

Making Connections

Language, Literacy, Learning

 A publication of the Department of Language and Cultural Equity 

Sheltering the Literacy Block

by Kathy Waldman

With its strong emphasis on comprehension, the Four Blocks Model offers many opportunities for teachers to provide sheltered instruction for their second language learners. In every “block”—“Making Words,” “Self-selected Reading,” “Guided Reading,” and “Writing,”—teachers work toward comprehension and make connections across the curriculum. These connections help language learners to learn content and to see through the content to the language they are learning. In her book, *Learning to Learn in a Second Language*, Pauline Gibbons states:

“...for children learning in a second language, it is important that we are aware of the language we use and that we deliberately create opportunities for children to hear and use it. We need to look at language rather than simply through it.”

How does a typical day look in a Four Blocks classroom? What sorts of activities and scaffolding or sheltering techniques are found in each of the teaching/learning segments? How can language learners benefit from this literacy model which encourages purposeful use of language?

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Third graders at Painted Sky participate in a “Book Club” during their Guided Reading Block.

STARTING THE DAY...

When the teacher gathers the children in the meeting area, she gives them a few minutes to share orally the events in their lives and then discuss the day’s activities. Next, the teacher shares several new informational books. She reads a few pages of three or four of these books and reminds the children that she has gathered a special collection of books for their new science unit from the school and public libraries. She has distributed these among the book baskets, and the children will be able to read them during self-selected reading time.

GUIDED READING BEGINS THIS LITERACY LESSON...

The class moves into the Guided Reading Block. On some days, the class does a shared reading of a big book with the teacher first reading the whole book to the class, and then children joining in on the second and third readings. On other days, the teacher guides the children in reading a story from a basal reader, literature collection, or multiple copies of a trade book (children’s literature or expository text). On this day, she has chosen the trade book, *Dinosaur Days* by Joyce Milton. Since this second grade class is currently using the Dinosaurs Science Kit, she wants to use guided reading time to extend her students’ knowledge of dinosaurs. In order to focus their

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Educación Familiar

por Elia María Romero

¿Cómo enseñar a sus hijos a ser buenos lectores y escritores?

El aprendizaje de la lectura y la escritura van íntimamente relacionados. Algunos niños de edad escolar empiezan a escribir antes de iniciar el proceso de la lectura. Los padres deben tener en cuenta que la base de la lectura y la escritura es el lenguaje hablado. Los maestros con mucha experiencia en la enseñanza de la lecto-escritura opinan que si su hijo/hija tiene facilidad de comunicarse en su lenguaje materno, posee un buen vocabulario y fluidez, será el primero en aprender a leer y escribir en la clase.

¿Cómo aprenden sus hijos a ser buenos lectores?

Esto comienza en la casa. Sus hijos aprenden poco a poco desde la edad muy temprana a imitar los sonidos y las imágenes. Ellos aprenden a leer sus gestos y movimientos. El escuchar lo hablado es el primer paso hacia la lectura. Esto les ayuda a desarrollar un amor y respeto hacia su idioma y un deseo de aprender un nuevo vocabulario.

A medida que van creciendo, sus hijos se dan cuenta que usted tiene gran interés en que ellos lleguen a tener éxito en todo lo que hacen. Es



Madre e hija leen juntas. La niña goza el tiempo especial y aprende mucho a la vez.



Una niña y su mamá están jugando el juego "formando palabras", usando sílabas.

importante que usted lea con sus hijos. Al leerles, señale los dibujos. Hágales preguntas sobre los personajes en las historias o cuentos que leen juntos. Demuéstreles que las palabras y los dibujos tienen una conexión. Busque libros con temas que a sus hijos les gustan. Así logrará que ellos estén ansiosos de que usted les lea.

Cuando esté leyendo pídale que encuentren palabras, dibujos, expresiones, sílabas, letras. Lea despacio y deténgase de vez en cuando para enseñarle a su hijo/hija a pensar en voz alta sobre lo que está leyendo. Hágale preguntas tales como: ¿Qué crees que va a pasar? ¿Sabes lo que es un castillo? ¿Cómo va a terminar este cuento? ¿Qué piensas de esta historia? ¿Puedes contarme el cuento otra vez? No se desespere si a veces su hijo/hija no comprende lo que lee. Anime a su hijo/hija a hacer preguntas y así logrará que él/ella comprenda la lectura.

¡Juegue con sus hijos!

Cuando lee con sus hijos es el momento perfecto para enseñarles lo que significa la escritura. Los juegos ayudan a hacer divertido este proceso. Juegue con ellos con sílabas, palabras, letras o dibujos. Durante el juego

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ellos descubrirán que las letras forman palabras, que las palabras forman oraciones, y que las oraciones forman un texto.

Un juego puede ser la palabra escondida. Este juego ayuda a la formación de palabras. El juego consiste en que usted le dice una palabra dividida en sílabas y el niño adivina la palabra. Por ejemplo, comenzando con una palabra sencilla, usted le dice al niño, «o-so», y le pregunta, «¿Qué palabra te dije?» (Oso.) «¿Puedes escribir la palabra?». Yo puedo ayudarte a escribirla.» Cuando el niño puede escribir palabras sencillas, puede progresar a palabras más complicadas, como por ejemplo: ma-ri-po-sa.

Escribir las sílabas le ayudará a deletrear las palabras. Cuando comience a escribir palabras completas, no se preocupe si no las escribe con la ortografía correcta. ¡Felicítelo! ¡Abrazelo!

Si usted lee y escribe todos los días con sus hijos, usted notará que naturalmente sus hijos serán excelentes lectores y escritores. Amarán el leer y escribir. Estarán siempre dispuestos a compartir con otros familiares que ya saben leer y escribir. Usted orgullosamente les podrá decir, «¡Felicidades! ¡Ya eres un buen lector y escritor!»

Include a Trip to the Library in Your Summer Travel Plans!

Teachers—for those of you on year-round schedules, teaching summer school, or just planning ahead and exploring materials for next year, schedule some time to visit the Cross Cultural Education Resource Library (CCERL)

The CCERL has an established collection of books, videos, language material, ESL kits, and other resources available for students and teachers to develop an awareness of cultural diversity in the school community. It also provides an extensive professional development section to help support issues around student and teacher learning of diverse populations.

The CCERL at Montgomery Complex will be open all summer for your convenience. Summer hours will be 8:00 to 4:30 daily, with a 12:00-1:00 lunch hour.

If you are currently a patron of the CCERL and have materials checked out, please return them to the library before the end of the school year. If you have lost or stolen material to report, call Jo Ann Gonzales at 883-0440 (154). Any changes in location or work status should also be reported so that your account information can be updated.

See you at the library!



The Cross Cultural Education Resource Library, Montgomery Complex, offers a wealth of materials for classroom use and professional development.



James Banks: Envisioning Multicultural Education

“One of multicultural education’s important goals is to help students acquire the knowledge and commitment needed to think, decide, and take personal, social, and civic action. Activism helps students apply what they have learned and develop a sense of personal and civic efficacy.”

—James Banks with A.A. Clegg Jr. (1990). *Teaching Strategies for the Social Studies: Inquiry, Valuing, and Decision-Making*. New York: Longman—

LEVELS OF INTEGRATION OF MULTICULTURAL CONTENT



LEVEL 4 THE SOCIAL ACTION APPROACH

Students make decisions on important social issues and take actions to help solve them. *This might include writing letters to the editor; doing awareness campaigns in public; examining delivery of community services...*



LEVEL 3 THE TRANSFORMATIONAL APPROACH

The structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups. *This might include historical events considered from the perspectives of all participants using authentic documents; interviews; multiple sources of information; current events; thematic approaches...*



LEVEL 2 THE ADDITIVE APPROACH

Content, concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure. *This might include bringing additional perspectives to the standard, textbook-based curriculum; adding pertinent books to the existing curriculum; inviting speakers...*



LEVEL 1 THE CONTRIBUTIONS APPROACH

Focuses on heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements. *This might include designated days or months to recognize specific cultures or individuals; study or celebration based on the more accessible aspects of culture such as music, food, or holiday celebrations...*

Adapted from Banks, J.A. (1989) *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

In Albuquerque Public Schools, we have the good fortune and challenge to work in a setting of rich diversity represented by the students and staff. Our teachers and schools aim to respond to this diversity through curriculum, instructional approaches and materials, and school setting and climate. We have the responsibility of reaching every child to foster a positive learning experience, thereby enhancing academic and personal development. James Banks of the University of Washington created five “dimensions” for educators to assess their work toward effective multicultural programs and equitable teaching/learning environments. They are:

- diversity content integrated across the curriculum;
- knowledge construction from various perspectives;
- prejudice reduction and development of positive intergroup attitudes;
- equity pedagogy with modification of teaching to facilitate achievement of all students; and
- establishment of an empowering school culture and social structure.

The following descriptions of instruction, designed and/or implemented by APS teachers, embody many of the five dimensions listed above. Although different in scope and focus, they illustrate various “Levels of Integration of Multicultural Content” devised by Banks to help educators think about and develop multicultural learning in their classrooms.

First and second graders learn about two first Thanksgivings as a social studies and language arts mini-unit during ESL instruction. In addition to the more common account of the European Pilgrims and American Indians in the eastern United States, these students learn about the arrival of Spanish explorers/*conquistadores* and the tradition of Indian feast days for giving thanks. They identify the foods native to the United States which were shared with the Spanish in New Mexico. The activities include: map work to show where different people lived and where they

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were moving; creative dialogues for students to role-play how different groups might have felt during these meetings; planting seeds of native foods such as squash, chile, and beans; and a classroom mural of important events in the first Thanksgivings.

A fifth grade class is immersed in the study of civil rights as a long-term theme. In their social studies and language arts time, cooperative teams come to consensus on and then research the lives and work of various civil rights leaders from many cultures and nations. Using a range of media and formats, the teams present their findings to the class. From this collective information, students compare and contrast the leaders' situations, initiatives, philosophies, and actions. In addition, class discussion revolves around similarities and connections to historical and present-day events. The project is rather open-ended to allow students to demonstrate what they know in multiple ways. Each team has a leader who keeps the work moving and checks in with the teacher regularly to report progress or roadblocks. A rubric guides students in their research and clarifies academic expectations.

In order to explore the evolution, perpetuation, and dangers of stereotyping, students in a high school communications class participate in a simulation entitled "BAFA,BAFA." The students become members of two very different cultures, each with unique ways of communicating and interacting. After visiting each others' "society/culture," students report out on what their feelings were as they encountered the "strange" cultural norms. During the whole group discussion, students explore the nature of words used to describe the other culture and the "mysteries" they observed. Then, as they become aware of the reasons these norms were part of the culture, they realize that their perceptions and conclusions reflect only surface assumptions about the "strangers."

"When content, concepts, and events are studied from many points of view, all our students will be ready to play their roles in the life of the nation. They can help transform the United States from what it is to what it could and should be—many groups working together to build a strong nation that celebrates its diversity."

—James Banks, "Transforming the Mainstream Curriculum" in *Educational Leadership*. ASCD: Volume 51, Number 8, May 1994—

IF WE WANT ALL STUDENTS TO...	THEN, AS TEACHERS, WE...
participate and be successful in our classrooms	change strategies to match preferred learning styles; encourage students to demonstrate learning through multiple modes; get to know students through activities that allow them to express their cultural, linguistic, and familial resources (surveys, interviews, community studies...).
participate fully and effectively in a democratic society	provide opportunities for discussion, class meetings, and collaborative learning to build community, foster participation, and enhance consideration of different perspectives.
be responsible and engaged learners	encourage students to have a say in their own learning by negotiating curriculum, participating in assessment design, and applying their learning in the larger community.
understand, appreciate, and work productively with others, while maintaining individual identity	design structured opportunities for working in integrated groups, with clear goals and outcomes; balance individual and group learning opportunities; expressly teach about different cultures, heritages, and historical perspectives within a curriculum; make aspects of different cultures visible in the classroom.
understand the impact and intersection of people and events in the history of our nation	encourage the use of primary sources from a variety of perspectives; examine different points of view through activities such as debates and simulations; expressly teach critical analysis of texts.

Two Teachers, Two Subjects, Multiple

Fourth in a series...



Mr. Vitale previews the weekly article with students.

Over the semester, Mr. Vitale has been scaffolding the task for his students, many of whom are English language learners, in several ways:

- 1) Ample time allows students to work carefully and to confer with peers and the teacher;
- 2) Weekly practice fosters depth of understanding of the genre and format and reinforces “safety” in consistent classroom practices and procedures;
- 3) Demonstration of academic writing—specifically summaries—and opinion pieces helps students make distinctions between the two; and
- 4) Engagement of student interest comes through careful selection of articles: “I try to choose things from the editorial page or other articles which relate to the students’ interests and lives.” With controversial topics, Mr. Vitale presents articles/videos/newscasts containing differing points of view, and, as extensions of their weekly papers, the students practice compare/contrast essays.



A student “talks to the text” with notes in the margin.

—in the government classroom—

Friday, first period, Rio Grande High School. The seniors come into their government classroom, settle in their desks, and get ready for their weekly current events session. Dictionaries, including bilingual editions, lie ready on the desks and shelves nearby. The classroom walls and boards display reading strategies, new vocabulary, and an APS *Perspective* article on academic standards as well as maps, newspaper articles, history posters, and stock market portfolio charts common to social studies classrooms. Literacy is obviously important in teacher John Vitale’s room: current events means reading for understanding, word study, and writing to learn and communicate.

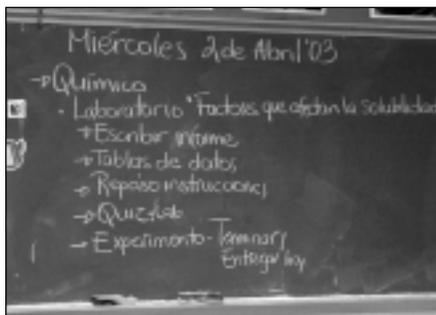
The work starts quickly. Mr. Vitale gives a brief introduction of the article he has copied from the *Albuquerque Journal*. He previews the text by pointing out the title, its author, the underlined words which comprise the week’s new vocabulary, and a brief overview of the issues. Then students take turns reading aloud with their teacher assisting and clarifying where necessary. And, since Mr. Vitale has had this format in place since January, it takes only a short prompt to set the task: composing sentences for the new vocabulary and writing a summary of the article.

“Remember to separate what the author says from what you feel in your heart,” he reminds the students.

The curricula in the A and B academies at Rio provide a literacy component for every course. Mr. Vitale assures that the students write every week, noting that “...writing is essential to critical thinking.” He has chosen to emphasize the summary format since it is vital to academic performance. In these activities, students work simultaneously toward national ESL, APS language arts, and state social studies standards.

ESL, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS:

- Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject matter information in spoken and written form.
- The student writes effectively for different audiences and purposes using appropriate writing strategies and conventions.
- Students will use critical thinking skills to understand and communicate perspectives of individuals, groups, and societies from multiple contexts.



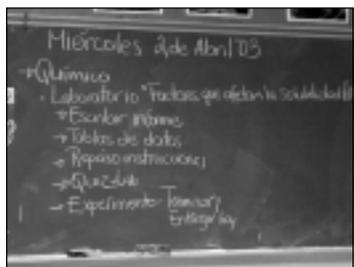
The chalkboard reminds students of reading strategies.

Multiple Standards, a Variety of Students

by Nancy Lawrence

Across the campus, in the science building, Lisa Caldwell guides her students through written directions, in Spanish, for a lab on solubility of compounds. She speaks only Spanish when teaching the entire group. Even though many of these sophomores are English dominant native New Mexican students, they have chosen to be in this class. The agenda on the board, the lab guide, and charts and posters, including student work, are in Spanish. In this setting, Ms. Caldwell must make both chemistry content and academic Spanish comprehensible so students can attain standards.

Ms. Caldwell uses many techniques to make sure students understand and learn content and language. With colleagues from Rio Grande and Language and Cultural Equity, she has collected and developed curricular materials in Spanish from a variety of sources. When first presenting



The agenda focuses students on consistent procedures.

printed material, she uses transparencies to demonstrate reading strategies such as finding key vocabulary, understanding text format and genre, and asking questions. As the students take turns reading the procedures aloud, Ms. Caldwell further mediates the text through demonstration with lab equipment and materials and by explaining the writing steps needed for reports.

Alone or in small groups, students rewrite the lab procedures in the past tense and third person. This becomes the guide for the lab and, once all data are recorded, the “official” report. Ms. Caldwell further encourages written language development by giving extra points for exceptional fluency and correctness.

Before the experiment, there is one more check for understanding. Ms. Caldwell reads a simple

Ms. Caldwell and students prepare for chemistry lab.



quiz highlighting the most important features of the lab report. Students are allowed to use their own written work as well as information on the boards and walls. They exchange papers and review the quiz orally with the teacher.

During the hands-on lab experiment itself, students work in triads, supporting each other once again. Following their own written lab reports and using the chemistry equipment and compounds, students negotiate and reinforce academic content language. They also have an opportunity to check with the teacher, indulge in friendly social language, and compare group findings from the experiment.

Frontloading both language and content has proved very beneficial for learning in the Spanish-language chemistry class. Ms. Caldwell noted, “At the beginning of the year, the students weren’t able to understand or write the lab report. Now they have the resources and confidence to do this work.”

ESL, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND CHEMISTRY STANDARDS:

- Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject matter information in spoken and written form.
- The student demonstrates fluency with appropriate types of speaking for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- The student revises written work to make it clearer and analyzes own work for consistency in facts, ideas, ...clarity, ...conciseness.
- Students will know and understand the properties of matter.
- Students will acquire the abilities to do scientific inquiry.



Students follow their own written guide for lab work.

—in the chemistry classroom—

I Don't Speak Spanish, I Speak English— Lessons From my Childhood

by Patricia Trujillo

This story could be one from any “nativo.” I am an Hispanic that grew up in the North Valley speaking English. My mom and dad spoke Spanish to each other and to my grandparents. Their primary language is Spanish; out of necessity they later learned English. None of them finished school.

When I went to school, some kids spoke only Spanish. I didn't, I spoke English. In third grade, the teacher asked me to write a story. I decided to write about the time I got in trouble. This is how the story went...

“The Day I Got In Trouble”

“Mom told me to sweep the cuartito. I couldn't find the palita. So, I decided to play. I pretended I was driving the car to the store to buy something to make the granito go away. Oops, mom caught me playing. I couldn't hear her until I put the radio slower. I got down from the car. I had to go pray a rosary. I am so glad mom hadn't noticed I forgot to close the light. That would have meant another rosary! I started to sweep the cuartito when I noticed I was wearing my shapos. I forgot to put my shoes on. I went to put on my shoes. The phone rang it was Auntie Nena. I better finish sweeping the cuartito.”

As a child, I wrote like we spoke. As an adult, upon reflection, I can see it was a beautiful language—the melding of two cultures and languages into one. In my teaching, I tried to

help my students be aware of the rich language background they brought to school. When we read, my students did a picture walk. I would elicit as much language as possible, validating



Reading together helps students develop literacy in Spanish.

their language and explaining another way to say a word, for example, “*Shapos* means slippers. That is the word the book will use.”

Later in junior high, I was told to take the Spanish placement test simply because I am Hispanic. I didn't pass. How could I? I didn't speak Spanish. I couldn't understand why they called me a Mexican at school. When we went to Juárez, I was called a *gringa*. I knew I was neither a *gringa* nor a Mexican. My identity was uncertain. I don't speak Spanish, I speak English.

Then after taking the ACT in high school, my counselor told me to go to vocational school because I wouldn't make it in college. I thought back to earlier years in school. I had never been in the top reading groups. I was so afraid to read out loud knowing that I would make a mistake or sound *mocha*. I remembered this as a teacher, so in my classroom we did a lot of pre-reading, partner reading, choral reading, and practice at listening centers with the same text.

Finally, thanks to the encouragement and support of my family, I went to college. I became a teacher. I wanted my students to feel comfortable with both their home and school languages. In my classroom my students wrote daily. I would give them a prompt or a story starter. One time, I asked them to write about their most embarrassing day at school. I wasn't sure if I was going to tell them about my most embarrassing day. I remember that on that day the teacher asked me to count how many papers were in the pile and write down the number. I wrote “45 shits.” My friends laughed. I sounded it out and it looked right. They told me it was “sheets” not “shits.” I don't read Spanish, I read English? To this day the memory stings with humiliation. So, in my classroom, students were not allowed to laugh at each other. We were a family. We could only encourage and help each other.

Over time, I decided to study and learn my ancestral language, Spanish. My mom would

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often tell me she didn't speak the "correct" Spanish. It is painful to see how timid she is. I didn't want that to happen to me. I took classes in Spanish and studied in Guatemala. I struggled with the language; it was not the Spanish I heard at home. I have always felt like I just don't have the fluency in Spanish of a native Spanish speaker or the academic English fluency of my colleagues. You wonder, "Will I ever feel competent in either language?" I did not want my students to feel the same way. When they struggled, I would tell them that I was still learning English and Spanish. I made mistakes too. My class motto was "¡Sí puedo!" Students were encouraged not to say, "I can't," but rather, "I need some help."

As a child, I didn't know what my identity was. The same was true of how we spoke; there was not a clear delineation of languages. My home language had a foothold in both English and Spanish. Thanks to my high school teacher, Rudolfo Anaya, I knew it was a powerful thing to celebrate our cultures, languages, foods, and traditions. We would have multicultural parties—not the usual cake and chips. There was always an effort to bridge home and school, whether it was through a homework assignment, a field trip, or a guest speaker.

There are many PHLOTE (Primary or Home Language Other Than English) students who come to us as dominant English speakers. Reading my story from third grade, you can see how the home language and culture influence English. Spanish syntax and words find their way into English. We can't assume because a student speaks English they know how and when to shift to the academic register. I found that conferencing with a student about their writing is very helpful. It not only preserves their self-esteem but also allows a discussion about academic language.

What is the home language of the Hispanic native New Mexican? No, it is not "Spanglish." It is a rich language that is influenced by our culture and ancestors and can be a positive feature for students. Non-native English

speakers taught me English and with it came nurturing and love. It is not a "substandard" language. Studies show that parents who support their children with home language help build a foundation for further language development. I have always believed promoting relationships between parents and students solidifies learning. Respecting the parents can go a long way.

A strong bilingual program can make the positive difference native Hispanic students need. A well-implemented, sound bilingual program promotes heritage language restoration in Spanish. Revitalization nurtures a sense of pride, identity, and belonging. Students have the benefit of studying the language which may have influenced their English. With that knowledge comes the ability to value the metalinguistics. Instruction in the home language would be in content areas, with the support of sheltering strategies.

Every sound bilingual program has the English Language Development component. (Or, ESL if prescribed by the LAS scores.) This component addresses the English academic register the students need to acquire. Again, it is vital that the instruction in the content area be meaningful and sheltered. Exposure to academic language is not enough for students. That language must be encouraged, modeled, and taught. It takes time to develop academic language. "Morning Message" was a beneficial tool to model academic register. Now teachers use the overhead as they think aloud and write. When students see the process, they see the "how to."

In a well-designed bilingual program, native Hispanic students have the capacity to be biliterate and bilingual, ending the feeling of inferiority in both English and Spanish. Students are capable of expressing themselves proficiently in the academic register in either language, thereby helping them avoid the feeling of being a 'sell-out" or considered "*faceta*" by their peer group. Native Hispanics have the opportunity to earn the illustrious Bilingual Seal upon graduation. The language brought to school is a diamond in the rough ... full of brilliance for two languages.

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study, she has created a big class chart of six dinosaurs with spaces to be filled in with what their names mean, what they ate, how they moved, their size, number of legs, and special features. She points to the small picture of each dinosaur on the chart. The use of graphic organizers and illustrations is especially important for the language learners in her class—it helps them find the important information in their books and not become overwhelmed by too much information.

The teacher takes the students on a picture walk through the first fifteen pages of the text, pointing out that they will be reading about three of the six dinosaurs on the chart. She has put a paperclip and an index card with the word “stop” on it on page 15. Reading partners are assigned for this book, and, as a specific purpose and task, the teacher tells them to work together to fill out as many boxes on their individual charts as they can. She explains that not all the answers are in this book, and that they will fill in the rest later, when they will be reading a different (easier) dinosaur text. (Three days of the week are spent on grade-level texts and two at an easier level.)

As the children take turns whisper reading with their partners, the teacher circulates, stopping for a minute or two with each pair. She compliments their reading and cooperation, especially when one partner is helping the other



Second grade students at Painted Sky work on “Guess the Covered Word” during their Working with Words Block.

figure out words instead of just telling the word. At the end of this block, she calls the class back together and as a group they fill in the information they have gathered on the big class chart as a group.

WORKING WITH WORDS...

Next on the schedule is the Working with Words Block. This block has two main purposes. First, children need to learn to automatically recognize and spell high-frequency words that appear in almost everything they read and write. Second, they need to learn to look for patterns in words so that they can decode and spell the less frequently used words they encounter in their reading and writing. Often, high-frequency words are taken from content books or from the children’s own writing. Thus, the teacher depends on daily word wall activities to help children learn high-frequency words and a second activity, which varies, designed to help her students become good decoders and spellers.

Each week, the teacher adds five words to the word wall and reminds the children that when they “need” one of these important words, they can always find it on the Word Wall under its beginning letter. She has chosen “after, nice, them, where,” and “age” as the new words. She puts a gold star next to “nice” and “age,” and tells the class that these rhyme patterns can be found in many other words like “mice” and “page.” The teacher next demonstrates correct letter formation for each word and has the children clap, say, and write the words on a half sheet of handwriting paper. They will continue to practice these five new words all week.

She next moves on to the second activity, and today she has chosen a “Rounding up Rhymes” lesson based on one of Jack Prelutsky’s dinosaur poems, connecting this block to the current thematic study. After reading the poem as a shared reading, the children are asked to find the rhymes. The teacher writes the words on sentence strip paper and places them in a pocket chart. Next, she asks them to decide if each pair

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follows a spelling pattern, or only a sound pattern. They discard words that do not have a common spelling pattern.

In the next part of the activity, the teacher writes some words that fit the spelling or rhyme pattern and asks the children to decide where each new word “fits”. This helps children transfer their knowledge and extend it beyond the words in the poem.



The Writing Block includes individual conferences in this fifth grade classroom at Painted Sky.

A CHANGE OF PACE, AND THEN WRITING BLOCK...

Next the class moves on to math time and lunch and returns to their Four Blocks work in the afternoon. The Writing Block follows lunch and begins with a mini-lesson. Today, the teacher demonstrates report writing from the dinosaur chart they worked on during the Guided Reading Block. Since they were able to fill in all the information about Brontosaurus, she decides to write her report on that dinosaur. Working from the graphic organizer, she writes on large chart paper:

“Brontosaurus was a very big dinosaur. He was as long as a football field and as tall as a two story house. His name means “thunder lizard” because he made a noise like thunder when he walked on land. . . .”

As she models writing, she talks to the class about her topic sentence, supporting details, conventions of writing, and strategies for progressing from notes to connected narrative. The children then have fifteen minutes for independent writing, and today they may write on any topic they choose. Later in the week, they will begin writing their own dinosaur reports on special dinosaur paper during this block. The modeled report on large chart paper will be labeled and displayed as a guide for the children’s writing. As the children begin their own writing, the teacher calls individual students for a three-to-five minute conference. She takes notes on syntax, spelling, and

grammar. She praises good ideas, asks questions about their stories, and suggests next steps. For her brand new language learners, she suggests labeling drawings or using sentence frames as a way to move into written English.

SELF-SELECTED READING WINDS UP THE LITERACY LESSON...

The final block of the day for this class is the Self-selected Reading Block. The block begins with a read-aloud of *Patrick’s Dinosaur* by Carol Carrick. The class is excited to find some of the dinosaur facts they need for their chart in this fiction book. They discuss this—that often authors add facts to a fiction book, which helps it seem real, even

if the basic story is made up. Next the teacher reminds the children to look for the new dinosaur books in their table book baskets and sets the timer for fifteen minutes.

While they are reading, the teacher calls students one at a time for three-minute reading conferences where she checks for fluency in the book they have chosen, and asks them to explain part of the story and what they like or don’t like about the book. She keeps conference records, noting strengths, concerns, kinds of errors, reading strategies used, and the book title and genre. She may nudge a child to choose a book at a more appropriate reading level or suggest a different genre. For new language learners, she may suggest alphabet books with one picture per page or simple “one liners” to move them into reading in their new language. By having individual conferences, she can tailor this important reading time to meet the needs of each of her students.

Each of the Four Blocks has lasted for approximately thirty to forty minutes. With the individualization that is possible in the writing and self-selected reading segments, the needs of each student can be addressed, and the multi-level nature of the other two blocks is also helpful to students struggling to learn a new language.

Making more connections!

Coming Events

❖ **Stephen Krashen—Effective Second language Acquisition:** June 27, Albuquerque. Registration: \$165 per person. Information? Contact SDR at 1.800.678.8908 or www.SDRresources.org.

❖ **Prueba de Español—New Test Dates:** June 28, August 2 and 9 in Las Vegas; August 16 in Silver City. For information, call 505.454.3396.

❖ **CABE Spanish Language Institute for Educators in Two-Way Bilingual Immersion (Dual) Language Programs:** July 7-18, Ensenada, Baja California. For more information, visit the CABE website at www.bilingualeducation.org.

❖ **2-Way CABE 2003—11th Annual National Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Program:** July 22-25, Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport. For more information, visit the CABE website at www.bilingualeducation.org.

❖ **Camino Real Council of the IRA—13th Annual Mini-Conference, A Mosaic of Literacy:** October 25, Albuquerque. For more information, contact June Gandert at 266.7244



❖ **La Cosecha 2003, 8th Annual Dual Language Conference—Growing Cross-Cultural Connections:** November 12-15, Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort, New Mexico. Questions? Call 505.243.0648 or visit the website at www.duallanguagenm.org.

Cross Cultural Resource Library



Monday and Wednesday:

8:00-5:00

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

8:00-4:30

Closed daily for lunch:

12:00-1:00

LIBRARY SPECIALIST: Jo Ann Gonzales

For information on summer hours, please see page 2 of the newsletter.

FYI... Don't forget about **ESL Summer School** for elementary, middle school, and high school students! There is no charge for qualifying students scoring a 1 or 2 on the LAS Oral or a 3 on the LAS-O with a 1 on the LAS R/W. Registration dates at summer school sites are May 17 and June 2. Summer school runs from June 11 to July 16 for elementary and middle school. High school dates are June 9-30 and July 1-23. For specific sites, please contact Language and Cultural Equity at 883.0440.

Before students can register on those dates, they need to be enrolled on-line by someone at their home school site. School personnel can sign up on Course Wizard for a one hour training on how to complete the on-line summer school enrollment. For more information on this process, please contact the Office of Extended Learning at 342.7293.

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Making Connections is a publication of the Department of Language and Cultural Equity, Albuquerque Public Schools; it is distributed to the Board of Education, district administrators and departments, and all schools. Please direct questions and comments to the editors: Dee McMann and Nancy Lawrence, 883-0440.

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