures small group reading lessons with independent centers (60 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasures writing Workshop (45 minutes)</td>
<td>Treasures phonics (30 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectura small group reading lessons with independent centers (60 minutes)</td>
<td>Lectura whole group reading lessons including phonics/spelling (45 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectura phonics/spelling (30 minutes)</td>
<td>Lectura writing workshop (45 minutes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This schedule results in 3 hours of literacy per day (1.5 hours in English and 1.5 hours in Spanish) and maintains fidelity to the 50:50 simultaneous, biliteracy dual language program. We realize that this is an ambitious time requirement but have been able to reconcile it reasonably well with our core math program and science and social studies curricula.

**Future Work**

As we move forward with implementation of these core reading programs, we are aware that we need to focus on choosing the most appropriate activities for our second language learners (e.g., independent centers with manipulatives and word sorts versus worksheets from practice books) and scaffolding the whole group lessons appropriately (e.g., using G.L.A.D. strategies to ensure that our students have access to the core selections, which for many of them are far above their reading level). We will also be looking at what comprehension objectives from the two programs transfer across languages (e.g., identifying character setting and plot) to possibly eliminate overlap in order to use daily time more efficiently.
Estrategias para crear un ambiente placentero para la lectura
por Elia María Romero

Después que se enseña a leer y a escribir a los estudiantes, la lectura empieza a considerarse como una materia obligatoria y un recurso de aprendizaje. Esto da lugar a que se le dé más importancia a la medición de la lectura mecánica que al acto placentero de leer para aprender.

La formación del hábito de la lectura se desarrolla mediante la práctica de actividades lectoras que conllevan al control consciente sobre lo que se lee, es decir, que leer dé como resultado comprender y disfrutar lo que se lee. Esto permite a los estudiantes establecer una relación entre lo leído y las experiencias personales así como también conocer la realidad que le rodea.

Para disfrutar de la lectura diaria requiere de condiciones previas:
✔ Que la actividad de leer sea libre y continuada.
✔ Que los libros sean adecuados a la edad del estudiante.
✔ Que los libros que se van a leer tengan calidad literaria y relación con la cultura del estudiante.
✔ Que los textos sean completos y auténticos.
✔ Que leer sea una experiencia colectiva placentera.
✔ Que la lectura permita pasar de la lectura a la escritura y de la escritura al disfrute de la lectura.

Es importante tener en cuenta que los niños disfrutan mejor del acto de la lectura si se realizan juegos con el lenguaje como los que a continuación se presentan.

Estos tipos de actividades tienen el objetivo fundamental de promover la lectura consciente. Puede servir para evaluar la lectura y la motivación para la relectura.

✔ JUEGOS DE OBSERVACIÓN Y RAZONAMIENTO VERBAL
  • sopas de letras
  • jeroglíficos
  • pirámides de palabras
  • descifrar mensajes secretos
  • problema del día
  • mensaje escondido del día

✔ JUEGOS ORALES
  • fórmulas repetitivas ejemplo: una manzana, media manzana, dos manzanas, media manzana, etc.
  • canciones que se les cambia la letra
  • memorización de trabalenguas, adivinanzas, retahílas, pregones, frases inventadas
  • cuentos al revés
  • memorizar textos o poemas acorde con la edad; hacerlo con distintos criterios: decirlo rápido, lento, sustituyendo palabras. . .
  • inventar lenguajes (añadiendo una sílaba al inicio o al final de las palabras)

✔ JUEGOS ESCRITOS
  • crear rimas fáciles
  • crear adivinanzas
  • crear coplas
  • rotular todo el salón de clase
  • inventar comparaciones
  • escribir textos en espiral
  • inventar una entrevista con un artista o personaje famoso
  • crear un anuncio, un póstero, un rótulo de las actividades de la escuela o la comunidad
  • crear historias con técnicas diferentes: ensalada de cuentos, ensalada de fábulas, completar finales
  • descubrir palabras a través de una pista dada
  • hacer definiciones reales, absurdas o que no tienen sentido

La lectura tiene un componente afectivo. Los que transmiten la experiencia de leer son los que tienen la mayor influencia y responsabilidad para que los estudiantes tengan gusto o rechazo por la lectura.

Hay que hacer todo lo posible para que los estudiantes tengan la oportunidad de tener a su alrededor personas que les ayuden a tener el gusto y placer por la lectura. Estas personas harán un gran impacto en nuestra comunidad de lectores.
The May '07 Making Connections article, “Refocusing on Sheltered Instruction,” shows how the Albuquerque High School faculty faced its challenge to increase the percentage of students' meeting proficiency in math and reading as measured on the New Mexico Standards-Based Assessment. Our '06-'07 EPSS identified literacy strategies, including school-wide literacy skills instruction with pre- and post-assessments, as a means to boost student achievement. In addition, the principal thought it wise to implement sheltered instruction in English and Spanish language content classes.

The May '07 article described how the AHS faculty, during in-service last September, began the process to examine how students perceive and teachers can articulate their use of sheltered instruction. Furthermore, the article concluded with the questions from the Students’ Language Instruction Survey developed by LCE resource teachers Greg Hansen and Nancy Lawrence, and Carlos J. Ortega. These teachers hoped that the students’ perceptions would stimulate the staff's willingness to return to sheltered instruction as a valid approach to the daunting task of realizing students' gains in language learning and, ultimately, in academic performance.

The responses demonstrate that students recognize that sheltered instruction is used and not used in the classrooms at Albuquerque High. It was gratifying to read the students’ uncut, but authentic ideas. Perhaps they elicited the staff's desire to review and reincorporate sheltering into their practice. Certainly, that was the intent of the survey.

Next, the AHS faculty began to discuss and reflect on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and other sheltering guidelines (based on, but not a duplicate of the SIOP), in departmental groupings. As facilitators, we instructed teachers to think, converse, organize, record, and report aloud on evidence of sheltered instruction in their own work. We stressed, “Highlight your most effective, successful practices.” Once understood, the work process flowed. The faculty needed from 30 to 45 minutes to record and report out to the whole group. The teachers’ ideas were then recorded verbatim on disk for later in-depth analysis, evaluation, and revision.

Just recently, part of the AHS Counseling Department began to examine its work from last year. Overall, the items’ tone was inviting and sensitive to students of other languages and cultures, almost as if the Counseling Department is suggesting the notion of sheltering the school's overall physical and emotional environment. This kind of support would be important for putting students and families at ease, lowering people’s affective filter before instruction ever begins.

The counselors’ brainstorming resulted in both clear, straightforward ideas and more general ideas, some of which will need clarification and elaboration in order to be more useful. So, counseling and all other academic departments will meet again, with facilitation support, to have conversations about ideas and practices such as those below.

Carlos Ortega interviews an AHS student.
Facilitation would necessitate creating comments and questions to encourage more depth and detail in the counselors’ "first-draft" ideas. Regarding a "welcoming environment," for instance: How can you specifically make the environment in counseling more welcoming? What does welcoming mean in a hectic school setting? Another example might be, in respect to “coordinate with resource staff”: With which resource staff members could you coordinate? How could they help you and you, them? Hopefully, more fleshed-out ideas and, in terms of classroom instruction, more extensively sheltered learning activities would result. For the classroom teacher, many of the SIOP concepts would inform questions, such as, "What language objectives for the lesson can enhance the content objectives?"

Now, as Albuquerque High begins the new school year, we still face the same challenge as last year: to close the gap between students’ academic proficiency levels and AYP in reading and math. New Mexico Standards-Based Assessment results are not yet available, but a glimpse at the data shows that we have not met AYP in 2006-07. Professional development in sheltered instruction will continue this year, given reasonable amounts of time during in-service trainings and departmental meetings. Hopefully the steps I trace in this article provide the pertinent information necessary for other schools to address students’ academic challenges, similar to those we face at Albuquerque High.

Students’ Language Instruction Survey at AHS—

*a random sampling of questions and student responses to the oral survey*

When you are in class, do you ever share anything about your personal life or what you already know about the topic of the lesson? Give examples.

*Sí, en matemáticas, la Sra. ____ me pide (algo) sobre mis reflexiones del tema. (Otra maestra) nos pregunta sobre mi familia, ¿Cómo están?* Depends on the lesson. I wouldn’t give real personal stuff, you know, real private stuff anyway. Yes, I had that experience in class before.

In class what do your teachers do to help you understand what you’re reading?

*The teacher pauses in the middle and explains what we have just read. The teacher explains real well. En veces nos ponen a leer, nos explican con otras palabras. Hacemos webs (telarañas de conceptos).*

In class, what do your teachers do to help you understand what they’re saying?

*The teachers here say things and make you visualize it. Teachers say, “give (oral) presentations and plays, or try acting out subjects.” (They) write what they say on the board and explain, repeat if you don’t get it. They explain with different words.* Lo peor es que nos gritan. Tal vez dan ejemplos de sus propias vidas.

What kinds of classroom activities help you to learn best?

*Hands-on activities, for example projects in which I teach other students... I made an Aztec pyramid.* Poder hacerle preguntas a la maestra.

What could teachers do to make you feel comfortable and confident in your learning?

*Be open. Ask questions. Be patient. No busy work. Be prepared. Participar más con sus alumnos, hablar contigo. Utilizar mi lenguaje. Incluir personas de mi cultura en sus lecciones. They should pretend they care... I remember... kids would read out loud in class and the teacher just said okay and moved on as if he just had to get it done.*

For more information, or for the complete text of survey questions in both Spanish and English, see *Making Connections, May ’07* or contact Carlos Ortega at ortega_ca@aps.edu.
The six key components of sheltered instruction are a touchstone to help us ensure effective teaching and constructive learning activities for language learners and culturally diverse students. Those components include planning clear language objectives, building and using students’ background/prior knowledge and experiences, providing demonstration, structuring peer-to-peer interaction, making text accessible, and including realia in the lessons (see lacequity.com, Newsletter Articles, Key Components of Sheltered Instruction). They are appropriate for all content areas and grade levels. And they form a positive, basic, instructional framework to move all students toward achieving standards.

Although these key strategies and techniques are effective, teachers look for ways to extend them as they work to enhance student engagement and learning. Is there more guidance in improving language development through interaction and authentic, meaningful use? Is there a more comprehensive model of sheltered instruction to guide and refine instructional practice? Are there other elements to add to the six key components?

The answers come in the form of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), a research-based instructional model which has proven to be reliable and valid. What is most exciting about this model is that students learning English whose teachers were skilled in SIOP made significantly greater gains compared to similar students whose teachers did not use this model. This evidence showed up during four years of research using a state-developed writing assessment. Specific subtests showing a higher level of performance included language production, organization, and mechanics.

The following checklist is adapted from Making Content Comprehensible by Echevarria et al., 2004, Pearson. It can serve as both as a planning and reflection tool; it is organized in categories which incorporate and exemplify the six key components; and its design supports standards-based instruction.

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Guidelines for Sheltered Instruction
APS Language and Cultural Equity—2006-07

For English language learners and culturally diverse students, the following elements are critical for quality instruction and intensive support/interventions in Tier I and Tier II of the RTI process.

I. Preparation
1. Clearly defined standards and content objectives to guide teaching and learning
2. Clearly defined language objectives for each lesson (functions, structures, vocabulary)
3. Student performance targets, based on language proficiency levels, determined by state (ELD) and TESOL standards
4. Content concepts appropriate for age and educational background of students
5. Supplementary materials to clarify language and content and engage students
6. Adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency (e.g., redundancy of language, making text accessible)
7. Meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening, and speaking

II. Instruction
Accessing and Building Background
8. Concepts explicitly linked to students’ background experiences
9. Links explicitly made between past learning and new concepts
10. Key vocabulary emphasized, illustrated, and used in various contexts

Comprehensible Input
11. Instruction proceeds from whole to part to whole
12. Speech appropriate for students’ proficiency level
13. Explanation of academic tasks clear and modeled
14. A variety of scaffolding techniques used to make content concepts clear
15. Reading/writing supported by various scaffolds

Strategies
16. Ample opportunities provided for students to use learning strategies
17. Consistent use of scaffolding techniques and checks for understanding throughout the lesson, including small-group learning activities
18. A variety of formats provided for students to show what they know (graphic organizer, oral response, cloze, pictorial representation, etc.)

Interaction
19. Various question types, including those that promote higher-order thinking skills, used throughout the lesson

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Deepening Sheltered Instruction—continued on page 7—

by Nancy Lawrence and Dee McMann

[continued on page 7—]
20. Frequent opportunities for teacher/student and student/student interaction to encourage student talk and elaborated responses about lesson concepts
21. Grouping configurations support active participation in language and content objectives
22. Sufficient wait time for student response
23. Opportunities for students to clarify concepts, including use of L1 when possible and/or appropriate

Practice/Application
24. Hands-on materials and/or manipulatives for students to practice using new content knowledge individually or in groups
25. Learning activities to apply content and language knowledge
26. Activities that integrate all language skills/modes (i.e., reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, researching)

Lesson Implementation
27. Content and language objectives clearly supported by modeling and sheltering learning activities
28. Pacing of the lesson appropriate to the students’ language proficiency levels and demands of the content
29. Learning tasks differentiated according to students’ language proficiency levels

III. Classroom Environment
30. Consistency in classroom management routines and procedures to support student learning and independence
31. Community building an on-going activity
32. Students’ languages, cultures, and work reflected in the classroom environment
33. Personal and academic risk-taking supported by positive inter-personal climate
34. Multicultural curriculum inclusive of diverse peoples and issues
35. Student participation in planning, decision-making, self-assessment, etc., to encourage engagement and investment in learning

IV. Review/Assessment
36. On-going review and redundancy of language functions, vocabulary, and content concepts
37. Frequent, specific feedback provided on students’ language, content, and work
38. Formative and summative assessments to assess student comprehension and learning and guide instruction
39. Assessments differentiated for language proficiency levels
40. Opportunities for students to self-assess language and content learning

African American Performing Arts Center & Exhibit Hall Opens!

A new community resource, the African American Performing Arts Center & Exhibit Hall, opened to the public on June 9, 2007. Located in Albuquerque at 310 San Pedro NE, 87110, the center brings together and promotes community activities of research, preservation, and nurturing of the intellectual and cultural histories of people of African descent in New Mexico as well as across the Southwest.

The center houses several programs and facilities:
- Exhibit Hall, which will showcase the artistic heritage of the community and beyond;
- Community Arts Program, which offers classes in visual and performing arts;
- Charlie Morrisey Education Center, which is both a repository of cultural artifacts and an active research center;
- Headquarters for the Sickle Cell Council, providing support and social services to its clients; and
- Robotics Computer Program, offering support for students in the areas of math and science.

Of particular interest at the start of the new school year is the Robotics Program for after-school use by middle and high school students. It is offered through Cyberquest, New Mexico, a web-based learning program for math and science. This tutorial supports students taking Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1 and 2, Geometry, Physical Science, and other math/science classes. For more information, contact Joycelyn Jackson, Director, Cyberquest NM Robotics Learning System at the African American Performing Arts Center, 222.0782.

Adapted from The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP): Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000, 2004

Joycelyn Jackson and West Mesa H.S. students try out the online math tutorial in the computer lab.
"I CAN’T READ THIS!" Harold stood behind his desk, fists clenched, shouting at his third-grade teacher, while the rest of his class silently read a selection about sound waves from their grade-level science text. “I don’t care about this noise stuff anyway!” Harold’s scowling face spoke volumes about his frustration at being a non-reader who also didn’t see any relevance in the curriculum. I was a visitor in his classroom that day, helping his teacher with ways to shelter science vocabulary for ELL students.

The teacher looked at me in frustration, saying that she now understood how to shelter the vocabulary for her ELL’s, and she could incorporate sheltering into her lessons. What really troubled her was how to reach individual students like Harold, who were reading far below grade level, given the requirements of her school’s new core reading program. Her frustration at not being able to meet Harold’s needs seemed almost as great as his anger at not being able to read.

I offered to work with her to devise some strategies for Harold. I first gave him a DRA assessment so I could observe his reading difficulties first-hand. I found out that he had some sight words, could sound out V-C-V pattern words, but that letter blends, long words, and vowel combinations stopped him cold. He would guess wildly, saying any word that began with the same sound, or just come to a screeching halt when confronted with an unfamiliar word. His only decoding strategy was to “sound it out.”

When I asked him to think about the sentence and what would make sense, he gave a semantically correct substitution. It was also a good guess syntactically. He was able to use syntactical and contextual clues well, often substituting a wrong word that made sense. He just didn’t know that was a strategy that good readers use. Next, I used the diagnostic spelling inventory from Words Their Way to determine his phonetic understanding, since decoding seemed to be a big issue for him.

I called his family to ask permission to work with him. They were very willing, and knew that he was very frustrated by reading. We worked out a plan for them to check for notes from me and reinforce his reading at home.

THE FIRST HOOK: PERSONAL RELEVANCE
In talking to him I found out that he’d never really found books that he enjoyed. He grudgingly admitted that he did like Frog and Toad. But that was it. What he did love was playing basketball with his father and older brother. His dad coached his team. I asked him if he’d like to read about basketball, and he nodded reluctantly and asked, “But how’s that going to make me a better player?”

I found an “Eyewitness” book about basketball in the public library. Harold and I went through the book together, an informal “picture walk,” and he noticed that many of the illustrations were accompanied by drawings of basketball plays. He recognized one, the “pick and roll,” from the diagram. We decided that I would copy the pages with play diagrams on them, and we would make a basketball play book, writing descriptions of the plays together.

THE SECOND HOOK: FAMILY SUPPORT
His dad was happy to take part in this project. Harold and I read the written descriptions together, and he was soon reading more fluently. The combination of real background knowledge and high interest were working their magic for him. Writing the play descriptions in his own words helped him use blends more accurately, and he was willing to correct his work so that his father could read it with him. This also helped with comprehension. In addition, we spent about twenty minutes with phonics games from the Words Their Way program. These games went home with him, as well, and his parents made them part of their family game nights.

—continued on page 9—
Since I was only able to work with him for about an hour each week, he became impatient and began to do “pages” on his own in class. He’d get help from his teacher as needed, and he began to be an independent worker. He started to volunteer to read in his reading group, as well, and his teacher reported that he seemed more confident as a reader.

**The third hook: Culturally Relevant Literature**

Since my role in his basketball project was somewhat diminished, I went looking for more reading material for Harold. I knew that another one of his frustrations was that he couldn’t read “chapter books” and was stuck with the “baby books.” I found an easy-reading chapter book, *The Stories Julian Tells* by Ann Cameron and Ann Strugnell, about an African American family with a strong father and two little boys. Since Harold is African American, and the middle son of the family, I thought he might relate to Julian as the older brother, as well as to Huey, the little brother. We took turns reading pages, and Harold read much less haltingly after a while. He loved the humor, and the family seemed a lot like his, he said. He wasn’t able to read completely independently yet, but he was becoming a much stronger reader. He began to volunteer to read in his classroom, and he thought of himself as a reader by the end of the school year. He found another “Julian” book in the library (it’s a series), and he and his mother were reading it at home together.

When his teacher checked his reading level with the DRA in May, he was a late second-grade reader, having made a year’s progress since January. She was elated and decided that when she had similar students in the future, she would make time to find out their interests and work with them individually. “It really didn’t take us that much time, and it made a real difference,” she reported. “I can also make sure my read-aloud books are multicultural. I just felt so overwhelmed by all the requirements! I felt I had no time for individual students. I have to make time!”

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**—Creating the Time and Means for One-on-One Instruction—**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade levels</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Benefit for students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 – 12</td>
<td>BOOK CLUBS – Students are introduced to several books and sign up to read one, along with other students having the same interest.</td>
<td>Allows for reading that is personally, culturally relevant; students interact with peers with similar interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K – 12</td>
<td>READERS'/WRITERS' WORKSHOP – Students work on individual reading/writing projects.</td>
<td>Allows teacher to work with individual students/small groups on areas of need or interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K – 12</td>
<td>DIALOGUE JOURNALS – Students write to the teacher and she responds without correction of “mistakes.” (In early grades, responses are written with the learner so that the teacher can model.)</td>
<td>Allows teacher to get to know students’ individual interests/concerns and respond through the journal and/or by addressing common needs in the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K – 12</td>
<td>COOPERATIVE LEARNING GROUPS—Students work together in assigned roles to complete projects. (In lower grades, these are often called “committees” or “labs.”)</td>
<td>Teacher can pull individual students out of group for intensive work on area(s) of need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K – 12</td>
<td>SUSTAINED SILENT READING</td>
<td>Teacher can pull individual students/small groups for intervention work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K – 12</td>
<td>INTERVENTION TIME</td>
<td>Allows for targeted work on area of need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 12</td>
<td>ADVISORY PERIOD/ HOMEROOM PERIOD</td>
<td>Teacher can pull individual students/small groups for work in area of need</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For centuries, people have debated the question of how to educate deaf and hard of hearing people—and even if they should be educated. One controversial question is still heard today: Should deaf people be educated using sign language or spoken English? The arguments in favor of manualism (the use of signs) sound much like arguments in favor of bilingual education: if deaf people have a solid first language, they will be able to learn to read and write English more easily.

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, originally passed in 1975 and re-authorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1990, guaranteed a “free and appropriate public education” to all students, in the “least restrictive environment.” For most students, the LRE was interpreted to be the child’s neighborhood school, since the law also sought to educate disabled students with their non-disabled peers.

To most educators, this seems the ideal placement. A deaf child can learn with hearing children as a sign language interpreter signs what the teacher and other students say. Yet this solution is limiting, and often not successful for many deaf and hard of hearing children. Often, parents are cautioned against learning to sign; many professionals believe that learning to sign will negatively affect the child’s ability to acquire spoken English. As a result, many of these children arrive at school with poorly developed language skills, spoken or signed. Language learning is an interactive process; a child watching an interpreter is not likely to acquire sign language naturally. Nor will a student learn language and curricular content simultaneously through an interpreter. Ideally, children need to be in a language-rich environment where direct communication happens effortlessly.

The late 1970’s saw the rise of what was termed Total Communication, a philosophy that advocated the use of any educational approaches that could help deaf and hard of hearing children succeed in school. Unfortunately, the philosophy was mistakenly interpreted as a method for instruction, resulting in what is termed simultaneous communication. This involved synchronizing signs with spoken English, which became the method of choice in many schools for the Deaf. It is difficult to use well, providing only a skeletal version of English, and it is often incomprehensible to deaf people who do not have proficiency in English. English-based sign systems “provide few of the paralinguistic cues that English speakers rely on for understanding...cues such as pacing, intonation, and stress are either deleted or bear little resemblance to what we expect in English.” (Winston, 1994) This method has not proven effective given the low average reading level of deaf and hard of hearing children upon graduation from high school.

Deaf and hard of hearing people who use American Sign Language (ASL) should be considered bilingual, since they must also be literate in English to navigate the world around them. Linguistic research has established that American Sign Language is a naturally developed, rule-governed language with its own phonology, morphology, syntax, and pragmatic rules. Some schools slowly began to experiment with, advocate for, and incorporate the use of ASL as the language of the classroom for deaf and hard of hearing children and began to teach English as a second language, the first steps toward applying bilingual educational methods in this setting.

In 1988, the Commission on the Education of the Deaf explored the state of deaf education in the United States. Its findings were not encouraging: “The present status of education for persons who are deaf in the United States is unsatisfactory. Unacceptably so.” (COED, 1988) In response, the 1989 publication Unlocking the Curriculum: Principles for Achieving Access in Deaf Education challenged educators to rethink traditional methods and proposed a complete overhaul of deaf education to use ASL as the natural first...
language of deaf people in order to teach English literacy as a second language.

The guiding principles of the proposal were:

❖ Deaf children will learn if given access to the things we want them to learn;
❖ The first language of deaf children should be a natural sign language (ASL);
❖ The acquisition of a natural sign language should begin as early as possible;
❖ The best models for natural sign language acquisition, the development of a social identity, and the enhancement of self-esteem for deaf children are proficient deaf signers;
❖ The natural sign language acquired by a deaf child provides the best access to educational content;
❖ Sign language and spoken language are not the same and must be kept separate both in use and in the curriculum;
❖ The learning of a spoken language (English) for a deaf person is a process of learning a second language through literacy (reading and writing);
❖ Speech should not be employed as the primary vehicle for the learning of a spoken language for deaf children;
❖ The development of speech-related skills must be accomplished through a program having a variety of approaches, each for a specific combination of etiology and severity of hearing loss;
❖ Deaf children are not seen as “defective models” of normally hearing children; and
❖ The “Least Restrictive Environment” for deaf children is one in which they may acquire a natural sign language and through that language achieve access to spoken language and the curriculum.

Recently, new programs for educating deaf and hard of hearing children have begun to incorporate bilingual-bicultural practices. A brief description of one such school follows.

THE LEARNING CENTER FOR DEAF CHILDREN

Established in 1970, the Learning Center for Deaf Children (TLC) in Massachusetts advocates the use of sign language in addition to spoken English in the classroom. In 1988, it made a commitment to become a bilingual-bicultural school, emphasizing both ASL and English as well as American Deaf culture and other American cultures. According to the Learning Center, “American Sign Language is the natural language of Deaf people and the most accessible language for our student population. Written English is presented as a second language and is heavily emphasized...”

TLC supports a continuum of placement options. These include special classes, resource rooms, and regular classrooms in the public schools, as well as special schools, home and hospital instruction, or any combination that will meet each student’s individual needs.

The Learning Center provides students the opportunity to experience the same range of experiences as their hearing peers in public school programs. Through a common primary language, ASL, students have complete and continuous daily access to classroom instruction and incidental conversation with language models, peers, and role models proficient in ALS. This does not occur in public schools where deaf students watch interpreters. Students also can participate in every component of their education: sports teams, competitions and contests, committees and clubs.

One of TLC’s most unique features is its Dual Language program, designed primarily for students with cochlear implants. This program stresses the importance of using spoken language and listening (English) as well as visual language (ASL). Each student is assessed to maximize his or her potential in ASL, audition, and speech, while focusing on education as well as social development. Positive self-identity and success in both the Deaf and hearing communities are primary goals.

Having a strong rapport with the deaf child’s family is also a TLC goal. ASL classes are offered for parents and siblings in order to foster positive communication in the home.

With such innovative programs, true bilingual education might be provided for all of our deaf and hard of hearing students. If we can help them acquire a first language designed for the eyes that allows true access to education, then we can help them acquire English, as well. They can truly have the best of both worlds.

WORKS CONSULTED
Making Connections—September ‘07

Cross Cultural Resource Library

Tuesday and Wednesday: 7:30-5:00
Monday, Thursday, Friday: 8:00-4:30
Closed daily for lunch: 12:00-1:00

Library Specialist: Jo Ann Gonzales

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

Coming Events

❖ National Association for Multicultural Education’s 17th Annual International Conference — Charting the Course to Academic Excellence and Equity through Multicultural Education: October 31-November 4, 2007 in Baltimore, Maryland. For more information, visit the NAME website at www.nameorg.org.


FYI... TESOL Endorsement and Survival Spanish Courses for APS Teachers — Fall 2007 —

LCE is making available courses at Sandia High School for the TESOL Endorsement and in Survival Spanish for Teachers. These courses are open to APS teachers, who will be reimbursed for tuition costs. The TESOL courses satisfy all NM State requirements for the endorsement. Survival Spanish course participants will learn to communicate better with monolingual Spanish-speaking children and their families. The Survival Spanish courses satisfy the foreign language requirement for the TESOL Endorsement. Tuition for each course is $525, to be paid on the first day of class and reimbursed when the course has been passed. Contact: Prof. Henry Shonerd, at 855.7271.

FYI...

A note from LCE...

Making Connections is distributed to administrators, literacy leaders, instructional coaches, department and grade-level chairpersons, and ALS contact personnel at APS Schools. We hope that you find it informative and helpful, and that you consider using it in a variety of professional development settings such as study groups, departmental/grade-level meetings, in-service workshops, mentoring new teachers, etc. Please pass copies on to other members of the school staff as you finish each issue, and contact the editors if there are particular topics you would like to see addressed in future articles!

Our website, lcequity.com, contains numerous resources for teachers and administrators. Making Connections is archived on the site, both by issue and article categories; there are live links to useful websites; coming events and important notices are highlighted on the front page; and there are plans for other exciting components to help in teaching language learners and culturally diverse students. Check it often!

Dual Language Study Group

A dual language study group, sponsored by LCE, will be starting September 24 and meet monthly through December! For more information about schedule, stipends, and materials, please contact Susana Ibarra Johnson, LCE, at johnson_si@aps.edu.