

Making Connections

Language, Literacy, Learning

APS A publication of the Department of Language and Cultural Equity LCE

Showing Progress Toward Closing the “Achievement Gap”

This article excerpt is from an editorial by Dr. Beth Everitt that was published in the Albuquerque Journal on October 31, 2003.

...Closing the achievement gap means addressing the learning needs of English language learners and minority students.

APS is addressing this through school redesign efforts that create smaller learning communities, literacy/biliteracy development, and professional development. Alternative language services are available to all English language learners.

Over the last eight years, APS has increased its English as a Second Language certified teachers from 25 to 925 and tripled the number of bilingual endorsed teachers. This has been accomplished through tuition reimbursement for teachers taking coursework leading to an ESL or bilingual endorsement and a teacher pay differential. Currently, 90 percent of all students who require ESL services are receiving them.

One of the best measures of our alternative language services is the performance of English language learners who exit these programs.



Dr. Beth Everitt, APS Superintendent

Scores for these students range from the 49th percentile rank in third grade to a high score of 59th percentile rank in sixth grade.

On a school-by-school basis, we show pockets of excellence and strong early initiatives that are closing the achievement gap. La Mesa, East San José, Dolores Gonzales, Eubank, and Lowell elementary schools, and Washington Middle School have shown great successes in helping large populations of minority students make strong progress.

Terra Nova scores are one good measure for comparing students' performance. The test publisher considers scores from the 40th to 60th percentile rank to be within the average category. APS' percentiles for minority students range from 39th to 67th.

APS completed a statistical analysis of student performance for a cohort of students moving from sixth through eighth grade. This study

—continued on page 2—

Also in this issue...

- ❖ **Academic Improvement Plans—A Closer Look for English Language Learners**
- ❖ **Características del proceso de evaluación para estudiantes bilingües**
- ❖ **Living in a Learning Ecosystem . . .**
- ❖ **. . . Piloting the Standards-Based Progress Report**
- ❖ **Planning with a Focus on Language Objectives**
- ❖ **“Expanding the Vision of Equality”**
- ❖ **Making More Connections!**

—continued from page 1—

examined the progress of minority compared to non-minority students; students in poverty and those not; special education students and regular education students; and English language learners compared to students proficient in English. These studies show that the minority students' performance starts 9 to 15 points behind in reading and math, but their progress (the academic growth in math) mirrors that of non-minority students.

Further, this study shows that the reading score gap between the groups was gradually closing by 1.25 points a year. The reading achievement gap between English language learning students and English proficient students closed by 1.75 points per year during the study. The growth from sixth to eighth grade for all other special groups was equal to the comparison group of students.

Finally, minority students who are proficient in Spanish participate in achievement testing in Spanish. The scores from these tests show that students score above the national average. The highest scoring group on the *Supera* is the eighth graders at the 73rd percentile.

... Parent and community involvement is being accomplished through successful programs in the Rio Grande, Albuquerque, Valley, and West Mesa high school clusters. It is in the form of parent centers, groups like ENLACE, and programs that involve parents through community action teams. It does take a community to ensure that all children can learn and to hold APS accountable that every child graduate fully prepared ... to become a world-class citizen.

Clearly APS is making progress, but not enough. APS will continue to seek out strategies that help students close the gap and compete in a global economy. ... Together we can close the gap and increase the number of productive and fulfilled citizens in Albuquerque.

Academic Improvement Plans: A Closer Look for English Language Learners

As APS moves into a standards-based system, we are maintaining records and accountability reports through technology services. This, in turn, streamlines processes such as the Academic Improvement Plan procedures. The Office of Extended Learning has provided trainings and an FAQ sheet to administrators and others in order to help clarify the process. Teachers of ELL's will want to be aware of the following points of information.

- Students qualify for the AIP list in grades 1-3 according to their scores on the KDPR, the ARI/SRI/Johns, or other RDA-approved assessments and in grades 4-8 on *Assess2Learn*. The ALERT list signals that the student may need additional evaluation and/or academic support. It is not an indicator of who receives an AIP this year.
- If a student has not made adequate yearly progress from the pre- to the post-assessment, that student will appear on the spring AIP Bubble Sheet and a summer intervention, such as an ESL class, if appropriate, may be considered. If a student has made adequate yearly progress and is performing at grade level in reading and/or math, his/her name will not appear on the spring AIP Bubble Sheet.
- Every student whose name appears on the AIP Bubble Sheet must have an AIP written.
- ELL students will appear on the AIP Bubble Sheet if they scored below 20 percent this fall on A2L and below the 40th percentile in reading and/or math on last year's *Supera*.
- The "three years in the U.S." federal No Child Left Behind guideline does NOT apply to district assessments.
- The accommodations which are available for ELL students on sweep state testing are also available on A2L.

Some suggested appropriate instructional interventions for ELL's who qualify for an AIP are listed on the teacher worksheet provided by the Office of Extended Learning. These research-based, beyond-class-time interventions can be accomplished through sheltered instruction; additional enrichment resources in English or the home language; modeled tasks and assignments using demonstration mediated by oral and written targeted vocabulary; additional small-group and one-to-one, teacher-to-student learning activities; and tutoring which emphasizes hands-on, concrete practice. An ESL class is, in itself, considered an intervention.

Special thanks to Linda Lefton, Director, Office of Extended Learning. For further questions about the AIP, please contact that office at 342.7204 or your school principal.

Características del proceso de evaluación para estudiantes bilingües

por Elia María Romero

El tema de la evaluación como proceso es uno de los tópicos más controversiales en el debate sobre la nueva educación.

Actualmente se plantea la necesidad de evaluar a los estudiantes respecto a las normas académicas del estado mediante pruebas estandarizadas. Como consecuencia, los maestros en las aulas bilingües necesitan incrementar el número de horas en la preparación de sus estudiantes para ayudarles a adquirir las destrezas básicas necesarias para tomar una prueba estandarizada. Esto crea un dilema cuando el maestro tiene que enfrentar una realidad; sus estudiantes provienen de diferentes ambientes lingüísticos, culturales y socioeconómicos. Entonces el maestro comienza a preguntarse:

¿Quiénes deberán tomar las pruebas estandarizadas? ¿En qué idioma? ¿Deberán tomarlas con acomodaciones o sin acomodaciones? ¿Qué recursos tengo para ayudar a mis estudiantes? ¿Qué debo hacer para prepararlos?

A continuación se destacan algunas estrategias que deben tenerse presente en la preparación y evaluación de los estudiantes bilingües que presentan diferentes niveles y diferentes maneras de aprender:

La evaluación debe ser continua. Es decir, debe ser parte integral de los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Esto significa que el maestro debe preparar actividades significativas en ambos idiomas como parte de prácticas diarias que le permitan obtener información de cómo aprenden sus estudiantes y cuáles son sus dificultades en el proceso de aprendizaje.

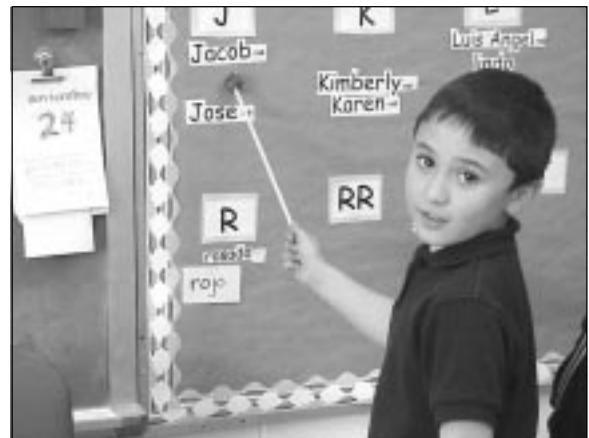
La evaluación debe ser globalizadora. Esto implica que mediante la evaluación el maestro conocerá mejor la personalidad y los estilos de aprendizaje de sus estudiantes al igual que los aspectos intelectuales y afectivos.

La evaluación debe evaluar conceptos y procedimientos. Esto sugiere que el maestro debe enseñar conceptos que lleven al estudiante a dominar las estrategias que utilizó para aprender el concepto y cómo las puede aplicar a otras materias de estudio.

Las prácticas de los conceptos deben ir de lo fácil a lo difícil y deben ser también funcionales. Por ejemplo, si se están estudiando conceptos matemáticos de cómo calcular el área de un cuadrado, un círculo o un polígono, el estudiante deberá capacitarse para aplicar este concepto en situaciones diferentes de las que aprendió inicialmente. Puede comenzar a calcular el área de su clase, de las mesas de su escuela, de un parque, etc. Así el alumno al aprender este concepto en matemáticas deberá estar en capacidad de aplicarlo en otras materias tales como ciencias, estudios sociales, geografía, etc.

Es importante durante este proceso que los estudiantes pongan atención al proceso de cómo aprendieron los conceptos en los dos idiomas. Es recomendable pedirles que expliquen a otros estudiantes o a un adulto, tanto en inglés como en español el proceso que utilizaron en el aprendizaje de los conceptos.

Si preparamos a nuestros estudiantes solamente para salir bien en un examen estandarizado como forma de control, la riqueza del proceso educativo inevitablemente se pierde.



Un alumno de primer grado lee el tablero de palabras en el salón de la Sra. Freedman en La Escuela Atrisco.

Living in a Learning Ecosystem— growing language in math and science

by Greg Hansen

Perched on a tree branch, a bearded iguana emerges from slumber in slow motion, opening one eye and then another. Zebra finches whistle ascending note songs and ringed neck doves coo against the sound of running water, under which fish are hiding, nearly invisible among plant roots. A ferret, still curled, lifts its nose to greet the day. It's morning and Mr. Gilberto Lobo gets ready for work in an environment that looks more like his native Yucatan than a portable classroom on Albuquerque's West Mesa.



A classroom ecosystem at Truman Middle School provides the anchor for language and content learning.

Mr. Lobo teaches science and math at Truman Middle School. Together with ESL teacher Theresa Durán and Social Studies /Language Arts teacher José García and seventy-five 6th grade students, they form the Ocelots, one of Truman's dual language teams. Combining his passion for teaching with the knowledge and expertise of his first career as a veterinarian, Mr. Lobo has created a classroom of exploration and discovery.

Of course, what you notice first in Mr. Lobo's room is biodiversity. But just as tangible is the excitement one feels when learning is about to be enjoyed.

In Mr. Lobo's classroom, students become caretakers of a food chain, raising plants and hatching insects that will nourish the larger animals. The environment serves as a focal point, often providing an application for the wide range of math and science concepts that students will encounter in 6th grade. So when the students learn to multiply fractions, they can find a practical application of this knowledge connected to the running of the classroom ecosystem. This directed and purposeful work

helps to create what author Frank Smith describes in *Joining the Literacy Club* (1988). In Mr. Lobo's room, the learning resembles what

we experience when we enjoy being in a club. The work is meaningful and useful, and learning is often incidental because the students are focused on what they are *doing* instead of what they are *studying*. In this manner, work that is highly structured and directed can seem effortless. Estrella Anchondo, for example, is one of the fifteen or twenty students that voluntarily come every day after school to

help with the care and feeding of the animals and plants. "If you are scared of the animals, you get an opportunity to get to know them better," she says. "I like coming after school, because you can get to know more about them."

Contributing to the high level of comfort that is so apparent in all of the Ocelots' classrooms is the enormous amount of information about the students and their families that has been

gathered and displayed in the form of charts, graphs, lists and stories. The Ocelots

certainly know a lot about themselves. This self-awareness and the use of both their first and second languages send a clear message to the students that, although they come to school with differences, their differences are valued. "We're constructivists," says Lobo. "We look at what the kids have. Well, they have language."

And that they do. Talk to an Ocelot student (all of whom are English language learners) about what they do in class and you're likely to hear some very exact usage. "That's a bearded dragon," says Oscar Estrada, pointing to a hardy looking lizard across the room. "We have to

—continued on page 5—

... meaningful work is a stimulus for meaningful language interactions.

—continued from page 4—

write about it. We have to learn about their habitat, what they consume and how big they can grow.” Oscar told me this in English, even though he had received this instruction in Spanish, an indication that he is successfully transferring competency from first language to second. Like most all the work that the students do on the Ocelots, this task will be done in collaboration with other students in a group, which Mr. Lobo views as a pathway to boost both language skill and content knowledge. “We want them to talk with each other about the work that they are doing,” Mr. Lobo tells me with a common sense shrug. Of course, common sense and research would suggest that meaningful work is a stimulus for meaningful language interactions. In this respect, Mr. Lobo’s classroom is an excellent language lab as well, since the work that revolves around the care of his miniature ecosystem is so purposeful.

“So what do you know about percentages?” asks Mr. Lobo as the students settle in their places. The zebra finches have quieted, and the iguana has gone back to sleep. But the eyes of every sixth-grade student in the room are wide open.

I sat down recently with the Ocelots teaching team during one of their frequent lunch meetings. Clear themes emerged that support their work with students. Here are some excerpts from our conversation:

KNOWING STUDENTS . . .

GH: *You have information about your students displayed on the walls of your rooms. It looks like you know a lot about your students.*

GL: In the summer we get together and plan the academic year, and one of the things we do is use consensograms and other tools to get to know the community, so we divide up what we’re going to do.

JG: . . . the consensogram that I do is about what level of education the parents have. I also collect data on what schools the kids came from, whether it be here or even Mexico.

GH: *How would you describe your students in terms of language levels?*

TD: They are all ELL’s, and some are proficient in both languages and are working at grade level, and some lack proficiency in one, or even both languages.

GH: *Of course ESL deals specifically with language, but how about you two who teach science, math and social studies? Do you see yourselves as language teachers also?*

JG: Well, I do. In my history class, we’re reading and writing all the time, and I try to integrate Spanish language arts and social studies.

GL: We know we have to help our kids with vocabulary, so we are always checking for understanding. One of the things that helps is when we integrate our subjects as much as possible. We can’t do that 100% of the time, but we really do try to integrate curriculum continuously throughout the year.

COMMON PLANNING, COMMON GOALS . . .

GH: *It’s exciting to see three teachers working so closely together. Do you spend a lot of time planning?*

All: We do!

TD: We meet during the summer . . .

JG: . . . during prep period, lunches, after school . . .

TD: For me, since I am ESL, I can be more flexible and can figure out what they are teaching and pull it into my classes.

GH: *Do you think that makes your instruction more meaningful?*

TD: I do. And I also think that it helps the students make connections.

GH: *Your dual language program has existed for a couple of years now. What have you learned?*

TD: I have more respect for what it takes to learn a second language, and I have more respect for the kids as I watch them do it.

—continued on page 11—



Mr. Lobo confers with students who are estimating percentages.

Continuing the Transition to a Standards-Based System... Piloting the Standards-Based Progress Report

by Chris Fritz, RDA

BACKGROUND

Historically, teachers have communicated to parents about a child's academic performance with one letter—one letter with remarkable power. When a child receives an 'A,' it conveys to the parent that the child is succeeding; conversely, an 'F' conveys failure. However, the letter grade does not inform the parent of the child's strengths, weaknesses, or engagement with the content. Does it reveal how well the child reads? Spells? Persists in solving a math problem? It does not, so the letter grade is incomplete in terms of describing performance.

The move to a standards-based reporting system is a logical step after years of work on standards. The report will give teachers, administrators, families, and students a clearer picture of student progress toward the content standards, while also informing teachers' instructional "next steps."

In this new reporting initiative, there are three components of classroom/school practice that will potentially change:

- ◆ classroom instruction and assessment;
- ◆ classroom grading practices and policies; and
- ◆ reporting practices to parents and students.

In APS most school staffs are working on the first component—focusing on standards-based instruction and assessments. As teachers begin assessing and documenting progress toward standards, the need to change grading practices—and the need to change how parents are informed—becomes apparent.



Chris Fritz talks with elementary principals about the new progress report during a recent "Making Standards Work" session.

STANDARDS-BASED PROGRESS REPORT PILOT

The purpose of the new report is to describe students' learning progress to their families and others, based on the *APS Content and Performance Standards* at each grade level. It is intended to inform parents about learning successes and to guide improvement when needed. For this school year, participating schools include Bel-Air, Griegos, McCollum, Mitchell, Pajarito, San Antonito, and Zia elementaries.

Pilot schools have tailored participation to their unique needs and communities, with some implementing only in primary grades this year, some focusing on specific content areas, and still others pairing the new report with the current report card as a transition. The work of these schools will help identify and develop processes and supports for schools in the years ahead. Their input will also help to revise and refine the document itself, including development of indicators for language of instruction and special education services.

Additional schools will be invited to join the pilot in the fall, and in school year 2005-06, all elementary schools will be using the standards-based report in some way. The middle school conversation will begin in the spring of 2004, with a pilot in place by the spring of 2005.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN THE CLASSROOM?

At Mitchell, in their second year of using a standards-based report, teacher Sandra Brown notes, "This year, more than any other . . . we are truly thinking about standards and how we are assessing and teaching. Using a basic report that is shared by other schools is forcing us to develop a common language." She added that the common language and goals for teaching are central to on-going standards work at Mitchell.

For Sandra, unwrapping the standards this fall has focused and clarified the process. With the unwrapped standards, she has mapped out the

—continued on page 7—

—continued from page 6—



Sandra Brown, 5th grade teacher at Mitchell Elementary, confers with Jacob Laney. Students' reading/writing notebooks are at the heart of their work toward standards.

concepts and skills that are targeted for the second quarter. She also created a poster for each of the content standards to share with students, clarifying expectations for the work ahead—which is made even clearer with rubrics and benchmark papers. Her grade book now has a line item for each of the strands and what will be assessed.

A standards-based educational system is important for all students, but it is especially beneficial for English language learners who are balancing the demands of content *and* language learning. For example, evidence of student progress toward standards makes it easier for teachers to place students in appropriate fluid reading groups. Proficiency levels are determined by a collection of varied work and assessments. These multiple opportunities to improve work with specific feedback help to more accurately illustrate student learning during the language acquisition process. A report on growth and effort is also important for the families of all students who may not have achieved a standard but have worked hard and made demonstrable progress. Additionally, the progress report format is more user-friendly and comparable to academic progress reporting in other countries.

"A true standards-based system that supports children's proficiency must include a reporting system that allows for accurate and honest feedback."

Donna Little Kaumo, Principal,
San Antonito Elementary

What might schools be doing now to get ready . . .

. . . as a staff?

- Acknowledge that this is a challenging process of change that will take extended time and lots of thoughtful, respectful discussion.
- Work continuously over time with colleagues within and across grade levels to study and unwrap district and state standards, identifying power standards and the body of knowledge and "big ideas" that will focus teaching and learning.
- Examine student work and begin or extend professional conversations about what "proficient" looks like. Gather examples of student work in content area "portfolios."
- Begin to develop common units and rubrics at school/grade level for content areas.

. . . as part of the larger community?

- Reach out to the community with your shared understanding of what these changes mean—through Open House, PTA meetings, parent conferences, newsletters . . .
- Share your enthusiasm for this work—stress the effort to hold both students and teachers accountable for high standards.
- Reassure families that standards-based reporting will give them a more detailed description of students' progress.
- Show that standards support children's awareness of target expectations.
- Use the "refrigerator standards"—APS Content Standards pamphlets—in work with families and community members.

Thanks to teachers and administrators from the pilot schools for sharing their experience and expertise.

Resources:

Lisa Carbon—Coordinator for Standards—Teaching & Learning Systems: 880.8249
Chris Fritz—Assessment Manager—Research, Development & Accountability: 848.8717
Sandra Brown—Teacher—Mitchell Elementary: 299.1937

- *Transforming Classroom Grading*, Robert Marzano, ASCD
- *Making Standards Work*, Doug Reeves, Center for Performance Assessment
- *How's My Kid Doing?*, Thomas Guskey, Jossey-Bass

Planning with a Focus on Language Objectives

by Nancy Lawrence, with APS teachers from College of Santa Fe, Spring '03: 462/562

Often people say that sheltered instruction is simply “good teaching.” A powerful element that sets effective sheltered instruction apart is a clearly developed focus on language. Although this is a hallmark of best practices in instruction for English language learners, it is also vital for the development of good literacy and communication skills for all learners. Planning around language objectives and standards benefits both students and teachers in many ways. Explicit language objectives clarify content standards, topics, and teaching/learning activities. These objectives can:

- support acquisition of language in a variety of registers from informal to formal, both oral and written, for academic and social settings in the classroom and at school;
- accelerate content learning across disciplines by focusing on the specific, essential vocabulary and structures of content-area discourse as well as vocabulary common across curriculum;
- serve as a lens to organize and assess the daily lesson as far as planning and implementing instruction and measuring student progress;
- enhance teacher growth in the areas of language acquisition, communication, and professional knowledge through focused awareness of precise academic language in the school setting; and
- promote a positive classroom culture by providing accurate language models which are new to all students (or not yet internalized) and which all students can acquire and “own.”



Laura Hidalgo-Castillo, Elise Williamson, Maribel Rodriguez, and José M. Robles, Eugene Field Elementary, identify language objectives through a sequencing activity.

Language objectives include three components:

- 1) **functions**—uses and purposes of language appropriate for the task and topic;
- 2) **structures**—syntax, grammar, phrases, and expressions which are needed for the purpose, task, and topic; and
- 3) **key vocabulary**—words and terms which are essential to the content and context.

Naming language objectives as we plan helps us keep language alive and focused in every phase of instruction. The objectives do not limit language use in the classroom. Rather, they form the core of a rich language setting which encourages students and teachers to extend their capabilities. A step-by-step pattern for planning a topic of study might look like this:

- Determine the standard to be addressed and the essential question or “big idea” for the topic.
- Decide what learning activities with student outcomes will help students attain the standards.
- Plan daily instruction with explicit teaching and guided and independent student tasks.
- Gather/create resources, supplies, and materials for the lesson(s).
- Identify the function or purpose of the language required of the students for each activity.
- Predict the structures to be modeled and used by students for the tasks.
- Choose 3 to 5 essential words or phrases of concept vocabulary that the students should internalize.

Once language objectives are developed for the various instructional activities of the daily lesson, the teacher can broaden the focus throughout the unit according to the needs of every student, providing targeted practice for students who are less proficient and enrichment activities for those who are advancing. For example, students may develop an illustrated word wall, or perhaps a personal dictionary or word bank to highlight the language necessary for the unit.

—continued on page 9—

–continued from page 8–

The following frameworks for language objectives, adapted from the work of APS teachers, address language arts as well as other content performance standards. These are not complete lesson or unit plans, but can be used in conjunction with all components in those plans. Detailed plans will contain elements such as content objectives, correlated additional teaching/learning activities and assignments, procedures for building prior knowledge and closing daily lessons, specific grouping formats, literacy tasks, materials, realia, and texts to be used, and formative and summative assessments with appropriate scoring guides or rubrics.

STANDARDS: *First grade Science, K-4, 12, 13* "...describe weather changes..." "describe patterns of movement of objects in the sky..." *LA: IV 2, 3* "...uses new vocabulary..." "...participates in classroom discussions..."

TOPIC	ACTIVITIES	LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS	STRUCTURES	KEY VOCAB.
Seasons	affinity diagram (small groups use Post-its [®] with what they know)	classify, sort	They're the same because ... They're alike because ... They're different because ...	summer spring winter fall autumn
	tree murals (small group construction)	identify	I will draw ... The ...goes here. This is ... Add a ...	leaf ground trunk branch
	sharing murals (groups present their murals orally)	describe	In winter there is ... I see is like ...	

STANDARDS: *Fifth, eighth grades Social Studies: III-A* "...structure, functions, and powers of government." *LA: IV 1, 2, 3* "...makes presentation to inform or persuade..." "...clear, precise language..." "...awareness of audience..."

TOPIC	ACTIVITIES	LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS	STRUCTURES	KEY VOCAB.
Branches of the Federal Government	tree drawing or mobile created by students with model by teacher	describe, clarify, identify, classify, compare	The__branch is ... The function of the__ In the__branch are ...	executive legislative judicial function checks/balances
	mock elections, campaign, court case	compare, identify, express opinion	I prefer ... I believe ... This candidate is ... In my opinion ... The opinion of the court is ...	candidate vote law representative senator
	mini-research project (jigsaw on fed. gov.)	report, explain	Our topic is ... The reasons for__are ... This is because ...	

–continued on page 10–

–continued from page 9–

STANDARDS: *Fourth grade* Social Studies: III-D “understand rights and responsibilities of ‘good citizenship’” ...” LA: IV 2, 3 “... uses simple and compound sentences ...” “... presents information ...”

TOPIC	ACTIVITIES	LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS	STRUCTURES	KEY VOCAB.
<i>Civil Rights</i>	audio tape: MLK, Jr. shared reading: “A Box of Crayons,” by Shane de Wolf	compare, describe	We are alike/ different ...	equal different hope dream
	“I Have a Dream” drawing activity (students draw dreams in a cloud outline)	explain, report	In my picture ... This is how ... I want to show ...	hope dream

STANDARDS: *Kindergarten* Math: III-8,9 “compares and orders objects by length ...” “reports comparisons of objects ...” LA: IV 1, 2, 3 “... name objects ...” “... ask and answer questions ...” “... uses sentence patterns ...”

TOPIC	ACTIVITIES	LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS	STRUCTURES	KEY VOCAB.
<i>Size</i>	small group work: place objects in ascending order of size	classify, sequence	larger than ... smaller than ... __is__than__ -er, -est	big, bigger, biggest small, smaller, smallest than
	pairs: matching game of sizes using attribute shapes	compare contrast classify	comparative superlative I found the smallest/largest ...	more, most
	whole group/pairs: measure items, people	compare	__is__than__ __is the__	taller, tallest shorter, shortest

STANDARDS: *K-Fourth grades* Science: 10 “... describe life cycle of plants ...” LA: III 1, IV 1 “... plans writing strategies...organizes ideas ...” “responds to questions ... gives oral presentations ...”

TOPIC	ACTIVITIES	LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS	STRUCTURES	KEY VOCAB.
<i>Life cycle of plants</i>	soaking lima beans, small group work	label, describe seed parts	This is__ It’s the__	coat food plant
	compare hard and soaked beans	compare, describe	It is__	hard, harder big, bigger
	draw before and after soaking process	follow/ give instructions label	Label__ Draw a__ imperative	vocab. above draw label color
	prepare to observe and record growth	predict answer questions	future conditional If the seed__, then it will__ The seed will__	grow change die

—continued from page 5—

GH: *That's a good point, . . . we often think learning a second language is effortless for children, so it is good to remember how much help we can give them.*

CREATING COMMUNITY . . .

GL: The other thing is that we have to be really aware of what the kids already know and have, and that is Spanish, their language. So why wouldn't we want to use this incredible skill they have? Of course we want them to become 100% proficient in English, and we think that staying strong in their first language is the best way to make that happen. I'm not sure dual language is the best answer everywhere, but it is a great tool in certain areas.

GH: *Well it certainly seems like a good fit here . . .*

JG: . . . the parents help us out here in this program. Knowing that we speak both languages has brought them in, and they offer suggestions and become involved in things related to school. It's very open.

BUILDING LANGUAGE AND LITERACY . . .

GH: *All of your students come speaking Spanish, but I assume their reading and writing abilities vary.*

GL: Oh yes. That's our mission as educators, to improve these skills. And . . . a program like ours needs more than books and materials. We really have to be working together—parents, kids, teachers—for it to work right.

TD: And we really have a good pot of soup here! We work together really well.

GL: Yes, and it makes our lives so easy. We know these kids and we talk about them, and this communication helps and it sets a good example for the kids because they know we are working together.

GH: *So it's worth the effort to plan together?*

JG: It's not really effort, it makes it so much easier, because we support each other with curriculum.

GL: And we want to do it right, so we put a lot into this program, but if we didn't, things would be harder.

GH: *I notice a lot of face-to-face collaboration in your rooms. Do you think working this way helps with language learning?*

GL: It helps with everything.

TD: Sometimes, I can sit back and just observe them as they work, which is nice. I'm there for questions, but often I can just enjoy watching them interact.

JG: And we are giving them responsibility for learning.

GH: *You can tell they are engaged, and they seem like they are having fun.*

TD: It *needs* to be fun! (laughter, and the bell.)

“Expanding the Vision of Equality” at La Cosecha

Two central themes of this November's *La Cosecha*, the annual conference presented by Dual Language Education of New Mexico, were equity for all learners and strengthening multicultural identities and communication. An abundance of varied and rich sessions engaged participants in topics ranging from specific instructional strategies to program design, to assessment issues, to the broader purposes of education. Enid Lee, author of *Beyond Heroes and Holidays*, *Putting Race on the Table*, and *Letters to Marcia: A Teacher's Guide to Anti-Racist Education*, opened the conference with an invitation to a harvest table. In her keynote address, she asked audience members to share what learning they brought to the “feast.” In return, Ms. Lee offered conference-goers many gifts, including practical classroom ideas to balance high-stakes testing with different ways students demonstrate what they know. A suggested plan of action follows.

- Take back the assessments of our children's learning . . .
- At the beginning of the year, talk with students about the many ways in which we show what we learn.
- Post the students' answers. Include in the list standardized tests as one of the ways we show what we know.
- Discuss this measure of assessment, . . . (underscoring) . . . what it does show and what it does not show about what we know.
- Throughout the year, assist each student to develop her/his ability to show what they know on this measure of assessment along with other measures such as teacher-made pre- and post-tests, journals, letters to real audiences, and projects that contribute to greater fairness and justice in the community and world.
- Become familiar with and participate in the work around the country to remove high stakes from testing and advocate for more formative and instructionally useful assessments of students' learning.

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Making more connections!

Coming Events

❖ **National Association for Bilingual Education—Bilingual Education: An Enlightened Path to Academic Excellence:** February 4-7, 2004, Albuquerque, New Mexico. For more information, visit the NABE website at www.nabe.org.

❖ **Southwest Conference on Language Teaching—Chile Tres: Languages, Literacy, Leadership:** March 25-27, 2004, Hyatt Regency Downtown, Albuquerque. For more information, contact Nancy Oakes at oakes@rrhs.rrps.k12.nm.us.

FYI...

Language and Cultural Equity has a new website! We're still adding to it, but it's up and running, and the information is current. There are professional links for resources and materials, access to LAS testing assistance, information about partnership schools, and more. Check it out at www.lcequity.com.

The State Department of Education, along with other members of the Mountain West Consortium, has been working to prepare a new statewide English Language Proficiency Assessment Instrument that will accompany the new ELD Standards. New Mexico bilingual and ESL teachers are participating as item writers and working on the bias committee. Next steps will include a pilot in the spring of 2004 and the field test in the fall of 2004. The test will be ready for districts' use in the spring of 2005.



Cross Cultural Education Resource Library



Monday and Wednesday:
8:00-5:00

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:
8:00-4:30

Closed daily for lunch:
12:00-1:00

On occasion, the library specialist must be away from the building, so if you're coming to browse or check out materials, please call to confirm that the library will be open. The CCERL now has a drop box available for returning material after hours.

LIBRARY SPECIALIST: Jo Ann Gonzales
883.0440, ext. 147

(If you have trouble getting through, try dialing all ten numbers at once!)

There will be a Publishers' Caravan for the Language Arts instructional materials adoption on Saturday, January 17, at the Hilton on University and Menaul (almost). Contact teachers will receive a stipend for attending. Watch for times and additional information from DeDe Arwood, Teaching & Learning Systems, 880.8249, ext. 188 or e-mail arwood_d@aps.edu.

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