



On the Road to
EXCELLENCE

An EFL-Teacher's Handbook

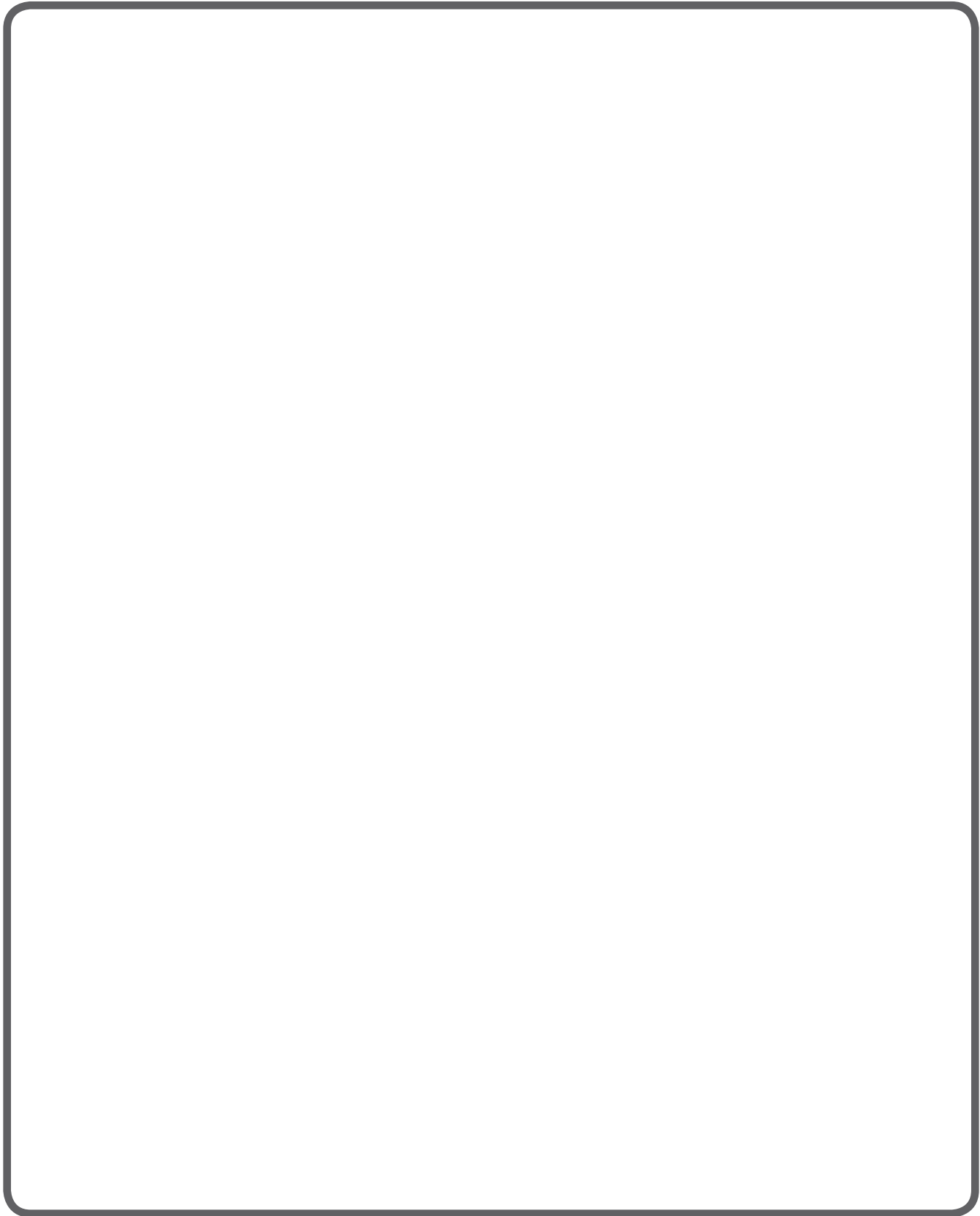
**Building the
Four Basic Skills**

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**Building
Listening and
Speaking Skills**

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Building Listening and Speaking Skills 1

To Our Esteemed English Teachers,

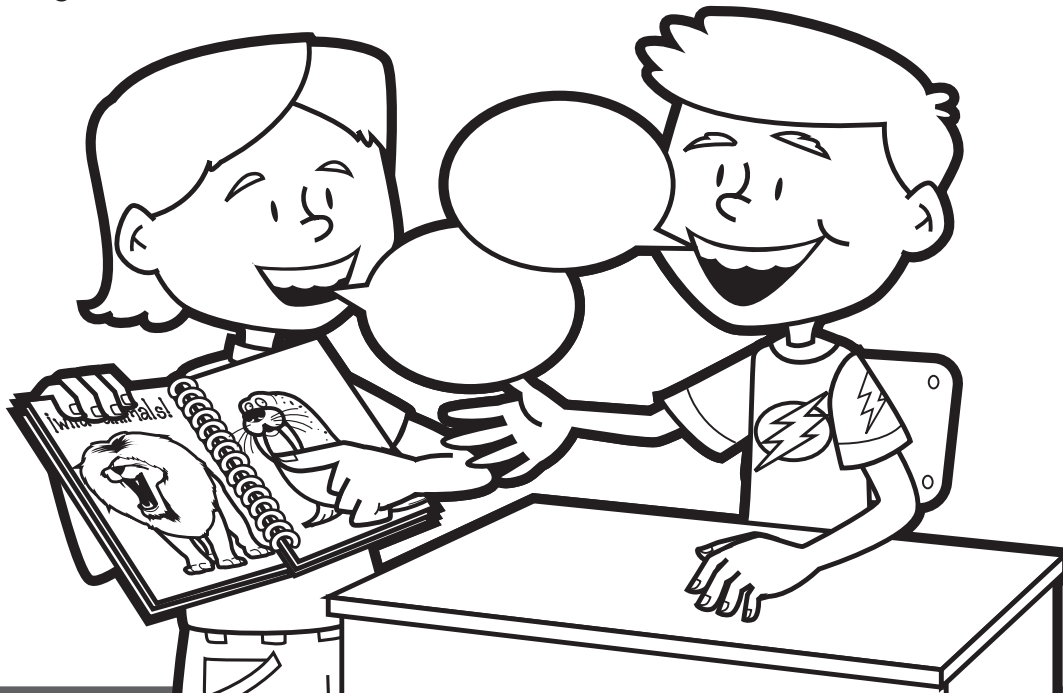
The Secretariat of Education of the State of Coahuila through the Sub Secretariat of Basic Education and the English Coordination committed to increasing the level of excellence in teaching and in support of its English teachers has designed a series of manuals entitled "On the Road to Excellence". We would like to present our new title within this series: "Building the Four Basic Skills".

This Manual is comprised of three major parts: listening and speaking, reading, and writing. All parts contain a vast variety of information about the skill, suggestions to approach the skill, and activities to develop the skill in and out of the classroom. At the end, you will find the Appendix. The Appendix contains useful information about Basic Elements, Language Levels, Being Bilingual, Word Lists, and Children's Songs.

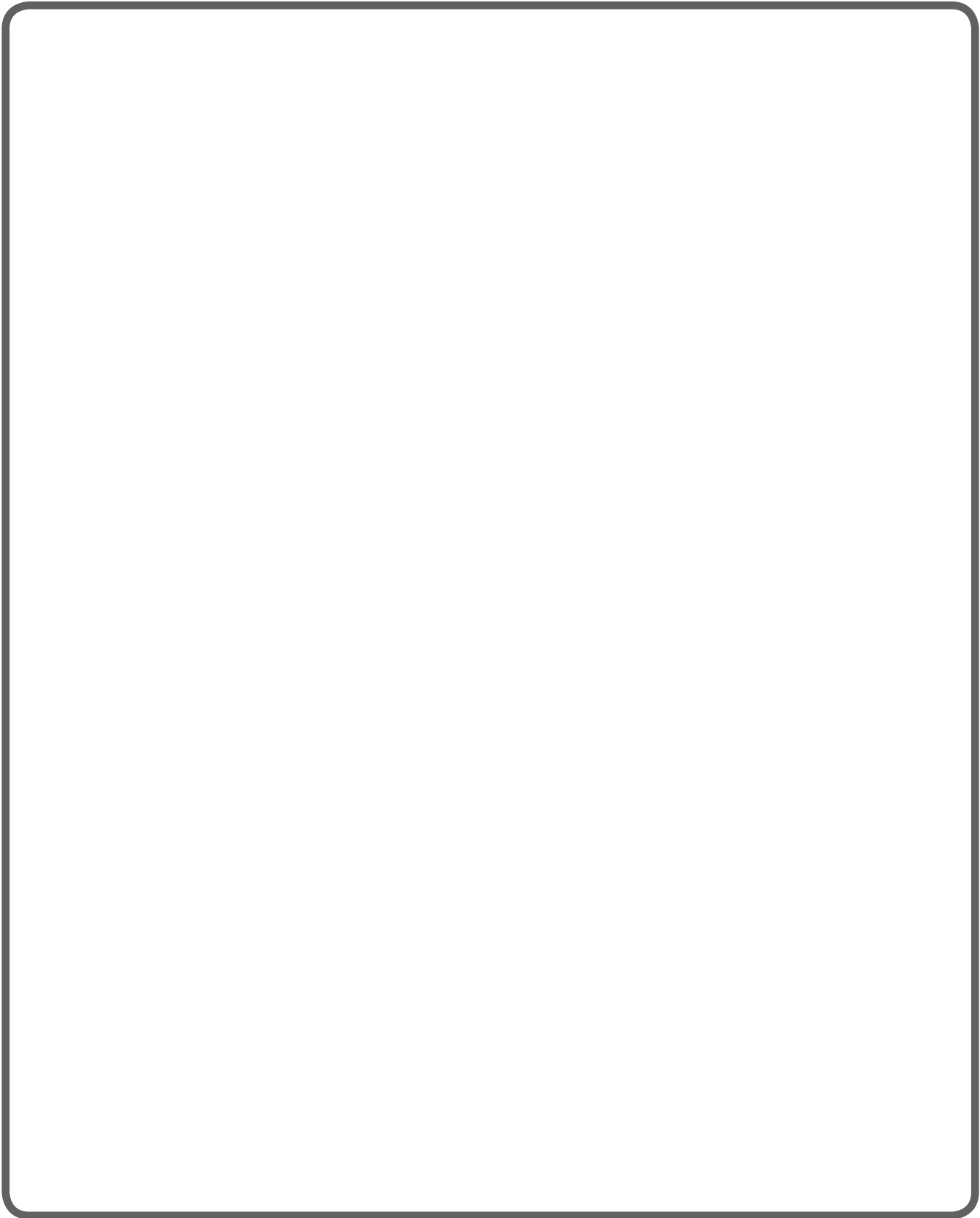
This Manual has the objective of strengthening the work of the teacher in the classroom, in the levels of Preschool, Primary, and Secondary. Besides reinforcing the four basic skills, students will have fun while learning through more dynamic, well structured, and pleasant classes.

As always, we wish you the best of luck and hope that this Manual helps you to plan, organize, and direct more successful classes which will reflect in a higher achievement of all our students.

State English Coordination



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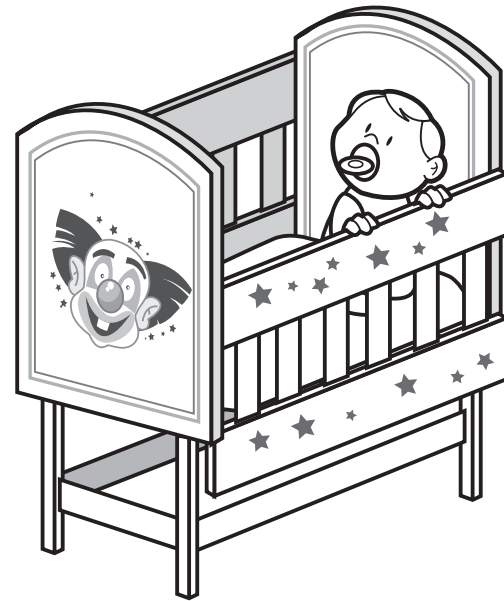


I. LISTENING: BACKGROUND AND BASIC THEORY

The first language skill that humans develop is listening.

LISTENING is considered to be a RECEPTIVE skill, something humans can do with little effort on their part. Someone speaks, or music is played, or a noise occurs...and the receiver hears it. That is why it's called a receptive skill, because it is received by the person, not produced by the person.

Scientists and doctors now can prove that babies inside their mothers' wombs respond to sounds such as soothing classical music, singing or humming by the mother, or loud noises. As a biological reality, listening occurs naturally by the baby even before birth. Once born, the baby responds to all kinds of sounds, and can sense the tone of voice by adults around him / her, such as calming, loud, or angry voices.



There are some studies suggesting that these early sounds can affect a baby's emotional development and personality. There are many adults who believe that a new-born baby is just a baby, not understanding anything until months later, when they are able to respond to the spoken word.

Studies, however, have shown that babies who are spoken to continuously from birth onward, as if they could speak themselves, develop speaking skills and vocabulary levels much higher than if they were just treated as "baby dolls", incapable of understanding.

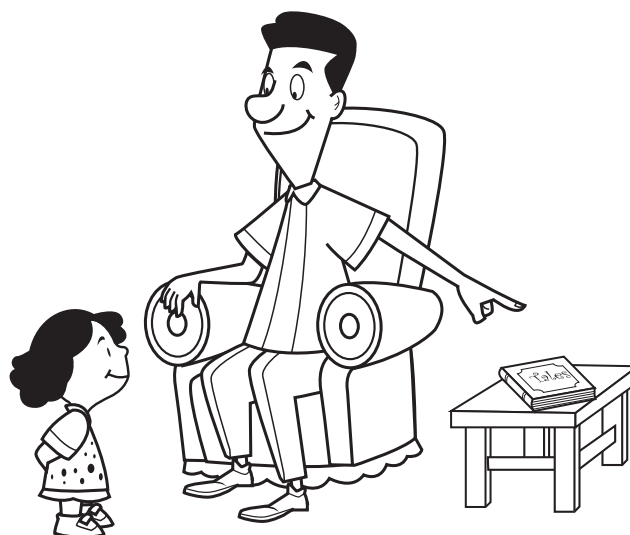
When applied to language learning, whether a first, second, or third language, there is a biological rule that must be kept in mind:

RECOGNITION PRECEDES PRODUCTION.

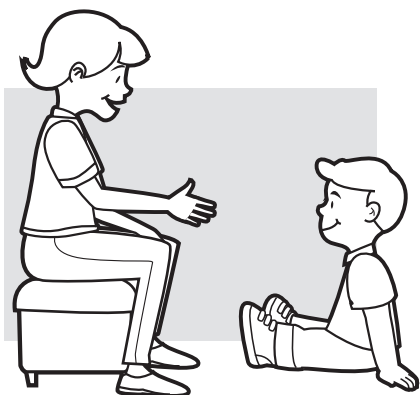
What does that mean?

It means that babies, or even adults, learning any language will be able to recognize the meanings of many things before they can actually SPEAK the language.

If you say a baby's name, he or she will recognize it, and respond in some manner, even before they can say a word. If you say to a small child, "Please bring me my book that's over there on the table", (pointing and gesturing as you speak), the child will



go get the book, bring it to you, recognizing what you had wanted, even though he or she can not yet speak in phrases, perhaps only able to say, "Mama" or "Daddy".



Perhaps, in this example, the only word that the child recognizes is BOOK. The other words said, (Please bring me...etc) the child HEARS but does not recognize at this time. He or she, however, carries out the requested action, and, little by little, the language learner (LL) will be able to identify and understand all the words in commonly-used phrases. As time goes on, the LL will increase his/her vocabulary, and, eventually, over time, will have a full, adequate listening vocabulary.

It is important to know three essential facts about developing listening skills:

1. The more a person is exposed to the spoken word (and to music with lyrics) the greater will be his/her listening vocabulary and speaking ability. Babies should be spoken to in the crib, from infancy onward, with a rich vocabulary, not in "baby-talk".

2. Listening and hearing are two different skills. HEARING is a physical ability: sounds going to the



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ear, passively received in the hearer's brain.

LISTENING is an active mental skill, a thinking skill. Listening is for a specific purpose..... to answer: "What did he/she say? Why? What is the message? What does it mean? How should I respond?"

3. No language skill is taught or learned in isolation. SPEAKING can not occur without having listened to someone speaking. Listening and speaking are so closely related that it is almost impossible to separate them, although educators and biology experts everywhere agree that hearing precedes listening, and listening precedes speaking.

Because of the three previous essential facts, we know that people learning a language (LL) must have months, maybe years, of listening before they can produce words themselves. This author knows of babies who had been spoken to since birth (or before) as if they were adults, and who began speaking phrases at 7 months of age! By 18 months of age, the child spoke sentences and could carry on a conversation with adults.

The child mentioned above, who spoke phrases at 7 months and sentences at 18 months, was NOT a child prodigy. He was a normal boy, who did well in school, but he was not exceptional. So why was he so verbal? He had been spoken to and played with by his mother in most of his waking hours.

Even when she was cooking or cleaning, she would talk to him, telling him what she was doing. "Now, Rick, I have to wash some clothes before your Daddy comes home from work. I'll measure one cup of bleach and 1 cup of soap. While the clothes are washing, let's go to the kitchen to begin to make a nice, delicious chicken soup for supper....." and so on....The same child saw that listening and speaking were as normal as breathing.

Now there is no rush, nor should there be a rush or pressure to speak.

As you know, RECOGNITION PRECEDES PRODUCTION.

What we are emphasizing here is that listening ability depends on language INPUT. The more input, the more a LL hears, the more he/she will begin to understand, and the greater will be the development of listening skills.....The more someone listens to vocabulary, phrases, and sentences, the



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better listening ability the LL will have....and eventually, the better speaking ability the LL will develop.

Listening is the first skill that a child learns in his/her native language (L1). It is also the first skill a person learns in a second language (L2) or third language (L3). Language learning is very natural. Children in Europe learn three or more languages with little difficulty, being exposed to them from primary school or before, and beyond, so that by age of 18, they have acquired fluency in several languages.

The mystery and mystique of second and third language learning is greatly over-rated in both Mexico and the United States of America, where Spanish or English are the preferred languages, respectively. Yet, in Canada, officially a bilingual country, all children learn both English and French from primary school onward, and are bilingual by their late teenage years.

It has been proven over and over again (Dr. Virginia Collier; Dr. Stephen Krashen; Dr. Jim Cummins, among many others), during more than 30 years of research, that second language acquisition is easily achieved by humans who are exposed to the correct methods, the younger, the better.

The secret to success with language acquisition is the answer to the question, "What are the correct methods?"

Basically, it must be recognized that language fluency in the 21st Century relies on ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS. Gone are the days of translations, back and forth, from one language to another, translating words, sentences, and paragraphs.

The old-fashioned grammar-translation method of teaching a language did not promote listening or speaking abilities. Students who were good at memorizing could pass a written exam, but if they had been plunked down in a country where the second language to be learned was the preferred language, they would have had huge difficulty communicating orally.



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What is happening in Europe?

For hundreds of years, the grammar-translation method was what was used to “teach” a “foreign” language. The idea of “second languages” or “bilingualism” had not yet evolved, except in a few countries, mainly in Europe, where countries, such as Switzerland, without its own language, adapted to the languages of its neighbors, Italian, German, French... so most Swiss nationals commonly spoke several languages.

In earlier times, a person who was truly intent on learning a second language fluently would visit the country where the language was in use, as an exchange student or as a long-term visitor. During the weeks or months of immersion, the person would learn the language almost as a native speaker.

In the 21st Century, English is the internationally-used language of choice by medicine, scientists, economists, businesses, and computers. Many countries of the world, including the member nations of the European Union, require English as a second language, so the market for English teachers has never been better!

Economic reasons prevent most second language learners from extensive travel, and, of course, young children rarely can travel abroad for language-learning reasons. Yet, English is imperative for future financial and professional success.

What is happening in Mexico?

Thousands of public schools, and many private schools are now “bilingual”, having made changes within the past six years. More and more public schools in entire cities are converting to bilingual programs, preparing their teachers, from Kindergartens (called “infantile”) through secondary/middle school (called ESO = Educación Secundaria Obligatoria) to be ready to teach subjects in English. They do not just offer English as a language; they truly are “bilingual”, with half day of subjects in English, and half day of subjects in Spanish.



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For at least 15 years, public schools in some states, such as Coahuila, a pioneer in English teaching, have been offering English as a foreign language in hundreds of schools. True bilingualism, however, is not part of the program as it is in European countries. In Mexico, public schools offer English 3 times a week, for 50 minutes each class. It is something to familiarize children with English and the concept of second language acquisition.



More time and money need to be invested, however, so that Mexican states can fully develop true bilingualism in the public schools, a real imperative since the United States of America is Mexico's northern border. English there is a necessity for success in the job market.

Private schools in Mexico are plentiful, and they have a better record than the public schools in providing dual bilingual programs, offering subjects which are taught in English and Spanish.

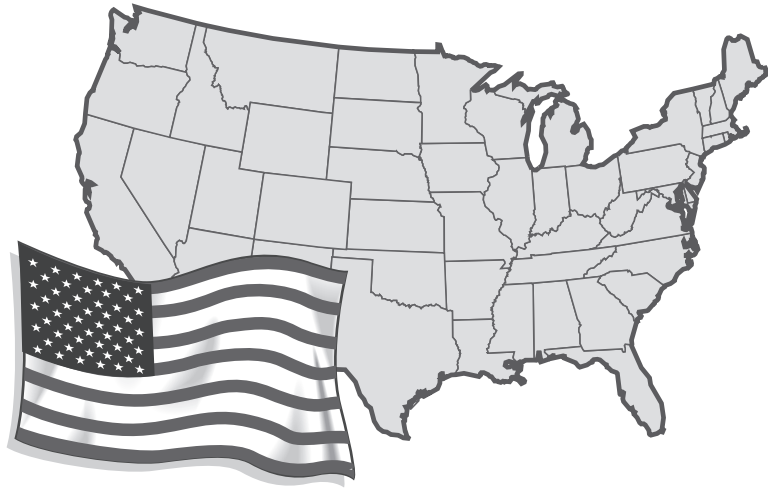
Many students become truly bilingual, and doors are opened to universities and jobs because of their dual language abilities. Public schools, however, are the backbone of any country's strength and international success, and they must become more involved and interested in the implementation of dual bilingualism. It is being achieved in other countries, some of which spend the same amount of money, per-pupil, as does Mexico. It is an issue of commitment to bilingualism, not how much money a country has to spend.

What is happening in USA?

At this point, English is the language of the land, although not officially. There are over 200 languages spoken in the USA, with Spanish being the number one language in use after English. Programs for public school children, by federal law, must include instruction in their first language. The objective is that all students learn and use English, while having some support in their native language.

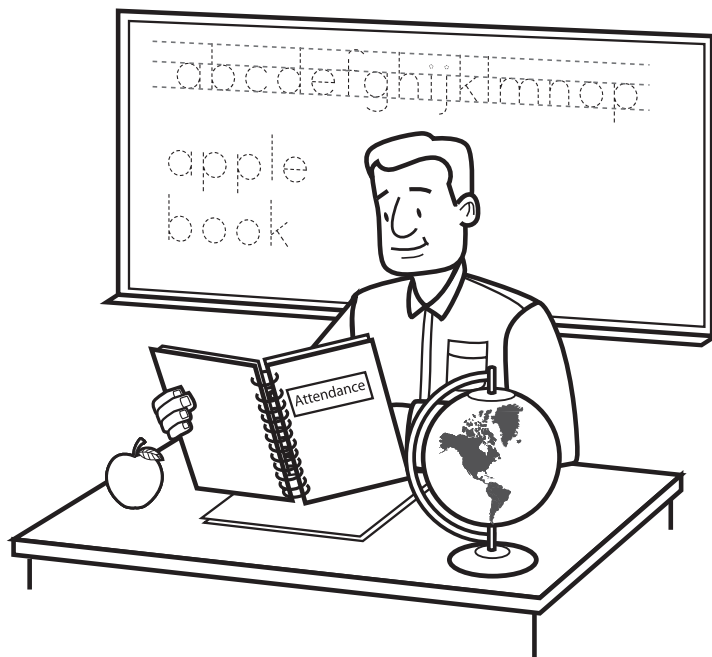
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With few exceptions, however, most public schools do not offer dual bilingual programs. Their expectation is that students will become fluent only in English. The idea of the acquisition of a second or third language is not a highly desired or expected goal of USA public schools. This may put the USA at a distinct international disadvantage in the near future, as bilingualism is the minimum requirement of more than 40 countries world wide!



Some statistics are showing that by 2038 the USA will have more Spanish speakers than English speakers, for the first time in its history. Unless schools gear up and prepare themselves, using world-wide goals and expectations for dual language development and implementation, the USA will find itself behind most other countries in students' abilities to be fluent in two or more languages. At this point, the USA is behind Mexico and Europe in language emphasis, because at least in Mexico and most European countries, English as a second language is offered from Kindergarten onward in the public schools.

In the USA, students usually do not have a second language available until high school. Some schools offer "world language studies" or a language at middle school level; but it is too little, too late. To achieve fluency, students need language studies from Kindergarten onward, 2-3 hours a day, with subjects taught in the languages to be acquired. The USA is far from that goal, yet, it spends more money per students than any other country in the world. Again, it is not money, it is the placement of goals and priorities.



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So, as teachers involved in English teaching, what should we do? We need to utilize the techniques well-known to language learning specialists:

USE the NATURAL APPROACH as much as possible.

This approach is well-documented and successful. Basically, it involves teaching a L2 or L3 the same way that a L1 was learned.

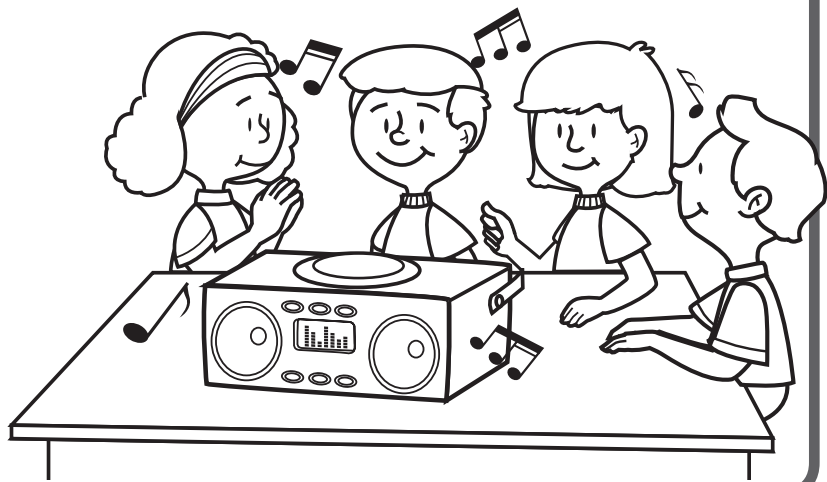
THE SIX INGREDIENTS OF THE NATURAL APPROACH

1. Extensive listening experiences.
2. Reduce the "filter" that people tend to erect as a barrier to second language acquisition.
3. Errors are a natural part of learning a language.
4. Fluency is valued and expected rather than grammatical skills.
5. NO translations provided: 100% of the class is conducted in the target language, English for our purposes.
6. Acquisition activities (games, songs) get better results than just using "learning" activities (texts and workbooks).

Learning a language is natural. No teacher should ever say or think, "That student just isn't meant to learn a second language." or "She doesn't have the ability to learn a second language."

ANYONE can learn a second or third language. The methods by which teachers teach is the determining factor as to whether or not a person learns the language.

ANYONE placed in a foreign country, with an unknown language, will learn the language to survival level within a few weeks! By six months, the person is speaking the new language with a degree of fluency. If they



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can spend a year in the country, they will have acquired a second (or third) language easily...without memorization and without emphasis on grammar. Things will "sound right" or "sound wrong" just as they do in the first language. These experiences have proven over and over again that anyone can learn a second language. The key to student success is HOW we teach the second language. A student is DOOMED to failure, and fluency will never, ever develop

if the teacher uses the old-fashioned memorization/grammar rules/ translation method. Anyone who has a first language can, and should, learn another language. HOW WE TEACH IT IS THE KEY!!!! Listening, listening, listening.....is the only way to acquire a second language. Absolutely NO grammar, translation, or memorization should be employed; otherwise, we are dooming our students to failure! Period! Learning a language begins with lots of LISTENING and with lots of practice, using interesting and varied experiences with music, games, conversations, and stories.



When students start to learn a second (or third) language, it is entering their brains mainly through their ears, and what they hear is the main source of the language. It is necessary to give meaning to what they are listening to by using gestures, facial expressions, mime, pictures, and actions, just as if they were babies learning their first language. This method works with children and adults.

Since listening is the first skill that needs to be developed, we must repeat things over and over. As you know, when we read, we can always go back and re-read a passage to get its meaning. When something is said, however, it is gone. Unless it's on a CD or DVD, we can not go back to listen again. Therefore, when we are teaching, we need to first get their attention, then speak clearly and go back to repeat so that all students have the opportunity to listen with comprehension.



When reading a story to the students, for example, show the pictures, repeat phrases...and go back to repeat sections. You do not have to read the story from beginning to end the first few times you read it. Stop along the way, and ask questions. Even if the students do not yet speak, still ask the questions....because they will learn

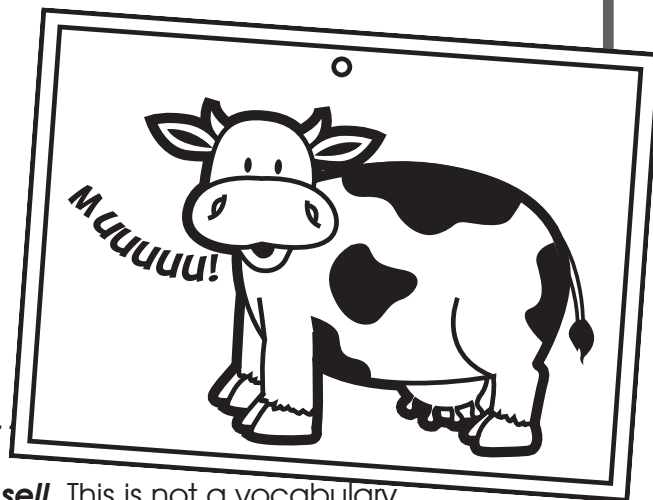
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from your questioning tone of voice...and, eventually, they will be able to answer you. As you read the story, you can re-tell it over and over again to check knowledge and comprehension. Example:

Today I will read you the story called 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Let's begin.

One day, Jack's mother told him that they had no food and no money. So she told Jack to go sell their cow.

*What did Jack have to sell?
(Teacher pauses, waiting for responses.)
"A cow, right, boys and girls?"
(Then the teacher will show a picture of a cow.)*

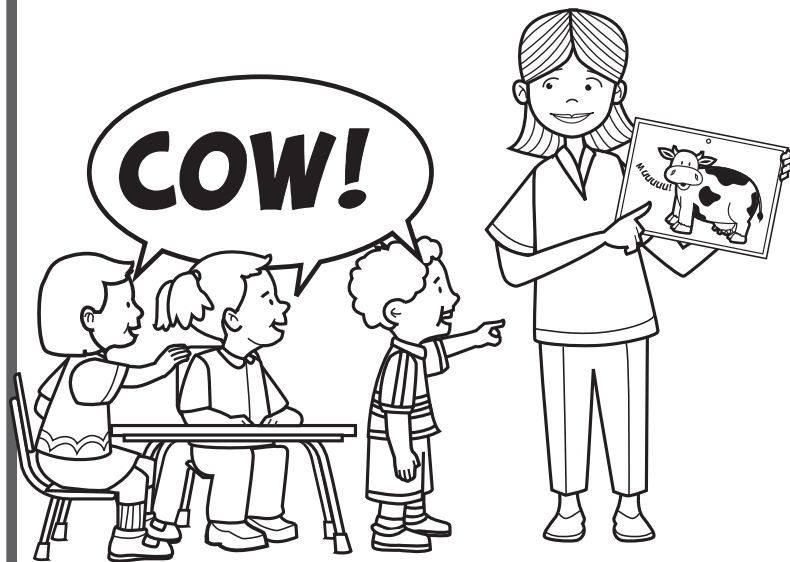


You do not have to explain every word, such as **sell**. This is not a vocabulary memorization activity. By showing some pictures along with repeating some of the words, the students, through context, will eventually get the idea of what the story theme is. This is the same way we learned our first language, and will be the way we best learn a second language.

We need to remember that language is for the communication of ideas and concepts. Ideas come from words. Little by little the ideas and concepts will come to the language learners IF they are taught the correct way, using the natural approach at language learning. The Natural Approach (Dr. Stephen Krashen) is the same method used that helped us to learn our L1 ...listening, listening, listening for many months before we could

even say "mama" or "daddy"...

Of course, once children know one language, their native language, (L1), they know how to speak. Acquiring a second language can be faster than how we learned the first language because the child now is biologically ready, with the ability to listen, discern sounds, and repeat sounds. The younger the better is another aspect of second language acquisition. Preschool is the best time to begin familiarizing children with the language to be learned.



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Listening is a two-way street. If someone is HEARING us, no response is necessary, nor can we tell if the hearing occurred. It is physical. LISTENING, however, requires a response, even if the students can not speak well in English. Most classroom language is listening: "Take out your pencils." or "Use your crayons." or "Come to the board to write."

You can easily see if the students listened by watching their actions to the spoken words. Language is a two-way street so that listening and responding go together.

EXAMPLE:

If you say, "Please take out your English books", you can tell quickly whether or not the students listened (understood). If they did, great! If not, use actions to show what you want....and repeat the exact words: "Please take out your English books."

By the second time, most students will respond correctly by taking out their English books, even if they had to look to see what others were doing. This is the first evidence that students are listening. They are on the way to learning English or another targeted language.



As further evidence that hearing and listening are two distinct skills, this author will give two personal experiences that occurred in the on-going process of acquiring her second language, Spanish, as an adult of 45 years of age.

(1) I was listening to some songs, over and over again on a CD in my car. They were sung by Ana Gabriel, and I played them frequently as I drove.

At this point, I had been in the process of attaining fluency in Spanish for about two years.

One of the songs I listened to was called "Marioneta".....I had thought it was a song about a sad woman whose boyfriend was treating her as if she were a puppet...a marionette. I listened frequently over weeks to the CD since I really liked the power and emotion in Ana Gabriel's voice.

One day, out of the blue, as if in a cartoon, a light bulb lit in my brain! All of a sudden, clear and vibrant, I heard Ana Gabriel. She was NOT singing "marioneta".....She was singing "mar y arena", three words, five syllables, NOT the one word of five syllables (marioneta) that I had thought I had been hearing.

This is a clear example of what happens to children and adults as they learn a language. What they HEAR and what may have actually been said are two distinct things. This is why it is so very important that LL are given countless listening experiences. The brain will

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take over and clear the path to listening when there has been ample time to HEAR the language being acquired.

(2) Another, similar experience occurred in my home in Mexico. I was listening to the radio and singing along with the music. I was singing...“No son flores....no son flores”.

My husband, a native Spanish speaker, (L1 Spanish) asked me, “What are you singing?” I answered, “That song on the radio, ‘No son flores’”. He laughed with amusement, and patiently said, “They are not singing ‘No son flores’. They are singing ‘No controles’.”

Once the correct words were pointed out to me, I “heard” the correct words from then onward whenever that song was played. Again, what we physically HEAR, and what was actually SAID, can often be two different things .

Note that, again, I did hear the correct number of syllables of what was actually being sung, (4 syllables = NO CONTROLES I heard as NO SON FLORES = 4 syllables). This proves that my hearing was fine, but my listening discrimination still needed refining, which is why we need to have countless listening and repeating experiences in any language acquisition, first, second, or third. Sometimes, as in these examples, listening to something many times helps us to finally hear correctly what was being said or sung. Repeating to someone what we hear, with that person correcting us, if necessary, also supports the fine-tuning of listening skills.

Listening, listening, listening, and, eventually, repeating are the building blocks of language fluency, both our first language as well as any additional languages. Once a first language is acquired, and the concept of sounds = meaning = words is understood, it will not take as long to learn the basics of a second language as it did the first. It will simply be language development based on vocabulary and phrases.



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The older the learner, the more vocabulary he or she will possess in the first language, and the easier it will be to apply this skill to new languages WITHOUT translating. Showing the objects or pictures will give a mental concept of what is to be learned. Phrases said over and over again (with NO translating) will reach the brain, and comprehension sets in.

When reading a story in English to the students, if the teacher begins with "Once upon a time...", he/she does not need to translate what it means. Simply use it, as it is used with native speakers without explanation. Eventually, they will figure out what it means.

Translation SLOWS the fluency of any listener, speaker, reader, writer. If English is the second language to be learned, the students should THINK in English. They will ONLY learn to think in the target language if students do not use translation.

The two personal experiences described above (Mary Arena and No Controles) are vivid examples of why it is so very necessary for teachers to provide students with many, varied listening experiences, repetition activities, and correction activities that clearly exhibit the sounds, words, or phrases being practiced.

Once students are able to comprehend and respond to most spoken instructions by the teacher, they are able to move forward to listening to stories, discussions, and following conversations...even though they still might not be able to speak with any fluency at all.

Naturally, the more students LISTEN, the more they will expand their listening vocabulary and comprehension abilities. Speaking fluency depends 100% on a student's listening experiences....so? Students NEED to have lots of varied experiences listening.

Teachers, you may wonder which words are the most important for students to know.

First: Speak to the children as if they already know English. Do not talk to them as if they were babies.

Second: Use motions, hand / body movements, and visuals (real objects, pictures, photographs, or drawings) to show students what some words mean. DO NOT TRANSLATE! We want students to be thinking in English, so that when they hear a word, they get a mental picture of it, not a translation of it.

Third: There are some high frequency nouns in English which are easily illustrated. Jerry Johns has come up with 50 words which he has checked in children's books, texts, magazines, and newspapers. These 50 words are the most commonly used in English, according to Johns.

So, when preparing your lessons, the things you will say to the children, and what you will show to the children, make sure you include these, over time, so that students will be familiar with their meanings...NOT, of course, memorized definitions, but ideas and images should come to mind when children hear these words.

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List of high frequency nouns

(Jerry L. Johns)

air	feet (foot)	morning	water
back	friend	name	way
book	girl	night	year
boy	group	nothing	
bus	hand	people	
car	head	place	
cat	home	road	
child(ren)	house	room	
city	love	school	
day	man	side	
dog	men	table	
door	mother	thing	
eye	Mr.	time	
face	Mrs.	top (bottom)	
father	money	tree	

Children will learn these words by use, and by listening to you using them. You can have children draw some of these words, too, which is another way to provide them with learning opportunities. (You will find these words again in the Appendix, along with 220 more words in the Dolch list.)

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SUMMARY: DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS

THE SIX INGREDIENTS OF THE NATURAL APPROACH:

1. **“Comprehensible Input” (Krashen)** means that the student must have a reason to use the language being learned. The INPUT is what is received and assimilated by the learner.

If the teacher says, “Let’s go outside for recess.” and does NOT translate to the student’s native language, the students will quickly learn what it means by watching the actions of other students or the teacher.

Studying a subject or topic in the language to be learned is the BEST way to master a second language. Learning subjects, such as science or geography in the target language, helps students to bring “comprehensible input” (Krashen) to the language process.

Long-term studies of over 25 years, by Dr. Virginia Collier and her husband, Dr. Thomas, have proven that of all the various methods used in bilingual education (early-exit, pull-out, transitional, total immersion, etc.) , the one with the highest achievement level for language fluency, over time, is the DUAL BILINGUAL MODEL, (Dr. Virginia Collier) whereby students study a second language for half day, and their first language the other half a day.

Some subjects are taught in their first language, and other subjects are taught in the language(s) to be learned. No translations are made. Collier’s research of 25 years shows that students in dual bilingual programs, at the end of 12th grade, score higher on achievement tests than any other methods...even higher than students who did not study a second language! Some psychologists and educators theorize that the process of acquiring a second language stimulates neuron connectors, making the brain more agile, and therefore, students perform better in some language tests. It is said that if you only know ONE language, you don’t REALLY know it; the process of learning a second language strengthens your knowledge of the first language, too.

2. Recognition precedes production. Humans are able to recognize spoken or written words, and know what they mean, before they have the words on the “tip of their tongues”, ready to retrieve at will. It takes a while, as many as eleven exposures over time, for a word to move from short term, recognition memory to long term, production memory.

Practice and exposure are the keys to language acquisition.

Research shows that eleven exposures are necessary for new material to move from short term to long-term memory.

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3. “Learning” a language is a conscious effort to study, memorize, and to learn.

“Acquisition” of a language occurs through exposure to input that is slightly above the learner’s current level of competence.

4. The affective filter *MUST* be down so that the “input” can enter.

Student must be relaxed and unthreatened.

5. Use lots of visual aids, and opportunities to speak, listen, and use the language.

Learners need active tasks and opportunities to “pick up” the language.

6. Language should be natural, not artificial. Remember: Recognition Precedes Production.

The activities which follow are in no special order. They can be used by children, adolescents, and adults to practice and strengthen listening skills. You can adapt any of the activities to reflect the vocabulary and the degree of difficulty that you want to reinforce. Be flexible. Be creative. Be enthusiastic! Keep the activities “fun” for your students. Don’t prolong them too much, or even the best activity can be boring. The key is that students WANT to continue the activity when you are ready to stop it. Usually five or ten minutes is enough time to keep the activity interesting but not tedious.

If students ask to continue the activity, firmly but politely tell them, “We’ll do it again another day. I am so glad you enjoyed it. Little by little you will be super-fluent in English! I am so proud of your enthusiasm!”

II. ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP AND ENHANCE LISTENING

Activity 1

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a well-known activity to practice the ability to listen and actively demonstrate the word(s) you hear. It is not a new concept, but is as effective today as it was twenty years ago. It is used mainly to teach vocabulary, and is especially useful with younger children as they need physical expression, and enjoy moving around.

You can ask students, from children to adults, to do many movements, simple to complicated.

“Stand up.”

“Sit down.”

“Raise your hand.”

“Raise your left elbow.”

“Go to the chalkboard and write your first name.”

“Stand by the door with your face to the door.”



The more language the students learn, the more you can ask them to do.

One advantage of TPR is that immediately the teacher will be able to see if the students understand the instructions or not.

Another advantage is that if a few students do not understand the instructions, they can see what other students are doing.

Activity 2

Simon Says is another veteran activity that helps LL (Language Learners) practice their listening abilities and their speedy reaction to verbal instructions. In this game, the LL are supposed to perform the activity only IF the leader precedes the instruction with, “Simon says...”.



For example: **Simon Says**

“Simon says stand up”.

“Simon says run in place.”

“Simon says put your hands on your head.”

“ Sit down.”

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Those who sit down after this last statement, are "out" of the game because the leader did not first say, "Simon says..."

The last one standing wins the game, and becomes the leader for the next round of "Simon Says".

Activity 3

Listen and Color is a game to use when children are learning their colors and numbers. Give them a plain sheet of paper, and tell them to fold it in half, and then in half again. (Show them as you say this.)

Have them number each section, 1 to 4. Again, show them your model.

Then invent things for them to do, simple at first. As you do this activity on various occasions, you can add to the difficulty. When the students hold up the papers, the teacher can check immediately to see if the students understood the instructions.

For example:

***"In rectangle one, draw 3 bananas. Color them yellow.
Then hold them up so I can see them."***

***"In rectangle two, draw 5 balloons. Color 3 red, and color 2 green.
Then hold them up so I can see them."***

***"In rectangle three, draw 7 balls. Color 2 blue. Color 2 orange. Color 3 green.
Now hold them up for me to see them."***

***"In rectangle four, draw one tree. Color the leaves green and the trunk brown.
Then draw one bird in the sky above the tree. Color the bird blue."***

Now hold up your drawing so I can see it."

"THANK YOU, students. You did a GREAT job!!"

Activity 4

Listen and Repeat is an activity with simple or advanced levels of words, phrases, or sentences to listen to...and to repeat in the same intonation and pitch as the teacher or the class model. Children are great imitators. Adult language learners, too, can learn to imitate and use the correct tone and rhythm of the words or phrases.

The idea is NOT to translate...The idea is simple repetition, with a tone, and pitch as the model. The teacher can use happiness, sadness, fear, anger...Any emotions can be exhibited simply by a change in the tone of voice. Students can learn this skill easily by imitation. They can identify an emotion by the tone of voice, not by the words. The words and spoken vocabulary will come later.

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Even something simple, such as, "Sit down", can be exhibited as an angry phrase, a happy one, a sad one, or a fearful one...depending on how it is voiced.

Examples:

" Listen to the radio."

" Go to bed."

" Help your grandmother."

Activity 5

Mime sentences is played by having the teacher or game leader take a sentence from an envelope, say it aloud, and ask a student or a group of students to act it out. The audience claps if they believe that the student(s) acted it out clearly. They do NOT clap if the student(s) did not clearly act out the sentence.

Examples:

I have a headache.

I am hungry.

What time is it?

My foot hurts.

I am so tired!

Do you want to dance with me?

I have a stomachache.

I ate too much.

I am talking on my cell phone.

I love you.

Activity 6

Listen. Can you say it? is a game/practice activity where the teacher or a student, makes a sound, or says a word twice. The others in the class have to repeat.

Starting with short sounds, and then, moving onto more complicated words, the participants say exactly what they hear. The goal is to improve listening and repeating skills.

Examples:

mmmm

ah, ah

oh, oh

cat, cat

elephant, elephant

me, me

hippo, hippo

hippopotamus, hippopotamus

see, see

super-duper, super-duper



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Activity 7

Elbows Up is a game where the teacher says a list of numbers or letters or words in a pattern or a series. When the teacher leaves out a word or something in the series, the students lift up their right elbow. That way, the teacher can see immediately which students recognized the missing item. This activity builds listening skills.

Another way to play the game is to recite a series and have the students identify what the series is.

Examples of series: (numbers in order)

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

Say: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 (After " 7 ", elbows should be up when students recognize that 6 was left out).

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L

(alphabet letters)

Say: A, B, C, D, E, G, H..... (After " G " elbows should go up when they recognize that F was left out).

SAMPLE SERIES...You choose which one to leave out.

1st letter is in alphabetical order:

apple, ball, cat, dog, elephant, frog, giraffe, horse, igloo, jaguar, kangaroo, lion, mouse, nut, ostrich, pig, queen, rabbit, skunk, tree, umbrella, violin, wolf, xylophone, yellow, zebra.

Rhyming words (You can put in a word that does not rhyme.)

book, look, cook, shook, rook, cat, rat, fat, mat, at, sat, tat, it, hit, mitt, bit, sit, fit

Activity 8

Red Light, Green Light is a game where the children have a red circle and a green circle, glued back to back on a popsicle stick. They hold up the stick with the RED side facing the teacher if the answer is NO...and they show the GREEN side if the answer is YES.

The teacher will be able to tell if the students know the answer right off because of the response style. Plus, all students get to actively participate.

Sample questions:

Do most dogs have a tail?	GREEN
Are whales and dolphins fish?	RED
Do whales and dolphins live in water?	GREEN
Do red and blue mixed together make purple?	GREEN

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Is the sun a planet?	RED
Is the sun a star?	GREEN
Can cats talk?	RED
Can cats meow?	GREEN
Should you brush your teeth every morning and night?	GREEN
Is your mother a woman?	GREEN
Do you eat breakfast at night?	RED
When you meet people should you say "hello"?	GREEN
Do you eat books?	RED
Do you write with a fork?	RED

Activity 9

Stories should be read aloud to the students every day. Nothing builds listening vocabulary as stories do. Stories play a vital role in language development. Establish a story-telling routine, where you sit, perhaps in a rocking chair or a beanbag chair. The students should be relaxed and comfortable...on the floor, with pillows, or at their desk. Lower the lights. Set the scene for pleasure.

The good thing about reading aloud to the students is that you can read the same story over and over again to them if it is one they especially like. Students love the repetition and after time, they will even join in with you to say words from the story.

"Fee, Fi , Fo Fum...I smell the blood of an Englishman," says the Giant several times in "Jack and the Beanstalk".

"I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down", says the wolf repeatedly in the tale of "The Three Little Pigs".

Students will join in as if they are part of the story chorus to repeat lines from the story. They love it, and when they do, the teacher knows that the students really are listening and getting involved in the story. Do NOT make the grave error of translating the story or groups of words. The students NEED to have a reason to learn English. To comprehend is the reason.

Listening regularly to stories provides children with the opportunity to use their imagination, and to create pictures in their brains. They accept giants and witches, animals that talk, and people who can fly. Stories can help students to come to terms with their own feelings

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about an issue. They can learn to identify with story characters and the dilemmas they face.

Fact or fiction stories provide lessons to the listeners. The structure of many stories helps children when they eventually come to tell or write their own stories.

Traditional fairy tales, such as "Little Red Riding Hood" and "The Three Little Pigs" are great stories to tell or to read.

They have clear structure, easy for five year olds to understand. They have repetition, so that children can see a pattern to various phrases. Fairy tales have interesting characters, with identifiable traits so students can get a feeling of what is right and what is wrong. They have a setting, and a series of events that lead on to other events. Consequences predictably follow some events, making the story a lesson of life.

Stories can lead to drawings, sequencing, vocabulary growth, basic discussions, and to a love of stories, setting the base for eventual reading enjoyment.

Activity 10

Animal sounds is a game where the teacher (or a student) makes the sound of an animal, and the class has to say the name of the animal. The reverse can also be played with the teacher saying the name of an animal, and the students make the animal's sound.

horse..... a whinny

cat..... meow

pig.....oink, oink

dog.....woof, woof or bow wow

bird.....whistling or peep peep

cowmoo moo

turkey.....gobble gobble

TEACHERS:

You will be able to find many ideas for listening activities in the Internet or from your colleagues. Use listening activities frequently to develop a strong base for speaking.

III. SPEAKING: BACKGROUND AND BASIC THEORY

The second language skill that humans develop is speaking.

Speaking is a human ability that is ONLY attained if the person has heard others speak. The more we hear others speak, and the greater the vocabulary of those who speak to us, the better we will be able to speak.

There have been cases of children who grew up without any human contact, and no speech to imitate, and found, at about age 15, having absolutely no human speech. The unusual thing (that might be very interesting for you to research) is that these children, the few that scientists know about, NEVER were able to speak. It seems as if there is a window of opportunity, between birth and 15 or 16 years of age, during which humans can learn speech. If the window of opportunity is missed, speech can not develop. Studies seem to support that if certain neurons are not used, they become dysfunctional. More research is being conducted in this area of language acquisition.

For now, we know that listening ability is the base for oral language development. So, the more we listen, repeat, listen, and speak, the better we will be at it.

Now, in the 21st Century, there are many movements towards emphasizing oral language communications, with less emphasis on writing than in previous times. Gone from modern language teaching is the old-fashioned stress on grammar, structure, memorization, drill, translating sentences, and copying.

Now, with current teaching methods, fluency is more highly regarded than accuracy. Of course, the ultimate goal is accuracy and correct structures, but as students learn to speak, the emphasis is on fluency, smoothness, and the development of vocabulary, in order to communicate ideas.

In order to implement and support fluency, teachers MUST talk less and allow and encourage students to talk more! This includes both free speaking among each other, as well as organized activities where students speak.

When students are doing free English speaking in class or recess, they do not need to be corrected so as not to break up the fluidity of their speech. When, however, they are having an organized lesson, the teacher can make corrections in both structure and pronunciation, using casual tact and patience so as not to pressure the student.

If a student should ask for a specific word or a way to pronounce a word in English, the teacher should provide it. For example, "How do you say "libro" in English?" The teacher should simply answer, "book". Do NOT tell students to look it up in a dictionary because it will discourage them from speaking, and it is tedious. Plus, we want to encourage the

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students to use an English-English dictionary, using the teacher and texts as a resource for expansion of English vocabulary. This is the best method to get students who will think in English, which is the key to fluency.

Part of speaking, of course, is oral communication with others. An extension of oral communication is oral presentation so that others will hear what ideas we have to present. When we give oral presentations, there are things to note so we can do a good job.

Teachers, you will need to teach these do's and don't's to your students.

Do's

- ✓ **Be organized!**
The more organized and focused your presentation is, the more relaxed you'll feel.
- ✓ **Breathe!**
It helps you relax.
- ✓ **Speak clearly.**
slowly and at an appropriate level for your audience.
- ✓ **Use vocabulary that is appropriate for your audience.**
If you use new vocabulary, make sure you explain it and write it on the board.
- ✓ **Make eye contact with all members of your audience.**
- ✓ **Move around.**
- ✓ **Use hand gestures.**

- ✓ **Allow the audience to ask questions** at the end of your presentation.
- ✓ **Practice your presentation** with a partner or in front of the mirror.
- ✓ **Remember to thank your audience and introduce the next speaker.**

Don't's

- ✗ **Try to cover too much material.**
Remember you only have 7-10 minutes.
- ✗ **Read your presentation.**
You can use short notes, but reading a presentation is unnatural; also, it makes it very difficult for your audience to follow.

IV. ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP AND ENHANCE SPEAKING

Activity 1

Role plays These are a form of pair practice which gives students freedom to play, improvise, and create. These are useful as a way to practice not only language, but also culturally appropriate behavior.

Procedure:

1. Create situations and roles for students. You may want to base these on a dialogue or something else you have studied in class.
2. Pair students, give them the situation and their roles, and have them carry out the role play. While students should practice material they have studied, also encourage them to be creative and improvise.
3. One way to close is by having one or two pairs do their role play for the whole class. This serves primarily to give a sense of closure and need not go on long. (If each pair performs, too much time is taken and other students spend too long sitting and waiting. Listening to classmates stumble through dialogues is not very good listening practice.)
4. Another way to close is by asking a few students what the outcome of their role play was (was the invitation accepted? etc.). This is much quicker than having students perform, but still provides a sense of closure.

Tip:

Encourage creativity. If students make an effort to entertain, role plays are more fun to do and much more fun to watch. Be realistic, however, about the fact that not all students will be great public performers.

Activity 2

Show and Tell This informal but engaging activity involves bringing pictures or other objects to class, showing them, and talking about them. Show and Tell is good for providing listening practice and arousing interest in a topic. It also serves as a good informal warm-up or as a break from "real" class.

Activity 3

Songs are great for making class a warmer, nicer place. For maximum value in language classes, you might first sing or play the song to get everyone interested, and then teach all or part of the words to the song by saying the words and having students repeat (and perhaps memorize) after you. You may not be able to teach all of the words this way,

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especially if the song is long, but try to have students learn as much as possible of the song by listening and speaking rather than just reading.

There are many CD's with children's songs available. The Appendix has some lyrics to commonly sung children's songs so you can be sure that they listen to the correct words. As you have learned from previous information in this book, sometimes sound discrimination can be distorted, especially in musical format, so teaching them the correct words is essential to good speaking, using singing as a base.

Interestingly, many people who do not even know a language well, can sing songs (from rote memory) without their native language accent; therefore, singing can greatly help to develop excellent pronunciation skills.

Activity 4

Surveys involve asking the same few questions several times to different people, so they are a good way for students to repeatedly practice questions and answers in a format which encourages genuine communication. For lower level students, this is one of the easiest formats for relatively free communicative interaction.

Procedure:

1. Decide on a topic or list of questions. This activity works better when you are genuinely curious about the results of the survey, and students too.
2. Tell students what the purpose/topic of the survey is. Either list the questions you want them to ask or give them a general topic and have them write down their own questions. If you want them to generate their own questions (either individually or in groups), give them time to do this. Variation: Have students work in groups to prepare questions, and then each member of the group asks the same questions. Later they can get back together to compare notes and report results.
3. Tell students how many classmates they are expected to survey, and approximately how long they have to do it in. Alternatively, assign a time limit for each short interview.
4. Have them conduct the survey. You may need to occasionally encourage them to move on to a new partner. You can either join in or wander and eavesdrop.
5. Close the activity by having a few students (or groups) report their findings.

Tip: Having students move around the class as they conduct their interviews makes things more lively and keeps everyone awake.

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Activity 5

Talks and Lectures are useful for helping students improve their listening and note-taking skills, especially for improving their ability to guess when listening to longer stretches of discourse in which it is not possible to catch every word; also it is useful for teaching culture. (Students are often especially interested in stories you tell about yourself, especially when supported with pictures or other visuals.)

Procedure:

1. Locate information and prepare the talk.
2. Tell students what you are going to talk about, and ask them to take notes. (Taking notes forces them to listen more carefully.) Participants may need some instruction on how to take notes.
3. Give the talk. If students' listening skills are not strong, it is very easy to lose your audience, so keep an eye out for the glazed-over look that says your audience has been left behind.
4. After the talk there are a number of ways to check comprehension: ask questions; have students write a summary of your talk; give a short quiz; have students write (and ask) follow-up questions based on what you talked about; have students talk or write about corresponding aspects of their own culture; based on your talk, have students work in groups to list similarities and differences between Chinese culture and yours.

Tips:

1. Your country and culture are especially good topics, but other topics such as your experiences in China, language learning, etc. can also be useful.
2. You can make your talk easier to follow by first giving students a list of questions to listen for the answers, or by writing a simple outline of the talk on the blackboard. Also write down key new vocabulary words that you use.
3. Visual aids of any kind are very helpful.
4. For maximum benefit, try to pitch the talk so that students can follow much of what you are saying, but still have to guess some of the time.
5. You can make talks easier for students with lower listening levels to follow by first giving them clues in the form of questions to answer or outlines, forms, or graphs to fill in. The questions (outlines) help focus students' listening, make it easier for students to anticipate and guess, and also enhance motivation and encourage active listening.

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Activity 6

Teacher Interview A good speaking activity is having your students interview you “press conference” style about a topic, often after they have prepared questions in groups. This is good for speaking and listening practice, and for encouraging student initiative; it also helps students to get to know you and your culture better.

Procedure:

1. Be sure you are prepared for any questions students might ask on the topic.
2. Tell students that they are reporters interviewing you so that they can write a story for the local paper. Then give them the topic and some time to prepare questions related to the topic. This can be done individually, but it is often better for speaking practice to have them work in groups.
3. Have students conduct the interview like a press conference.
4. If you plan to require a written report, have students take notes. You may also want to put new vocabulary on the board.
5. To close, ask comprehension questions, or ask a few volunteers to tell you what they found most interesting or surprising about what they learned from the interview. Alternatively, you can ask each student to write a short report based on the interview. (For more suggestions on checking comprehension, see Talks and Lectures.)

Tip: To ensure that the process isn't dominated by a few zealous students, one approach is allowing each group in turn to ask one question. This allows shyer students to get their questions asked by the group representative. If there is less need to protect shy students, another alternative is to simply require that everyone ask at least one question.

Activity 7

Total Physical Response (TPR) This is a “Simon Says” type of activity that we saw in the “Listening” section of this book. “Simon Says” is a game in which the teacher gives students instructions, and they respond by doing what the teacher asks (rather than by speaking). Because students respond with action rather than speech, they can focus their attention more fully on listening to what the teacher says (rather than having at the same time to worry about constructing an oral response). This method is good for building listening skills, especially for students at lower levels, and can also be used to introduce or review vocabulary and even grammar structures.

Once they play it for a few minutes, with the teacher giving the instructions, the teacher

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should select names from the students' name cards, and let a student give the directions. He or she has a turn until the first person makes an error. Then the teacher selects another name, in this way, students get speaking experience, and they learn how to give directions with the goal being to "trick" the others into responding incorrectly, which takes some thinking skills, as well.

Procedure:

1. Before the activity, make a list of the instructions you wish to use. (Ex: "Open your books." "Turn to page six." "Touch your nose with your friend's pen." etc.)
2. Conduct the activity in a game-like manner, repeating instructions and building for faster student responses.
3. If you want to make it more like a game, add the "Simon Says" element; i.e. tell students they should only carry out the instruction if you preface it by saying "Simon Says".
4. When the students become the "teacher", make sure they speak loudly enough for all to hear.

Tip:

This activity can be especially useful for teaching basic classroom instructions to students with very low listening skills.

Activity 8

True/False Listening: For this activity, prepare a number of short statements, some true and some false, and then present them to students as an informal "true/false" quiz. This activity is good for reviewing vocabulary and culture content from previous lessons while also providing listening practice.

Procedure:

1. Write up a set of statements for a short true/false quiz, drawing material (vocabulary, cultural information) from previous lessons. This is most fun if the statements are a little tricky without being mean. The more this seems like a game instead of a test, the better.
2. Ask students to listen to each statement, decide if it is true or false, and write down T or F on a numbered sheet. After the exercise the answers can be checked as a group. Alternatively, just ask everyone to shout out the answer.

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Activity 9

Interviews are especially good for intermediate or advanced oral skills classes because they allow in-depth exploration of a topic and provide students with practice in explaining opinions.

Procedure:

1. Decide what topic(s) you want students to interview each other on.
2. Give directions for the interviews. Students need to know the suggested topic and approximately how much time they will have. If you want students to write up their own list of questions, they will also need a few minutes to do this.
3. Pair students. Often it is good to find a way to pair students with someone other than the person sitting next to them (who they probably already know fairly well).
4. Have students carry out interviews. Once student A finishes interviewing student B, you can ask them to switch roles, or even switch partners. You may want to set a time limit, and call out when partners should switch roles.
5. To close, ask a few students to report some of the more interesting things they learned from their partner during the interview.

Tips:

1. Topics which involve opinions or information not shared by everyone in the class are best because they make interviews more genuinely communicative.
2. Role playing and interviews mix nicely; for example, one person might be a reporter and the other a famous person.

Activity 10

Cocktail Party is a free form of speaking practice in which students get out of their seats and converse with different partners in a style similar to that of a cocktail party.

Procedure:

1. Explain the basic "rules" of a cocktail party to students:

Rule #1: You should talk to more than one person rather than talking to the same person the whole time.

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Rule #2: After talking with someone for a while, you must close your conversation and move on to someone else.

Also teach students a few lines for striking up conversations

(Ex: "It sure is hot today"), and for closing them (Ex: "Well, it's been nice talking to you, but it's getting late, and I need to get going.").

2. Let students know whether or not you want them to practice specific material (from a model dialogue, for example), how long they have to talk, and how many people you expect them to talk to.

3. Turn students loose, and join in.

4. When time is up or enthusiasm runs thin, call everyone back to their seats. Close by asking a few students about their conversations. This is generally more fun -- and other students will pay more attention -- if you ask a specific question appropriate to the activity (Ex: "Tell me a little about the most interesting conversation you had." "What new things did you learn?") rather than having students summarize all their conversations.

Tip:

This format is relatively noisy, so consider the impact this chaos will have on nearby classes.

Activity 11

Conversation: Entertainment

These are various topics for the teacher to use to get the students speaking in class. Use any that are appropriate for your class.

What do you usually do on the weekends?

What did you do last weekend?

Do you have plans for this weekend?

What types of music do people listen to in your country?

Is there any type of music that you can only hear in your country?

How many different movie genres can you name? Which is your favorite?

Least favorite?

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Which American movies have been popular in your country?

What do you do for entertainment when you're on vacation that you don't usually do?

When was the last time you went to a play? What about an opera, a symphony, or a ballet?

What's your favorite drink? Where do you usually drink it?

What's the worst party you've ever been to? What made it bad?

How often do you eat in a restaurant? What's the best restaurant you've ever been to?

What's the best cheap restaurant you've ever been to?

What kind of music do you like? Is there any kind of music that you don't like? Explain.

How popular is live music in your country? When was the last time you went to a concert or live show?

What's the last movie you saw?

When did you see it? What was it about? Did you like it?

How often do you visit museums?

When was the last time you went to a museum?

Do you like to dance?

When was the last time you went dancing? Did you enjoy yourself?

How often do you go to parties?

Have you ever hosted a party?

What was it like?

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Activity 12

Conversation: Paranormal These are various topics for the teacher to use to get the students speaking in class.

Use any that are appropriate for your class. Have students explain and elaborate their responses.

Have you ever been to see a fortune teller or psychic? If so, do you think it was worth the money?

What numbers are lucky in your country? Unlucky? Do you have a lucky number? Unlucky?

What do you do for good luck? Do you think it works?

What sign are you? Do you think your personality reflects this?

Do you believe in ESP? Can some people know what other people are thinking or feeling? (Note: ESP stands for extrasensory perception).

What do you know about Nostradamus? Do you think that some people can predict the future?

How do people predict fortunes in your country? What do you think of these ways?

Do you believe in ghosts? What are they? Have you ever seen or felt one?

Do you know of any haunted places? Have you ever been to one of them?

Have you (or anyone you know) ever had a dream that later came true?

Do you read your horoscope?
If so, how seriously do you take it?

Have you (or anyone you've heard of) ever had an out of body experience? Do you believe there are people who can see things hidden from view?

Do you think that UFOs carry visitors from another planet to Earth? Do you think that UFO's pick up humans from Earth and take them somewhere to study them...and then return them to Earth? (Investigate on Internet, for example, Barney and Betty Hill, who, among many others, have made such a claim.)

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Has anything ever happened to you that you cannot explain?

What other things exist in the world that cannot be explained?

What is the weirdest thing that ever happened to you or to someone you know?

Do you like things that are weird?...Or do you prefer things that are more normal?

Activity 13

Conversation: Shopping These are various topics for the teacher to use to get the students speaking in class. Use any that are appropriate for your class.

Have students explain and elaborate their responses.

What was the last thing you bought for yourself? Where did you buy it?

Why did you buy it?

What was the last thing you bought for someone else? Where did you buy it?

Why did you buy it?

What's your favorite place to shop? Why?

Have you ever been to an outlet store?

(An "outlet store" is a store from a factory that offers special bargains.)

If you have, where was it and what did you think? If not, would you like to shop at one?

Why or why not?

Are thrift stores popular in your country? Where are they common?

Do you enjoy shopping at thrift stores?

Do you compare prices at different stores when you shop?

Is it important for you to own designer clothes? Why or why not?

Do you enjoy shopping?

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How often do you go shopping?

How much time do you spend
each time you go?

When you buy something, do you read the label? Why or why not?

Are you a price conscious shopper?
What is your opinion of discount stores?

What stores have you shopped at in _____?

What store did you like best and what store did you like least? Why?

How important is good customer service when you are shopping?

How important is it for you to be up to date with the latest fashions?

What kind of clothes do you like best?
Do you have a favorite type of fabric?
Are a lot of your clothes one color
or pattern?

Do you like to go look around at stores ("window shop")? Or do you prefer not to go shopping at all? Why?

Activity 14

Make a Budget This activity has the students working in pairs, a boy (man) and a girl (woman) working together. If you have an uneven number of boys/girls, it is OK, as they can pretend they are roommates.

The objective is to make a livable, sustainable budget for two people. The teacher can decide how much money the pair "earns", quoting it in Euros, Mexican pesos, or US dollars.

Ideally, this activity spans over several days, or even a few weeks, with students having time to talk and decide their expenses and earnings based on newspapers from the city where they live...or where they propose to live.

Procedure:

1. Teacher must explain what a "budget" is....The teacher must circulate among the students as they work, to assure that they are speaking English as they work...and to help them with vocabulary words they may need to use.

2. Then over days or weeks, depending on how much time per day will be devoted to this project, students, guided by the teacher, do the following:

First: Students make a list, as a pair, of logical expenses they will need to live well. This is labeled as "IDEAL BUDGET #1".

Second: Students add up the expenses from "Ideal Budget #1" to see how much the expenses total. A SAMPLE list of expenses that could be included follows these procedures.

Third: The students INCOME must be determined. This can be done by chance, or by planning.

CHANCE: The teacher has two bags with slips of paper inside. One bag is for one person of the pair, and the other bag is for the other person in the pair. In one bag, each slip has a monthly salary amount written on it, from low salary amounts to rather high amounts. The second bag has slips with salaries, but, also, in the bag are slips that say: "unemployed", or "stay-at-home Mom", "college student", or other designation. Each person in the pair draws from a different bag to provide a realistic balance of what actually happens in some households.

PLANNING: The students as a pair determine what their salary will be based on three things they need to establish: (1) How much education did they complete? (2) What is their career? (3) What are they earning? This should be based on newspaper job advertisements or Internet research.

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ALL students who choose this route, MUST pretend they are in the first year of their job. This will prevent students from unrealistically saying that they are the “top boss at IBM, earning a million dollars a year!”

Fourth: Once students know their combined salaries, they will need to prepare a REALISTIC BUDGET #2, adjusting the sums from the IDEAL BUDGET to reflect the reality of their income. Each pair of students will have to discuss and decide which budgeted items need to be adjusted, either lower or higher.

3. Once the IDEAL BUDGET has been adjusted in order to prepare a REALISTIC BUDGET, students will share with the class, orally and visually, with written posters, or with transparencies, or Power Point, or on the board, a summary of what they learned in this project. They should be prepared by the teacher on how to make summary statements, explaining what was the one, most important thing they learned from the project.

4. Chance/The Fickle Finger of Fate (FFF) Life’s Interruption

This is the final (optional) step to the activity, depending on the maturity and language / vocabulary ability of the students.

In a bag, labeled “The fickle finger of fate” , the teacher will have life events that do happen, often without warning.

Slips will be drawn, one per pair. The objective will be to prepare a final BUDGET #3 : 5 YEARS DOWN THE ROAD ...using the REALISTIC BUDGET as a base.

The Final Budget #3, will need to be adjusted based on what slip is drawn from the bag, reflecting a change in the life situation, five years into the relationship of the partners in the pair.

What does the FFF say? Here are some samples, but feel free to add others, and to solicit ideas from the students.

FFF Ideas (Feel free to add to or eliminate from ideas on this list.)

You will have to explain to your classmates (1) how this FFF will affect your life, and (2) what changes / adjustments you will have to make because of the FFF.

Sample FFF’s

1. Your spouse died in a car accident. NO life insurance. (The salary is lost from income.)
2. Your spouse died in a car accident, leaving \$100,000 US dollars in life insurance and the mortgage is paid off, too.
3. You just completed a huge, successful project at work. You receive a raise

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of \$1,000 a month more, PLUS a cash, tax free, bonus of \$10,000 US dollars, and a family vacation for two weeks at the beach in Cancun, Mexico.

4. This has been a really bad year for your company, so wages are cut by 25% for all employees, until further notice.
5. This has been a really bad year of income for your company, so you are laid off from work until further notice. Experts say the lay-offs will be permanent. Meanwhile, you will collect 30% of your previous salary in state unemployment benefits for 16 weeks. After that???? Who knows?
6. You accepted an extra, second job, three evenings a week, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. , at a doctor's office, doing her accounting work and preparing billings to send to patients. You will earn \$8.00 an hour, after taxes.
7. Your grandmother's estate left you a lovely, three bedroom house, fully furnished. She also left enough money to pay the property taxes for at least 10 years.
8. You just won the lottery!!!! You will received 100,000 US dollars a year for twenty years!
9. You just won the lottery!!!! The cash option you had selected when you bought the ticket awards you \$4,700,000 US dollars, ina lump sum, after taxes are paid.
10. You have to move 2,000 miles away because of your job. The company is closing the plant in your current city, so you have no choice. The salary will be the same as you now have, although you will have a higher position, supervising people, and less physical work than you did before. The only problem is that you will have to redo a budget because the city you are moving to is much more expensive than where you now live. The rent is \$150 dollars a month higher than you now pay. Food will cost about \$30 a month more, cable TV is \$10 more, and gas for your car will have to increase to \$60 a month more because you will have to drive further from /to your house to work each day.

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SAMPLE BUDGET TOPIC IDEAS TO BE INCLUDED

rent or mortgage	property taxes
electricity	cleaning service (home)
water	clothing, shoes
cable TV	medicines / vitamins
house repairs	doctors / dentists
food	going out / movies
household paper and cleaning products	vacations / travel
eating out in restaurants	gifts
savings	insurance: life
insurance: health	insurance: car
car payments	car gasoline
car maintenance: oil, tires	furniture replacement
miscellaneous expenses	hobbies / sports
laundry (soap, bleach, dry cleaning)	
personal money	
books, movie	
personal money	
manicures	

"Personal Money" includes beauty items (face and body creams, lipstick, makeup, cologne, perfume, etc.), and cleanliness items (shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, razors, special soaps, etc.).

Activity 15

Use puppets By using puppets that you buy or make, or that students make, you can encourage speaking activities and role play, even developing plays with various puppet characters. Developing conversation skills using puppets is very easy because students feel less self-conscious speaking through a puppet than by themselves.

Activity 16

Use pictures Cut out pictures from magazines and paste them onto index cards. On the back of each card, you can write some vocabulary words that could be derived from the picture. Students can use the cards in pairs to stimulate discussion, with questions and answers, or giving an explanation of the picture to his/her partner. The words on the back can be used for support...or for the student to check AFTER a pair activity to see if he/she

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used many of the words.

Example: a picture could be a mother holding a baby, kissing it on the cheek. Words on the back of the card could include: MOTHER, BABY, LOVE, KISS, AFFECTION, CARING, TENDERNESS, FACE, HEAD, EYES, MOUTH, PARENT, CHILD.

Activity 17

Controlled Practice. This kind of activity leaves little room for error as the students learn to use a language pattern as soon as it is taught.

It is a type of repetition activity. This can be very boring if it is practiced too long and if only one student speaks at a time, with the others listening.

Controlled practice is best done with students working in pairs, (Student A and Student B), with the teacher circulating around the room, listening, to help with correct responses and pronunciation. Complete sentences do not have to be used because it sounds too artificial, and in everyday speech, native speakers don't talk that way.

EXAMPLES:

A: *What time is it?*

B: *It's 3 o'clock. (Use a real clock or a model clock that Student A manipulates to change the time so flexible, varied responses can be practiced.)*

OR

A: *In what city do you live?*

B: *New York City*

OR

A: *Do you have a pet?*

B: *Yes, a dog.*

A: *What kind?*

B: *A German Shepherd*

A: *What's its name?*

B: *His name is Junior.*

Activity 18

Card categories. This activity uses sets of cards specifically prepared with pictures of foods, or means of transportation, or plants, or animals, etc. with 10 cards in each set. Keep each category separate. Students work in pairs, with one set of cards turned face down on the desk.

A. *(Picks up a card with a picture of a hamburger, and says:) I'm hungry and want a hamburger. Do you want one, too?*

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*B. (Picks up a card with a picture of an apple, and says:)
No, thanks. I'll eat this apple because I don't want a hamburger.*

Students will be guided by the teacher on what will be practiced and what cards each pair will use. With very large classes, perhaps just 4 cards per pair of students can be distributed. The topics can be variable. The goal is more flexible speech practice, without exact words being put in the students' mouths as with a more controlled practice activity.

Activity 19

Role playing is an activity that can be very structured at the beginning, practiced as a large class group repeating after the teacher. Later, it can be an opportunity for free, flexible responses by the students as their language fluency and vocabulary grow.

STRUCTURED EXAMPLE: (following a script the teacher provides and practices with the entire class first...)

- A. Good afternoon. Can I help you?
- B. Yes, I want to buy shoes for my child.
- A. Hi, young lady. May I measure your feet?
- B. She's a bit shy, but, yes, please measure her feet.
- A. OK. She seems to need a size 1.
- B. Please show me some white shoes for her size.

UNSTRUCTURED, FREE CONVERSATION EXAMPLE: *(invented as they speak with no prior script...)*

- A. Hi! can I help you find something?
- B. No, thanks. I'm just looking for now.
- A. OK...Let me know if I can help you later.
- B. Thanks, I will.
- A. (Later) Did you find anything interesting?
- B. Yes. Can you explain this computer game to me, please?

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Activity 20

Pick a topic. The teacher will have strips of paper in a bag. The strips have various speaking topics written on each one. Students will draw a strip from the bag and speak on the topic. Topics can be simple, one-word topics to sentences, depending on the vocabulary level, ability, and experience of the students. Teacher can set the time to present, from one minute to 5 minutes. Since the audience can find this boring, only use this activity with 3 or 4 students each time. Also, if the talks are 5 minutes or more, give the audience a rating chart so they can participate by rating the speakers. (SEE the ASSESSMENTS section which follows to obtain a sample PEER ASSESSMENT form.)

Activity 21

Using verbs. This activity practices oral and written use of verb tenses. Frequent practice, for short periods of time, will help the students learn to “hear” the correct word for the verb tense, especially for the irregular verbs.

VERB PRACTICE (ORAL AND WRITTEN)

Complete this chart using 5 verbs from the list which follows. Then say them.

SENTENCE PRACTICE: Use a different verb from the list to complete the chart .

Here are some verbs to use. Place them in the infinitive form by placing a “to” in front of each word :

go, look, read, ride, love, work, sleep, travel, fight, study, yell, play, act, run, sing, win, paint, fly, sail, see, compute, arrange, organize, talk, hug, plant, clean, sweep, wash, breathe, lie, lay

NOTE: to lie and to lay are two verbs that confuse even native speakers. The lie here is NOT the verb used when you do not tell the truth.

PRESENT

lie

lay*

PAST

lay

laid

PAST PARTICIPLE

lain

laid

The past tense of lie is lay.....

Yesterday Steve lay on the floor.
The dog lay in the mud after it rained.

The past tense of lay is laid.....

Last week I laid the report on your desk.
Mary laid her ring inside the jewelry box.

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	VERB to run	PRESENT run	PAST ran	PARTICIPLE has run, have run/ had run	FUTURE will run
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

The past participle of lie is lain....

Steve has lain on the floor for days.
The dog has lain in the mud for hours.

The past participle of lay is laid....

I have laid the report on your desk.
Mary has laid her ring in the box.

SPEAKING TOPICS: Using various verb tenses.

REMEMBER: It is more important to be able to USE the verbs, orally or in writing, than to IDENTIFY which tense they are!!!!

DISCUSS:

1. You have lost your wallet with your I.D. , license to drive, and all your money and debit cards. Tell what happened, where, and how you think you lost everything. Then tell what you will do to resolve the problem.

2. Your 16 year old daughter did not come home after a party. Friends say she went in a car with her boyfriend. You did not even know she had a boyfriend. What will you and your spouse do? How do you think our daughter will react?

3. Your company just told you that you have to relocate to Hong Kong for one year. There is a very large raise, plus a great housing allowance. You are eager to accept the position... BUT your spouse and two teenage children do not want to move. What should you do? What will you do?

4. You are 40 kilos overweight and you have diabetes. What should you do? What will you do?

5. Your 21 year old son dropped out of university before finishing his career. He has no job and just hangs around the house all day, sleeping late and doing nothing. For 5 months

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this has been going on. He says that he is looking for work but with the “crises” there is no work. What will you do? What is your advice to him? How can you guide him? Will he follow your advice?

6. You just won the lottery of \$100,000 U.S. dollars. What will you do? (after you scream!!!!)

7. Summer will be here soon. What is your “dream vacation” for three weeks? Where will you go? What will you do? Who will go with you? (Some dreams do come true...and they are free!)

V. ASSESSMENTS for LISTENING AND SPEAKING

A. Comments about assessing students

1. What are we looking for? Once we decide, that is how we evaluate. Many school systems do NOT give grades to primary students. Instead, they use narrative explanations or lists of what they expect from a normal child at a specific grade level.

Then they use three levels to assess the students’ progress:

Below expectations (Still developing skills in this area)

Meeting expectations (On target; good job)

Exceeding expectations (Over and beyond, excelling at all work, and using high level thinking skills)

2. The use of projects, in place of traditional exams, can help us see the various abilities of our students. (Multiple intelligences)

3. The use of alternative grading tools: RUBRICS. These allow a much fairer way to assess essays, projects, drawings, and other types of work that require a subjective, rather than objective, assessment.

4. Grade for both content and mechanics so that students can get credit for their entire work: ideas as well as technical details.

For example: in an essay: give one grade for the content, ideas, and vocabulary level of the student, and give a separate grade for the technical mechanics of writing: spelling, grammar, punctuation and sentence structure.

In mathematics: grade the answer as well as the process used to derive the answer. If students used the correct process to solve a word problem, but made a careless mistake in subtraction, so got the wrong answer, they should get a separate grade for each area.

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This helps students pay better attention to their work, and allows them to see where they need to improve. Otherwise, they just see the bad grade and give up, not really knowing where they went wrong.

B. Grading/Assessing

Sometimes you may want to use a different way to evaluate or score your students' work. Here is a list of several ways: points, words, or percentages. Feel free to use them as you want.

In this rubric, a score of ONE is the lowest and FIVE is the highest. Students should have access to the rubric before they have a speaking assessment so that they will be able to set their goals.

C. Sample Oral Presentations Assessment (for PEERS or Teachers)

Person Presenting: _____

Topic: _____

Please rate each of the following criteria on a scale of 1 to 5:
(1 = needs much improvement) 1 2 3 4 5 (5 = excellent)

WRITE RATING NUMBER BELOW.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The presenter spoke clearly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The presenter spoke at a good volume. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The presenter spoke at a good pace. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The presenter faced the audience. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The presenter appeared relaxed. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The presenter stood up straight. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The presenter used effective hand gestures. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The presenter made eye contact with me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. The introduction caught my attention. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. The presenter provided some good examples. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. The conclusion wrapped up the speech. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I found this topic interesting. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments / Specific Notes on Strengths and Areas to Improve:

C. A sample RUBRIC to assess oral presentations

CATEGORY	1	2	3	4
Speaks Clearly	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, and mispronounces no words.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, but mispronounces one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly most (94-85%) of the time. Mispronounces more than one word.	Often mumbles or can not be understood OR mispronounces many words.
Preparedness	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.	Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.	The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.
Posture and Eye Contact	Stands up straight, looks relaxed and confident. Establishes eye contact with everyone in the room during the presentation.	Stands up straight and establishes eye contact with everyone in the room during the presentation.	Sometimes stands up straight and establishes eye contact.	Slouches and/or does not look at people during the presentation.
Listens to Other Presentations	Listens intently. Does not make distracting noises or movements.	Listens intently but has one distracting noise or movement	Sometimes does not appear to be listening but is not distracting.	Sometimes does not appear to be listening and has distracting noises or movements.
Enthusiasm	Facial expressions and body language generate a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others.	Facial expressions and body language are used to try to generate enthusiasm, but seem somewhat faked.	Very little use of facial expressions or body language.	Did not generate much interest in topic being presented.

E. TEN QUESTIONS TO CHECK ENGLISH FLUENCY

I. Instructions

Teacher look for:

1. How quickly do they respond to each question?
3-5 seconds is the goal.
2. Do they answer automatically in English?
They should answer in English if they are addressed in English.
3. Is their response grammatically correct?
YES or NO. (Like being pregnant: you ARE or you AREN'T)
4. Is their vocabulary/word use appropriate for their grade level?

Scoring:

Highest is 40 points = 10 questions x 4 points

Lowest is 10 points = 10 questions x 1 point

Goal: 30 points for 85% of our students.

Note: Students do NOT need to answer in complete sentences. Conversation-like, short responses are acceptable.

Points Explained

4=Exceeding expectations (prompt response, in English, no grammatical errors, high vocabulary for the grade level, with near-native pronunciation)

3=Meeting expectations (3-5 second response, answering in hesitant form, but all in English, one grammar error only: such as 'he' for 'she' or 'is' instead of 'was'), basic vocabulary, typical of one learning a language, a slight Spanish accent)

2=Below expectations (More than 5 seconds, but does respond, partially in Spanish, but then switches to English, 2 -4 grammar errors, low vocabulary, poorly pronounced)

1=Absolute beginner (more than 5 seconds to respond or does NOT respond, answer is all in Spanish with maybe 1 or 2 English words, grammatical errors making it difficult to understand, low level, very basic words (such as 'yes', 'no', 'go', 'school' 'teacher', etc. or no vocabulary in English)

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I. ORAL QUESTIONS

Date: _____ Total score: _____

STUDENT NAME: _____

GRADE _____ SCHOOL: _____

ENGLISH METHOD BEING USED: _____

As you can see, there are optional questions, depending on the age / grade level of the student.

You choose which question(s) to ask among the several choices for each of the 10. Some are easier than others. If students answer any ONE from the several questions offered, they receive credit for a correct answer based on the 1-4 scoring guide.

Questions/Scoring Matrix:

Circle the points received on each question; then add them for a final score.

1. Hi! What's your name? What color is this? (Show something.) What is two plus three?

1 2 3 4

2. Who is your English teacher? What is your mother's name? What grade are you in?

1 2 3 4

3. How old are you now? When is your birthday? What kind of party do you want for your birthday?

1 2 3 4

4. What are you studying right now? What are you doing now?

Tell me about your friends. What is this a picture of? (Show a picture of a dog or a cat, or anything that is appropriate for the age group you are testing.) (Clip art has some great pictures for you to use..or a magazine picture.)

1 2 3 4

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5. Where do you live? (Street address is OK.) What city / state do you live in? What is the name of our school? What country do we live in?

1 2 3 4

6. What do you want to be when you grow up? ('I don't know' IS appropriate.)
What does your father or mother do? How do you help in your house?

1 2 3 4

7. What subject do you like best? What is your favorite subject?
What toys or games do you like?

1 2 3 4

8. What do you like to eat? What do you watch on TV? What is your favorite program on TV or your favorite book or movie?

1 2 3 4

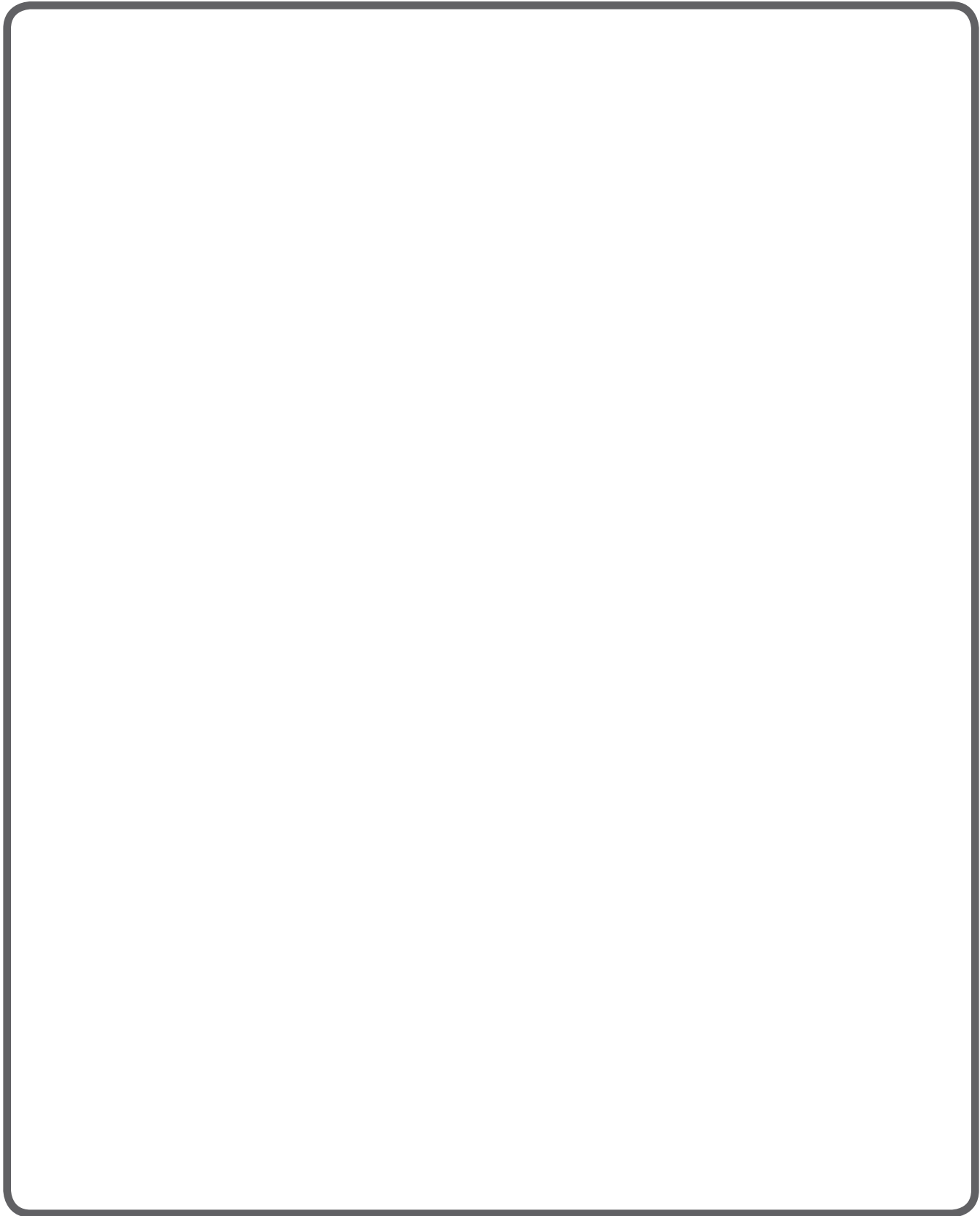
9. What do you do for fun when you are not in school? At home, what do you do?

1 2 3 4

10. Tell me about your family. Who lives with you in your house? Do you have brothers or sisters? (Go beyond a simple 'yes', 'no'....Tell me about them.)

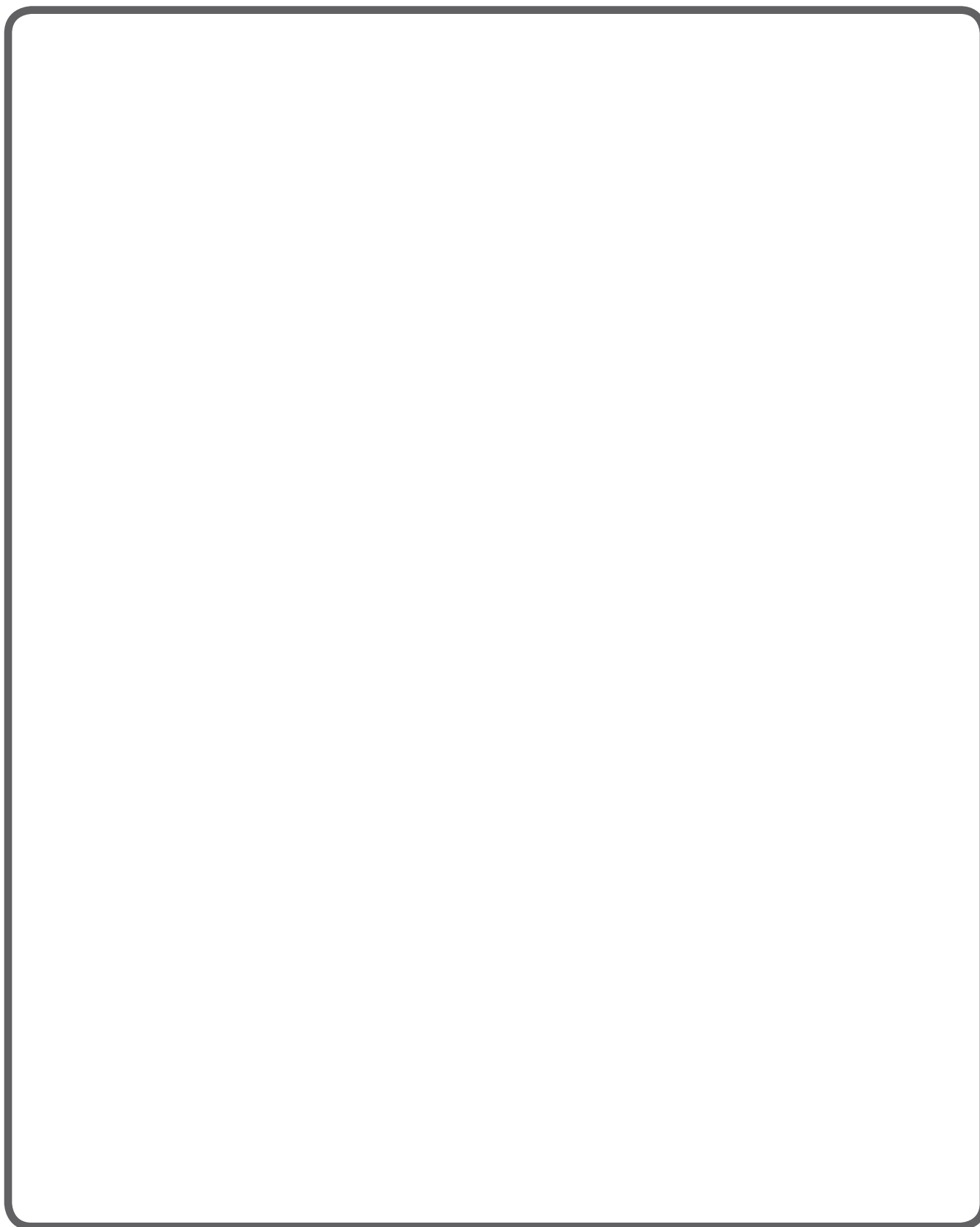
1 2 3 4

Building Listening and Speaking Skills 1



Building Reading Skills

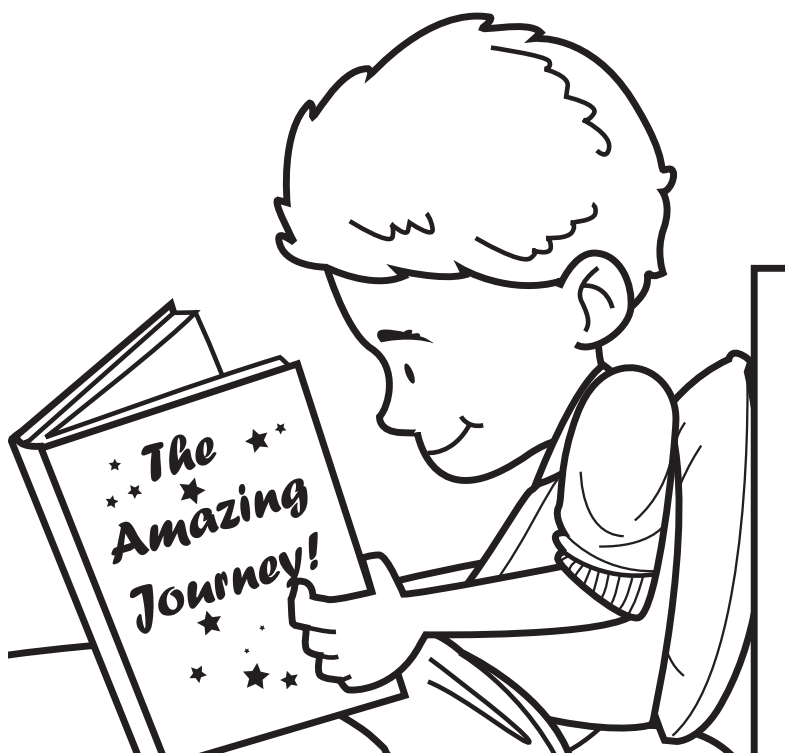
Building Reading Skills



I. READING: BACKGROUND AND BASIC THEORY

Listening is the main source of language when students are beginning to learn a language. As they grow in oral language ability, the printed word becomes the second most important source of language. Eventually, as language learners progress, in any language, including L1, the printed word becomes more and more important as the main source for improving vocabulary and for expanding and strengthening the language.

This is when reading becomes super-important as an essential language skill. It is an ability that is easy to acquire with practice, one that can stay with us even when we have no one to speak with, because reading can happen anywhere, alone or with others. Making reading an enjoyable activity is an essential and imperative part of the language learning process.



Dr. Stephen Krashen in his book, "The Power of Reading", states, "We learn to read by reading." As with anything, the more we do it, the better we can be at the activity. Perhaps many of the so-called "reading problems" that seem to develop with some students may simply be that they do not participate actively in enough meaningful daily reading experiences, and/or they were pushed to read before their gross motor skills were sufficiently developed. Most experts (Dr. Jean Piaget, et al) say that at about seven years of age (first grade of primary) is the best time to begin teaching reading and writing. This has been proven, over many years, as evidenced by Finland, for example, which has been number one in the world on the annual PISA (Program for International Student Assessment).exams for 12 years.

Finland has one year of Kindergarten, with children entering at age 6, where games, songs, social skills, an expansive oral language development, story-reading, role playing, imagination experiences, arts and crafts, and gross motor skills activities are practiced. First grade in Finland, beginning at age 7, is when reading and writing begins. By then, children are biologically ready, so have no problems learning how to read and write within

Building Reading Skills

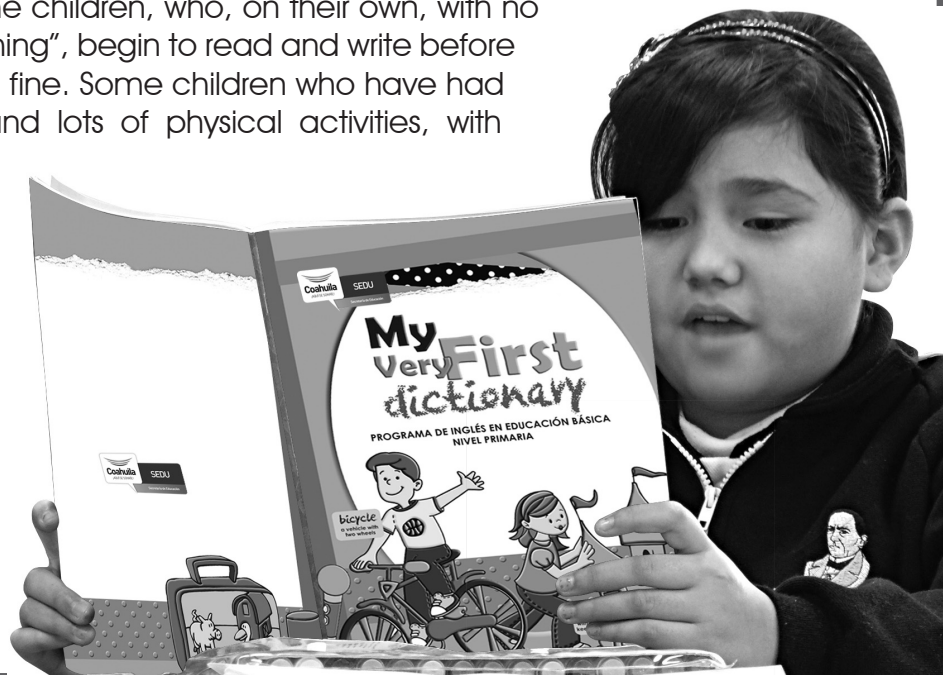
six months. They study several languages, too: Finnish, English, Russian, and Swedish, which is not unusual for Europe. There is no “rush” to get the children to read and write at very young ages. After all, what is the rush? If students perform well at age 15 on international exams requiring high level, critical thinking, such as PISA, what difference does it make that they learned to read at age 7 instead of at five? What is the rush for early reading and writing when all evidence points out that delaying teaching reading and writing until age seven obtains better long-term results?

As Finnish educators proudly say, “We want our children to stay children as long as possible.”

Schools say that “parents push” for early reading and writing. This may be true in some cases, but, parents must be educated about the biological development of children. Our schools are made up of educators, and it is their responsibility and moral obligation to inform parents of children’s needs and development. Educators and parents must become aware that early reading / writing does NOT imply higher intelligence.

On the contrary, if reading/writing are taught before the children are biologically ready, while gross motor skills (jumping, hopping, running, throwing, etc.) are still being developed, they may “learn” to read and write, but by second or third grade of primary, about 15% of students exhibit signs of dyslexia, a dislike of reading, or other developmental learning problems. If, however, fine motor skills such as writing, precise cutting, reading, are delayed being taught until about age 7, it is extremely rare that children exhibit learning problems caused by “rushing” the child to read and write before he/she is biologically ready.

Of course, there are some children, who, on their own, with no parental or teacher “pushing”, begin to read and write before age 7. If it is self-initiated, fine. Some children who have had rich oral background, and lots of physical activities, with fully-developed gross motor skills, learn to read and write almost on-their-own. We do not want to stop these children, and their skills can be encouraged, but not pushed. It must be emphasized,



however, that this small percentage of children are not necessarily smarter or more highly intelligent than others who learn to read later. It only means that they were “ready” to read.

There are a number of ways to approach the teaching of reading. In fact, in the Bibliography, there is one book (by Aukerman) which lists and describes more than 50 different programs that can be used to teach English reading. Most all of them depend, in some way, on using a combination of sight words (instant recognition) and phonics. Most approaches are successful.

The three factors which can affect the approach you choose to teach reading are:

1. The age of your students:

Younger students (6-7 years) may still need to learn the connection between the spoken word and the written word. Older students (8+) may already know how to read in their L1, so it will be easier for them to adapt to learning English reading.

2. Whether or not they already know how to read in their native language

(in that the concept of reading has been learned...They know there is a connection between the spoken and the written word.)

3. Whether or not their language uses the Roman/Latin-type letters, such as English uses.

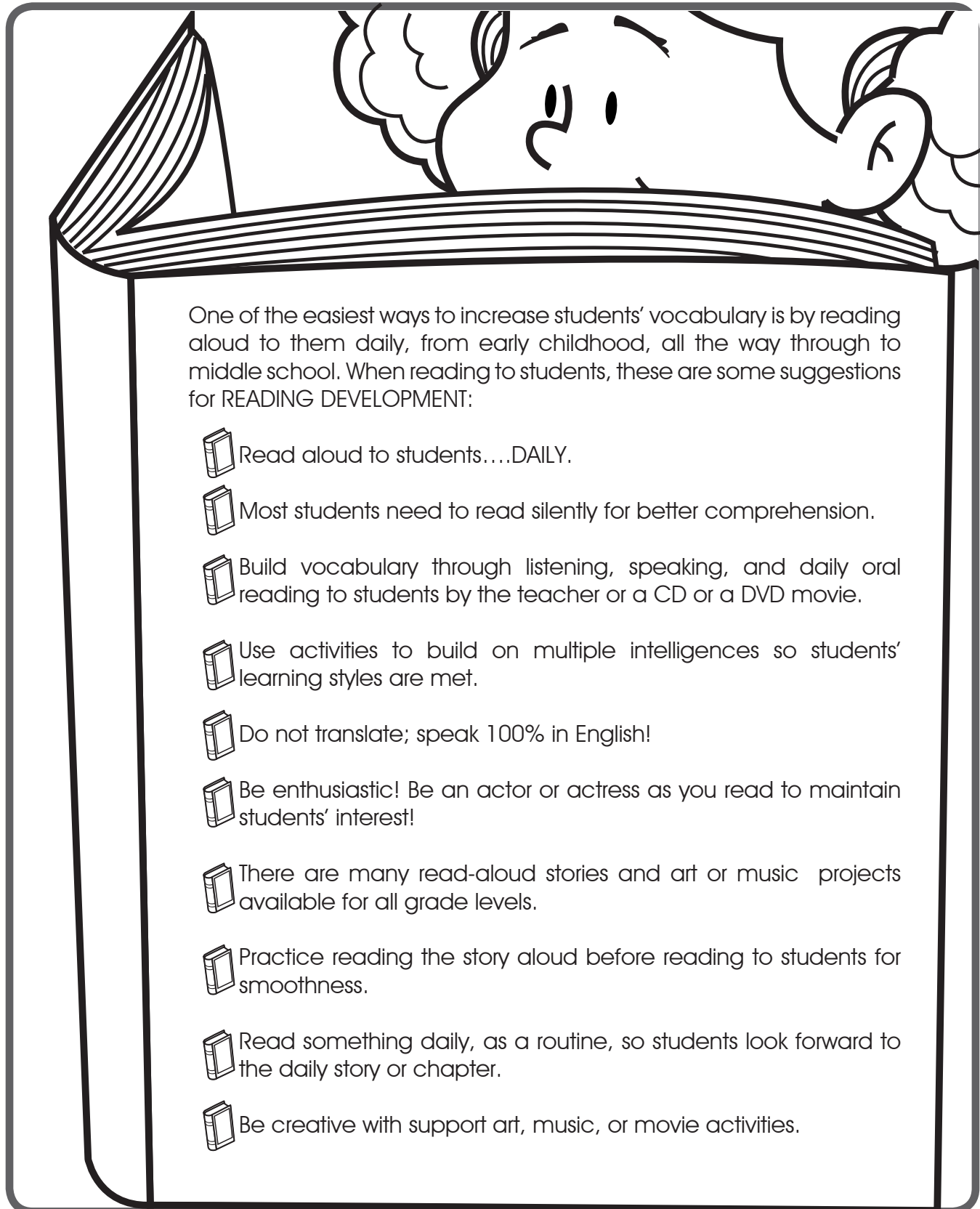
If students use Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Arabic or other languages with a script different from the Roman/Latin alphabet, work must begin with learning the English alphabet orally, then written, before learning reading.

Some languages, such as Spanish, are 100% phonetic, which means that the five vowels (A, E, I, O, U) always have the same sound, and are always sounded in a word, so there are only five vowel sounds.











In English, however, the same five vowels (A, E, I, O, U) have 44 sounds. Some vowels (such as E at the end of some words, cake, shake, etc.) are silent. Therefore, it is essential that teachers emphasize oral vocabulary before teaching reading to ensure student success.

One of the things most important in order to achieve reading success is that students need to have a large listening and speaking vocabulary! This can not be over-emphasized! Without an ample oral vocabulary, reading is tedious and difficult because not only will students need to learn reading skills and techniques, but they will also have to learn vocabulary words, too....a truly formidable task, the major reason why children do not learn how to read well, and, subsequently, dislike reading.

You can motivate your students to read by your actions!

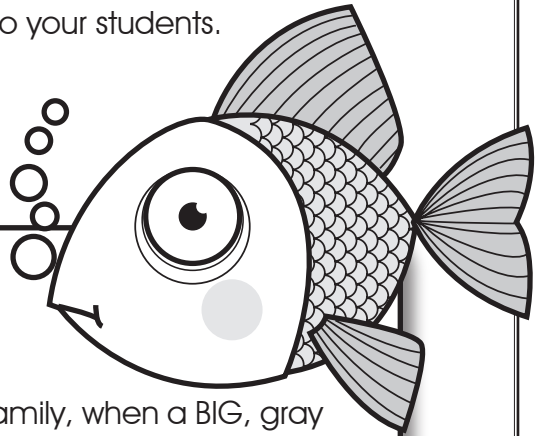


One of the easiest ways to increase students' vocabulary is by reading aloud to them daily, from early childhood, all the way through to middle school. When reading to students, these are some suggestions for **READING DEVELOPMENT**:

-  Read aloud to students....**DAILY**.
-  Most students need to read silently for better comprehension.
-  Build vocabulary through listening, speaking, and daily oral reading to students by the teacher or a CD or a DVD movie.
-  Use activities to build on multiple intelligences so students' learning styles are met.
-  Do not translate; speak 100% in English!
-  Be enthusiastic! Be an actor or actress as you read to maintain students' interest!
-  There are many read-aloud stories and art or music projects available for all grade levels.
-  Practice reading the story aloud before reading to students for smoothness.
-  Read something daily, as a routine, so students look forward to the daily story or chapter.
-  Be creative with support art, music, or movie activities.

Let's look at a story example that you can read aloud to your students.

STORY: "The Little Lost Fish", Art project: A fish



THE LITTLE LOST FISH

by Elaine Gallagher, Ph.D.

A little baby fish was swimming with his big, big family, when a BIG, gray shark came near.

"Hide, hide", shouted the mother fish. So all the little fish quickly swam away.

The big, big, gray shark swam by eight times. He did not see the baby fish. He went away, so they were safe.

One by one, two by two, they swam back to their mother. But the cute little baby fish did not see them. He was all alone. So he decided to look for them. The cute little baby fish saw a big, fat green sea turtle. He asked the big, fat, green sea turtle,

"Have you seen my mother and my brothers and my sisters?"

"No", said the fat, green turtle, and he kept on swimming,

A big, yellow star fish was on top of a big rock.

"Have you seen my mother and my brothers and my sisters?" asked the cute little baby fish.

"No", said the yellow star fish. "I did not see anyone."

Then a black and yellow fish swam by looking for bits of food.

"Have you seen my mother and my brothers and my sisters?" asked the little baby fish.

"Sorry, no," said the black and yellow fish, and he kept swimming, leaving the little baby fish alone.

The little baby fish was sad and lonely and afraid.

"I miss my mother and my brothers and my sisters," he said.

"What am I going to do? What am I going to do?"

He swam over a big green plant, but did not see his mother and his brothers and his sisters. He swam under a big white shell, but did not see his family.

Suddenly, the little baby fish felt the water moving in waves. The water was moving over him. He was afraid. The water was moving faster and faster.

He looked closer. "Wow!" said the little baby fish! "It is not a big fish! It is not a big black octopus. It is not a big shark. It is my mother and my brothers and sisters. They found me! They found me!"

The little baby fish said, "Oh, Mother, I am so happy you all found me! Now we are a big, happy family again."

THE END

The story about the "Little Lost Fish" has repetition, so students can repeat what the little lost fish is saying. They can draw pictures, showing sequence of story events, or a mural of the story with different teams of students contributing to the overall mural.

The idea is to get the students to speak in English so that their reading skills can be getting a strong foundation. There are many other similar stories for teachers to use. Also, students love to have the same story repeated several times. Like an old friend, the story lines become familiar to the students, increasing vocabulary.

There are many more stories for you to read aloud, such as "The Little Lost Fish" with accompanying art projects, available in the Storigami book, published by the SEC in 2008.

When students begin reading a bit more than one or two-word pages of text, they will need support to make sense of texts. Students will need support to strengthen reading skills as they are...

1. Getting INTO the text:

Before reading (INTO)

Things to do BEFORE reading, such as:

Take phrases from poetry / prose. Write them on cards. Students share statements.

Then students write or say what they think the selection is about leading to prediction skills.

After they actually read the selection, students can see how accurate their predictions were.

Introducing vocabulary, showing pictures that relate to the story, and discussing them and how they can relate to the story we are about to read.

Giving strips of paper with sentences from the story, and asking students to predict what type of story or poem they think it is. These are high level thinking skills.

2. Working THROUGH the text

During reading (THROUGH)

Things to do DURING the reading, such as

Jump-in reading: have students jump in the middle of a line, not at the end, so there's a flow. Readers can choose when they want to jump in. This is also called Jigsaw reading. Taking turns reading aloud, but with no names called....students just jump into the middle of a sentence that someone is reading aloud. This activity leads to active participation. (Remind them to read loudly.)

Paragraph strip: Having various paragraphs from the story passed out to students to put in the correct sequential order.

Vocabulary collecting: Making a list or poster of new words, that they do not know from the story.

Paraphrase activity: Paraphrasing is difficult, even for good readers...So in this activity, the teacher provides a paraphrased paragraph, and the students have to find which complete paragraph it came from.

Using a T- graph or other graphic organizer to compare or contrast characters or events from the story.

Identifying sources:

Who said what? Using a Venn diagram to compare / contrast events, characters, positives / negatives in the story.

3. Moving BEYOND the text

after the reading....(BEYOND)

Things to do AFTER reading the text, such as:

After reading, you can do a completion exercise to help students exhibit that they comprehend the story read.









EXAMPLE: Use the formula:

Somebody	Wanted	But	So	Then
----------	--------	-----	----	------

Using the "Goldilocks" story, for example:

Somebody	Wanted	But	So	Then
Goldilocks	to eat and sleep	the bears came home	she ran away	the bears were alone

This activity leads to better comprehension skills.

-  **Writing a letter home**, as if you are a character in the story.
-  **Drawing a sequence chart** or picture from the story.
-  **Writing a summary** or making a book jacket of the story or article.
-  **Making a timeline** of events in the story or article.
-  **Dramatization** of the story or of a scene.
-  **Discussing motives** of the author or characters.
-  **Using props or realia** that relate to the story, such as an exhibition after having read a story.
-  **Learning a song** or listening to music that relates to the story.

HOW can we teach students to write better?

To be a good writer, you **MUST** be a good reader!

The four basic skills are closely related and interdependent. By basing lessons on topics, a teacher can make lessons meaningful to the students, and will help with the overall progress of the students' vocabulary development.

We learn more vocabulary from reading than from listening because most people do not speak with a vocabulary as high as a writer may use to write.

We learn writing structures better from seeing them in readings than from grammar lessons.

So, what should you do?

You will have many opportunities to work with your students to develop reading skills.

How should teachers check for understanding as they teach?

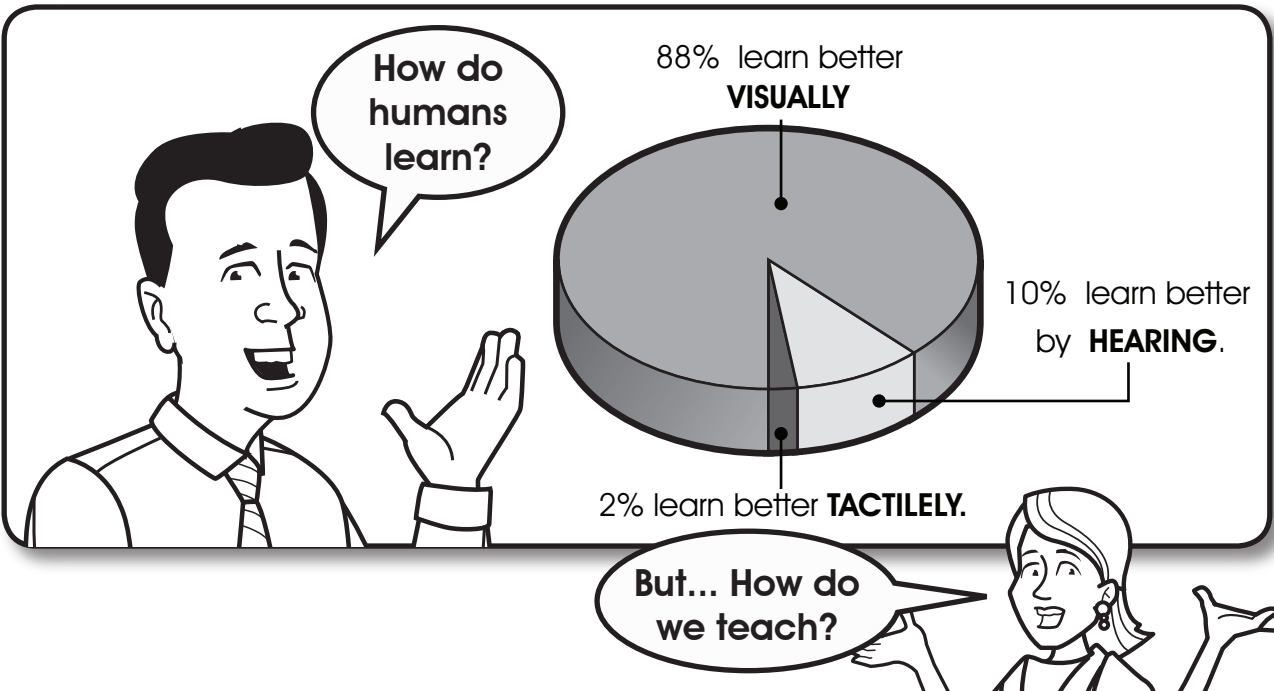
By constant questioning...

As they read the story aloud, teach a lesson, or the students reading a story, poem, or article, teachers should always ask questions as they go along with the lesson.

What kinds of things should teachers do to enhance reading skills?

There are 6 things:

- A** chance to read at their instructional and independent reading levels
- B**etter ways to build vocabulary
- C**omprehension strategies that help them understand what they've read
- D**ecoding strategies that help them get through big words
- E**ngaging texts that they want to read
- F**requent opportunities for word work that leads to better spelling



How do humans learn?

88% learn better **VISUALLY**

10% learn better by **HEARING**.

2% learn better **TACTILELY**.

But... How do we teach?

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

- Show students some sentences that will be easy to act out.
- Read them aloud.
- Students can copy the sentences in their notebooks.

THE NEXT DAY:

- Use sentence strips to act out.
- Vocabulary grows.
- Reading is enhanced.

MORE SAMPLE SENTENCES

I ate too much. I am stuffed!

Do you want to dance?

Ugh! That tastes terrible.

I love that music on the radio.

I have a headache.

II. ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP AND ENHANCE READING

Vary the use of activities. We do not always know students' learning preferences. Let's look at some activities to help us with ideas for vocabulary development, teaching grammar points interestingly, logical thinking activities, some games and kinesthetic work, discussing, predicting, and summarizing.

The initial experience:

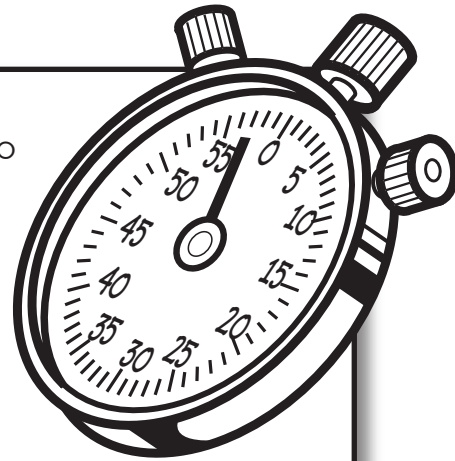
Most students believe they read well. This experience may give them a rude awakening but it will help to pave the way so you can interest students in paying closer attention to what they read.

Give each student a copy of this sheet, and tell them they have 3 minutes to read and complete what it says to do.

Can you follow directions?

This is a timed test. You only have three minutes to do it.

1. Read everything carefully before doing anything.
2. Write your name in the upper right hand corner of this paper.
3. Circle the word "name" in sentence number two.
4. Draw five small squares in the upper left hand corner of this paper.
5. Put an "X" inside each of the 5 squares you just drew.
6. Put a circle around each square.
7. Sign your name beside the title of this paper.
8. Under the title write "YES, YES, YES".
9. Put a circle completely around sentence seven.
10. Put an "X" in the lower left corner of this paper.



11. Draw a triangle around the "X" you just wrote.
12. On the back of this paper, multiply 703 by 66.
13. Draw a rectangle around the word "corner" in sentence four.
14. Loudly call out your first name when you get this far.
15. If you think you have followed directions carefully to this point, call out "I have".
16. On the back of this paper add 8950 and 9805.
17. Put a circle around your answer and a square around the circle.
18. In your normal speaking voice, count aloud from 10 to 0, backwards.
19. Punch 3 holes in the top of this paper with your pen or pencil point.
20. If you are the first person to reach this point, loudly call out: "I am the first person to reach this point. And I am the leader in following directions".
21. Underline all even numbers on the left side of this page.
22. Put a square around each odd number on the left side of this page.
23. Loudly call out, " I AM NEARLY FINISHED. I HAVE FOLLOWED DIRECTIONS."
24. Now that you have finished reading everything carefully, do only sentences one and two.

TEACHERS:

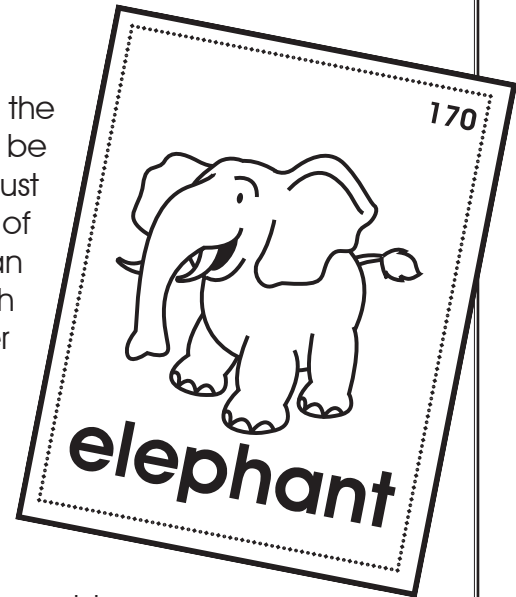
This activity may open the eyes of your students to the necessity of careful reading. Usually, this activity finds that many students do NOT read and follow the instructions correctly. It is a good way to begin a reading class because it makes very clear how important it is to follow directions exactly.

MORE READING ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

Flashcards or drawings can support reading progress. In the APPENDIX there is a list of 100 Picture Words which can be drawn or cut out of magazines or from Internet drawings. Just go to Google "images", and you can ask for pictures of almost anything, and they will quickly appear so you can print them out and cut/paste them to make flashcards, with the picture on one side and the word printed on the other side.

You probably already know lots of uses and games using flashcards, so these can be used in the same way.



Activity 2: Reading a story from a book

This activity can be done with students of any age. Even older children and adults enjoy story-reading when it is done with enthusiasm.

Show the students the book, and tell them a little bit about the topic, so they can anticipate what it's about...Don't think that they won't understand you. Maybe they won't... but they surely will not grow in English if you do not make English essential to know. Even if they only understand a little of what you say, it is an advancement.

For example, if you are introducing the story "Jack and the Beanstalk", you may first show the book, its cover, and a few pictures. Then you may say,

"Today I will **read** you a new **story** called **Jack** and the Beanstalk. It is about a **boy** named Jack who sells his family's **cow**, but instead of money for selling the cow, he accepts some magic **beans**. When Jack's **mother** throws the beans out the **window**, a huge, magic beanstalk grows. Jack climbs it to the top and finds a mean, ugly **giant**..."

The child may only recognize the few words that are highlighted here...but it is a start. After the introduction, and before reading the story, the teacher should show the pictures and say one key word from each picture, for students to repeat.

Examples:

JACK, BOY, MOTHER, COW, BEAN, GIANT, READ, WINDOW, STORY

In this way, basic vocabulary will be introduced, which will aid in the comprehension of the story.

The next step is to read the story, using facial expressions, voice pitch and intonation, and body language to make the story as clear as possible to the children.

Once the story is read, don't put the book aside. Read and re-read stories so that the words become "old friends" to your students.

Activity 3: Sentences to Act Out

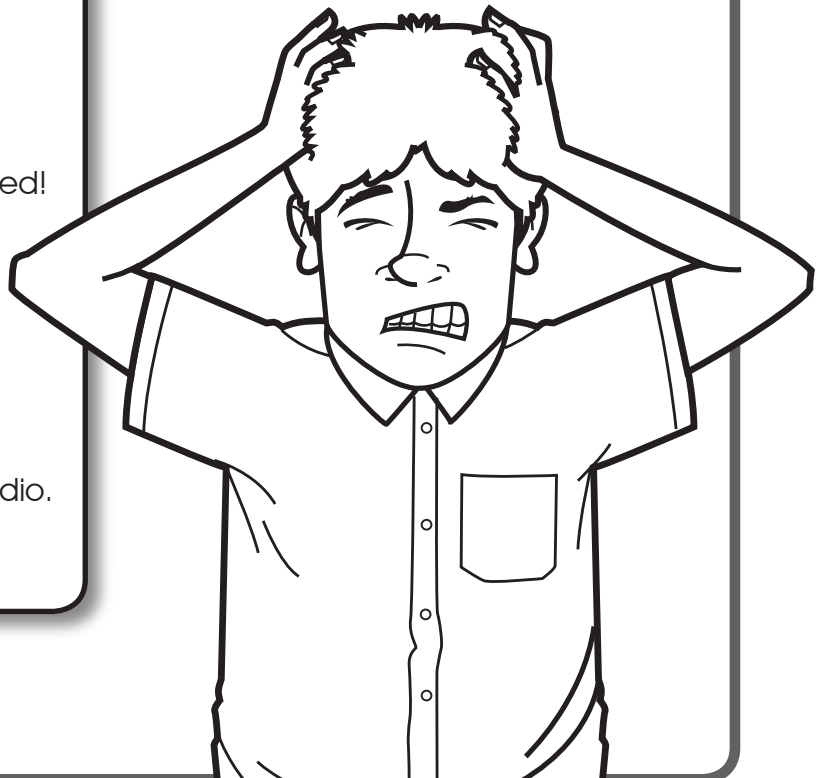
To make reading attractive to students, helping so they can visualize actions with sentences, is one of the ways to support students with reading, so they'll say, "This is fun!"

The class will have read and / or written various sentences that relate to actions, such as, "Juan can jump high!" or "I like ice cream."

Then a student will reach in to draw out a sentence, read it silently to himself/herself, and then act it out, for the class to guess what the sentence says.

Here are some sample sentences. The teacher or students can suggest and make more for the class bag of sentences.

- My foot hurts.
- I feel cold.
- I'm hungry.
- I have a headache.
- I ate too much. I am stuffed!
- Do you want to dance?
- Ugh! That tastes terrible.
- I am tired.
- I love that music on the radio.
- My back is itchy.



ACTIVITY 4

Reading a Class Story

This activity can be conducted once students have a basic oral vocabulary. They can tell you a story, which you will write on large paper so they can make the connection between the oral and written language. Once the story is done, read the entire story to the students.

Then, outside of class, the teacher will have to copy the story, using a computer, if possible, for clear letters. Then the teacher will need to make a copy of the story for each student. The students will then "read" the story to the teacher and to each other.... and make illustrations, so they can bring the "book" home to read to their parents or a younger sibling.

This activity helps with oral language development, listening skills, reading, and eventually, with writing, as the children can write a story once they have developed writing skills. Even adults learning a language can dictate a story.

ACTIVITY 5

Reading Cards

The teacher can prepare a set of 5 x 7 inch index cards with a simple picture that he/she cuts from a magazine and pastes on the card. On the reverse side, in neat printing or (better!) with computer text, the teacher will write a very short story for the children to read to themselves, to encourage reading. The picture will be a guide.

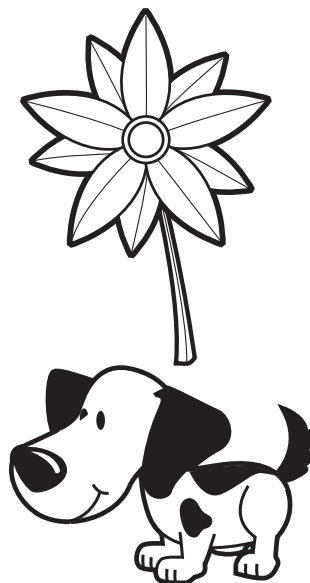
Examples:

PICTURE: a pink flower

STORY: The pink flower is so pretty. It smells good, too. I want to give a flower to my grandmother. I love my grandmother.

PICTURE: a black and white dog

STORY: I have a dog. His name is Harry. Harry is black and white. He loves to play with me. I throw a ball, and Harry runs to get it.

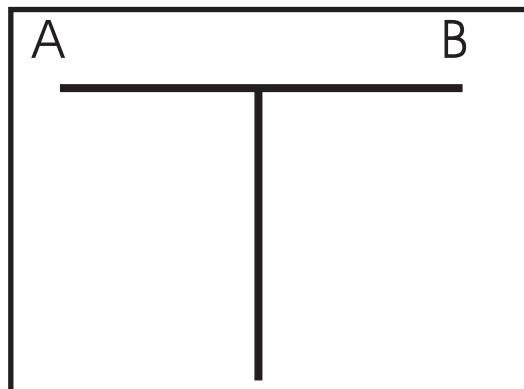


ACTIVITY 6

Using a T-graph

Each students will make a large T in the center of a piece of paper. At the top left, the students will write any letter of the alphabet that they are learning, and on the right top section of the T, they will write another letter.

For example, they may write A and B...as shown below.



Then, the students will look at a book, a story, or a magazine to find words that begin with these two letters. If they know how to write, they will copy the words under the side of the T where the letter is. If they do not yet write, they can cut out the appropriate words, and paste them in the correct column.

This same T-graph could be used to compare stories, characters, or events. The teacher can use creative ideas for which two things will be compared or contrasted, and have students write them in the top section of the T.

ACTIVITY 7

Reading Conversation

This activity practices reading, as well as listening and speaking skills. The activity takes about 10 minutes...and can be done about once a week to help build reading vocabulary as well as oral fluency in conversation situations.

The teacher will prepare a series of 3 x 5 inch index cards with sentences or phrases that can be spoken between two people, written, one on each side of the card.

The conversation starter, side 1, needs to be designated. The easiest way is by making a circle with a marker or highlighter. The circle should be in the same place on all cards, such as the upper left, so students can quickly assess who will be speaking first.

The teacher should make about 100 of these cards, which can be used all year. Once they are made, the teacher can pass out 3 cards to each pair of students.

Student 1 begins with reading aloud the side of the card he/she has in view, holding up the card so that the partner can see what is written on side 2, the response side.

Once they have completed the 3 cards, they switch positions, with the student who had begun the conversation, now becoming the one who responds to his/her partner's question.

With 100 cards made, if the teacher does this activity for 10 minutes once a week, there will be enough cards for the whole school year, just by passing out the cards at random, so that students don't get the same cards. If they do, they can exchange cards with another pair of students.

Once the students get good at this activity, they can then make up their own answers to the questions, so that only Side 1 (the one with the color on the upper left corner) will be used.

Here are 25 samples for you so you can begin making your cards. From your books and school activities, you will be able to prepare more so there will be enough for a full class activity, with several cards for each pair of students.

SAMPLE CARD CONVERSATIONS:

Side 1. Hi! My name's Sara. What's yours?

Side 2. My name's Samantha.

Side 1. How are you today?

Side 2. I'm fine, thanks.

Side 1. Where do you live?

Side 3. On Calle Nogal...Number 252.

Side 1. In what neighborhood is Calle Nogal?

Side 2. It's in Colonia Jardín.

Side 1. How old are you?

Side 2. I'm 12.

Side 1. What does your father do?

Side 2. He is a truck driver.

Side 1. Do you have a pet?

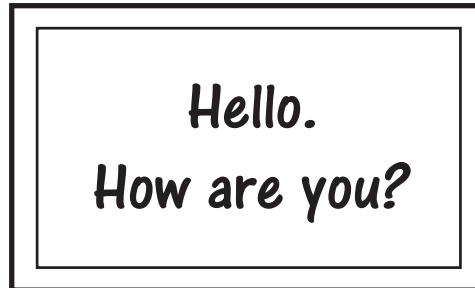
Side 2. Yes, a cat. Her name is Kitty.

Side 1. Do you have any brothers or sisters?

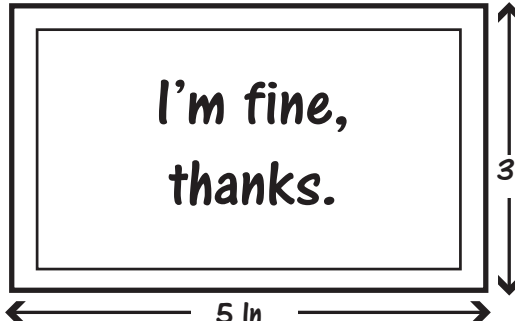
Side 2. Yes, I have one sister and two brothers.

Example:

Side 1



Side 2



Side 1. What are your two brothers' names?

Side 2. Fred...and my other brother is Jim.

Side 1. What's your sister's name?

Side 2. Mary Elizabeth

Side 1. Are you hungry?

Side 2. Yes, I'm starving.

Side 1. What can we eat for a snack?

Side 2. Let's make a ham and cheese sandwich.

Side 1. What kind of music do you like?

Side 2. Mostly, I like guitar music and modern music.

Side 1. Do you dance?

Side 2. Not too well...but I like to dance.

Side 1. What's your English teacher's name?

Side 2. Her name is Teacher Sandra.

Side 1. Do you like your English teacher?

Side 2. Yes, she is fun; and we play lots of games.

Side 1. What do you do after school?

Side 2. I help my mother cook and clean.

Side 1. What do you like to do at home?

Side 2. I love to watch TV.

Side 1. What do you do on Saturdays?

Side 2. I help my father clean the garden.

Side 1. Where do you like to visit during vacations?

Side 2. I love to go to my grandparents' ranch in the mountains.

Side 1. What do you do at the ranch?

Side 2. I ride the horse, and milk the cow, and collect the eggs from the chickens.

Side 1. What can you cook?

Side 2. Quesadillas, fried eggs, and bacon.

Side 1. What kind of movies do you like?

Side 2. I love adventure and action movies!

Side 1. What sports do you like to play?

Side 2. I like football, and I also like baseball and basketball.

Side 1. What is your best wish?

Side 2. That my parents will always have enough money for a good life.

(Now teachers you can make more cards)

ACTIVITY 8

Jigsaw Reading

For oral reading practice, listening skills, and to encourage active participation, jigsaw reading is fun!

Basically, this activity is putting together a piece of reading as if it were a Jigsaw puzzle, in parts that will be joined together.

The section, story, or paragraphs to be read should be something with which the students are familiar... at least the first few times you do this activity. Later, you can introduce new readings using this effect.

Jigsaw reading should not be done if you are teaching a new topic or if the story has many new vocabulary words that will need to be taught. It is a technique to build active, fluent, oral reading skills.

The idea is that the students see a story or article, and are given a few minutes just to skim-read it. Then, the teacher starts by beginning to read aloud the first sentence. Before the teacher even finishes the first sentence, a student, (ANY student), jumps in, and continues reading until another student jumps in to continue, and so on.

Students should NOT wait until the end of a sentence. The idea is that the students "jump in" and continue the oral reading in a smooth, seamless, continuous manner...so there is a flow to the words...not a choppy, rigid type of reading. The students will put together the words of the reading as if they were putting together a Jigsaw puzzle.

With this activity, anyone who wants to read just jumps in to read...The teacher does not call out names. The students, themselves, decide when they want to read.

Some timid or shy students may not actively participate as they may be afraid to assertively interrupt someone. If this is the case, another time the teacher wants to do this activity, he/she should divide the class into 4 sections... and only the section designated by the

Building Reading Skills

teacher will be the one to do the Jigsaw activity for that specific paragraph or story. If 4 separate paragraphs are read, all students get an opportunity to read aloud, and the shy students are within a smaller group, so they may feel more comfortable with the activity.

The United Nations was founded on October 24, 1945. It was begun as an international peacekeeping organization. Its first meetings were in San Francisco and delegates came there from all over the world at the end of World War II to begin this exciting new project. Its headquarters are now in New York City, and almost every nation in the world sends its representatives there to meet and discuss world developments.

The text

The jigsaw



ACTIVITY 9

Strategies for Reading to Learn : Think, Pair, Share

Description

Think, pair, share (TPS) is a simple technique with great benefits.

TPS results in increased student participation and improved retention of information. Using the procedure, students learn from one another and get to try out their ideas in a non-threatening context before venturing to make their ideas more public. Learner confidence improves and all students are given a way to participate in class, rather than the few who usually volunteer.

The benefits for the teacher include increased time on task in the classroom and greater quality of students' contributions to class discussions. Students and teachers alike gain much clearer understandings of the expectation for attention and participation in classroom discussions.

There are four steps to think, pair, share, with a time limit on each step signaled by the teacher. (An electronic kitchen timer works well for this.)

Procedure

Step One - Teacher poses a question.

The process of think, pair, share begins when the teacher poses a thought-provoking question for the entire class. This may be a straightforward question or a problem the teacher wants to pose to the class for solution.

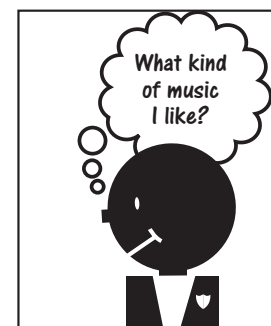
For example, "What would have been the likely outcome if the United States had maintained its isolationist position and not entered the European theater of World War II?" or "What is symbolized by the rose in the story of Snow White?"

Low level, single right answer questions are to be avoided in this model. Questions must pose problems or dilemmas that students will be willing and able to think about.

Step Two - Students think individually.

At a signal from the teacher, students are given a limited amount of time to think of their own answer to the problematic question. The time should be decided by the teacher on the basis of knowledge of the students, the nature of the question, and the demands of the schedule.

It may be helpful, though it is not required, to have students write out their individual responses and solutions. Students should understand that while there may be no one right answer, it is important that everyone come up with some reasonable answer to



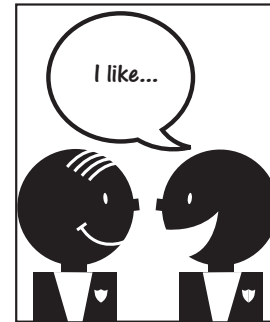
the question. This step of the procedure automatically builds “wait time” into the classroom conversation.

Step Three - Each student discusses his or her answer with a fellow student.

The end of the think step signals to the students the time to begin working with one other student to reach consensus on an answer to the question. Each student now has a chance to try out possibilities.

Together, each pair of students can reformulate a common answer based on their collective insights to possible solutions to the problem. At times, the process can go one step farther by asking pairs of students to regroup into foursomes to further refine their thoughts before sharing with the group at large.

These small group settings are less threatening to individual students than venturing forward before the whole group with an untried answer. The pair step in the model also promotes much more conversation among students about the issues entailed by the question.



Step Four - Students share their answers with the whole class.

In this final step, individuals can present solutions individually or cooperatively to the class as a whole group. Where pairs of students have constructed displays of their answers, as in a chart or diagram, each member of the pair can take credit for the product of their thinking.

The final step of think, pair, share has several benefits to all students. They see the same concepts expressed in several different ways as different individuals find unique expressions for answers to the question.

Moreover, the concepts embedded in the answers are in the language of the learners rather than the language of textbook or teacher. And where students can draw or otherwise picture their thoughts, different learning modalities and preferences can come into play in the attempt to understand the ideas behind the answers. It may be worth repeating one caveat in closing: The success and quality of the think, pair, share activity will depend on the quality of the question posed in step one. If the question promotes genuine thought for students, genuine insights are sure to emerge in successive steps.



References:

1. The above description was adapted from the description in: Gunter, M. A., Estes, T. H., & Schwab, J. H. 1999. *Instruction: A Models Approach*, 3rd edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, pp. 279-280.
2. The model explained in this activity was first proposed by Frank Lyman of the University of Maryland.
3. For an interesting variation on the use of the strategy, have a look at a website for "Discussion Webs" in Vaca & Vaca, pages 243-247.

ACTIVITY 10

Newsweek or Time Magazine Lesson

Teacher says, "Today you and your team / group are going to read an article in Newsweek or Time magazine."

Instructions for the activity:

First, take a few minutes to look through this week's edition of the magazine. Then, with your group, decide which article you are going to read. You can choose any feature article.

Preview the article first to be certain that it is an article you're interested in reading. Look at the pictures, read the captions and subject headings, and skim the first few paragraphs.






Next, read the article. Do NOT use a dictionary. As you read, do two things:

- (1) Circle any keywords you do not know.
- (2) Take notes in the margins. If you can't understand something, write a question about it.

Once you have finished reading, get together with your group again.

Ask your group for help with the questions you wrote in the margins. Ask your group for help with vocabulary.

Your group leader will take notes as you discuss the following:

-  What is the main idea of the article?
-  What are some of the important supporting details?
-  Identify the who, what, when, where, and how of the article.
-  Did anything about the article surprise you?
-  What is your opinion on this topic?

Finally, your group should elect a "spokesperson." This person is going to provide a brief oral summary of the article to the rest of the class. During this informal presentation, the other groups are expected to ask questions and generate class discussion on the topic.



There is a "Peer Self Evaluation Form" that follows these instructions in the next section, so that the class can give some input on the speaker's performance. It can also be used for self-evaluation. Ideally, all students should have spoken in front of the class, on several opportunities, before you use the evaluation form, so that no one gets too nervous.

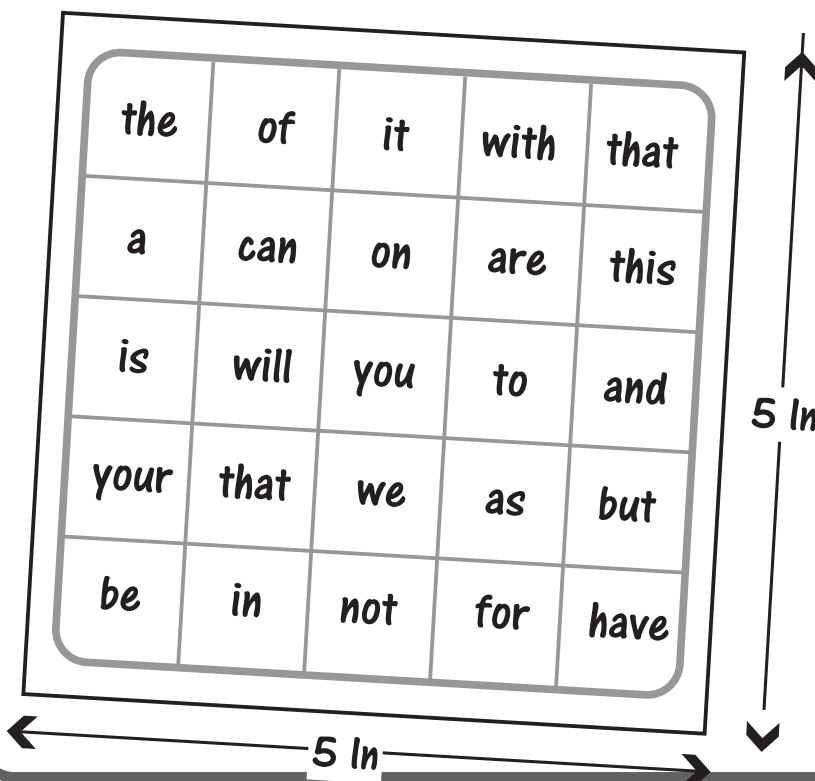
The idea is to do your best, no matter how "good" or "needing improvement" you are, so that a gradual improvement occurs in your speaking presentation ability during the entire school year.

ACTIVITY 11

BINGO is an excellent way to practice vocabulary, spelling words, phonics, prefixes, and other written material.

Twenty-five words on a card (5 x 5) can be used. You will need one card for each player. Each card can have the SAME words, but arranged differently.

To win: a line or a column, or a diagonal line can win. Then the teacher can have all the students complete all the items on the card so all the class will have practice. The words used can be drawn from a bag to assure fairness. BINGO IS A GREAT WAY TO PRACTICE THE INSTANT SIGHT WORDS. They are listed for you in the APPENDIX.



Final comments to the readers from the author

If you don't have time to do anything suggested in this book, if you don't give any tests, don't teach any phonics or instant words, don't ask any comprehension questions, don't require written stories, and don't have time for students to read aloud..... the least you can do is read to your students every day!

III. READING ASSESSMENTS

Teacher-made tests

Effective

Open notes-- 3 reasons to use them:

1. Class meets infrequently
2. Too much to remember
3. Check study habits and note-taking skills

basic questions
short answers
reasoning
explanations
filling in blanks
illustrating
projects with guidelines
portfolios
journals
performance
verbal presentations
Power Point presentations

These are not effective...why?

Multiple choice
True-false
Matching

Why Do We Give Tests?

There should be only TWO reasons to give tests:

1. To evaluate a child's knowledge about the material
2. To check to see how well we taught

We need to teach students how to take tests

Open notes, short essays, multiple-matching, true-false
Reading, writing, science, social studies
Reading 45 minutes a day; writing 45 minutes a day

CONTENT MECHANICS IDEAS

(Grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, vocabulary level, creativity, originality, smoothness, and flow of the story)

A. Oral Presentations Assessment (for something they read)

Use this assessment with peers after the students have read something and you want them to report orally on the reading.

Oral Presentations: Peer or Self Evaluation

Person Presenting: _____

Please rate each of the following criteria on a scale of 1 to 5
(needs improvement) 1 2 3 4 5 (very good)

1. The presenter spoke clearly.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The presenter spoke at a good volume.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The presenter spoke at a good pace.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The presenter faced the audience.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The presenter appeared relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The presenter stood up straight.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The presenter used effective hand gestures.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The presenter made eye contact with me.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The introduction caught my attention.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The presenter provided some good examples.	1	2	3	4	5
11. The conclusion wrapped up the speech.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I found this topic interesting.	1	2	3	4	5

B. Instant Words Test

This test is not standardized so there are no grade level results. It can be used to determine where to start working with students on the first word list that is in the Appendix. . Here are 20 words which the students can read from this list. The student will read aloud from one list and the examiner will have an identical list to mark. The student reads the words aloud. Stop the student after he / she misses any five words. Do not help the student. If the student makes an error or hesitates for five seconds say, "Try the next word."

Scoring

() position number of the last correct word before the 5th word missed, X 15.

Example:

If the last correct word was 10, then $10 \times 15 = 150$. So start the student with word number 151.

Test words for the First 300 Instant Words

1. are
2. but
3. which
4. so
5. see
6. now
7. only
8. just
9. too
10. small
11. why
12. again
13. study
14. last
15. story
16. beginning
17. feet
18. book
19. almost
20. family

Test words for the Second 300 Instant Words

21. room
22. become
23. whole
24. toward
25. map
26. king
27. certain
28. stars
29. nothing
30. stood
31. bring
32. check
33. heavy
34. direction
35. picked
36. window
37. wide
38. sign
39. root
40. describe

C. The Slossen Reading Test

This test is an oral reading test of words from pre-school level through 12th grade. Results are given by grade level so that teachers will know the approximate grade level of students. This test does not check comprehension, only oral reading ability of isolated words, but it does provide a guide so that teachers will have a basic idea of students' oral reading levels.

This test needs to be given individually to each student, so for class groups, this test would take some time.

The Slossen Reading Test can be purchased on-line through Amazon.com or other book supply company.

D. Reading Comprehension Test (Dr. Fry)

These are two simple, easy-to-score tests that can give teachers a quick view of students' overall reading comprehension ability, based on silent reading exercises. The tests can be given in a group, so they are easy to administer. It is very important that you do not tell the children which ones they got right or wrong, nor should you ever review the test items with the children, because if you do, the tests will not be valid to use with other students in the future.

These tests are NOT for a grade; they are only used to give teachers an approximate idea of the reading levels of their students.

Test A is intended for 3rd - 4th grade students who have had English classes since Kindergarten. A score of 8 correct is average reading ability for 9- year olds. Naturally, if a child is new to English, he/she would not be expected to score 8. Teacher judgment would have to be made, depending on the amount of English a student has had.

Test B is intended for 13 year olds, in 7th or 8th grade. A total score of 7 would be average for 13-year-olds in mid 7th grade.

Given these guidelines, a teacher can get a rough idea of the level of English of his/her students in comparison with national (USA) norms.

In each test, the first 5 questions are literal type questions, and the second 5 questions are inferential type questions.

SCORING: The correct answers follow each test.

Silent Reading Comprehension *Test A*

Read the items and stories below. Then mark an **X** in the space next to the best answer to the question. You may look back at the story.

1. Read the stories and do what they tell you to do.

_____ a. If you have ever visited the moon, mark an X on the line.

_____ b. If you have never visited the moon, mark an X on the line.

2. You want to call Mr. Jones on the telephone. You look in the telephone book for his number. You would find it between which names?

_____ a. Jackson and Jacobs

_____ b. Jacobs and James

_____ c. James and Johnson

_____ d. Johnson and Judson

_____ e. Judson and Justus

_____ f. I don't know.

3. Read the story and complete the sentence that follows it.

The wind pushed the boat further and further out to sea. It started to rain, and the fog grew thick. The boy and his father were lost at sea.

The weather was...

_____ a. calm.

_____ b. dry.

_____ c. sunny.

_____ d. wet.

_____ e. cold.

_____ f. I don't know.

Building Reading Skills

4. Read the story and answer the question which follows it.

The wind pushed the boat further and further out to sea. It started to rain, and the fog grew thick. The boy and his father were lost at sea.

What happened first in the story?

_____ a. It became foggy.

_____ b. It started to rain.

_____ c. The boat turned over.

_____ d. The boat went out to sea.

_____ e. It was sunny.

_____ f. I don't know.

5. Read the story and then answer the question that follows it.

A sports car differs from an ordinary passenger car in that its size and number of accessories are limited. The sports car also differs from the ordinary passenger car in performance. It can attain higher speeds because it is built smaller and lower. For these reasons it can also turn corners faster and more smoothly than a passenger car. Also a sports car generally gets better gas mileage than an ordinary passenger car.

What does the writer tell you about sports cars?

_____ a. Prices

_____ b. Colors and styles

_____ c. Places to buy them.

_____ d. Number of people they hold.

_____ e. How sports cars differ
from passenger cars

_____ f. I don't know.

6. This is like a game to see if you can tell what the nonsense word in the paragraph stands for. The nonsense word is just a silly word for something that you know very well. Read the paragraph and see if you can tell what the underlined nonsense word stands for.

Most people have two cags. You use your cags to hold things when you eat or brush your teeth. Some people write with their left cag, and some people write with their right cag.

Cags are probably...

- _____ a. eyes. _____ b. feet. _____ c. hands.
_____ d. pencils. _____ e. rings. _____ f. I don't know.

7. Read the story and answer the question that follows.

The wind pushed the boat further and further out to sea. It started to rain, and the fog grew thick. The boy and his father were lost at sea.

At least how many people were in the boat?

- _____ a. one _____ b. two _____ c. three
_____ d. four _____ e. five _____ f. I don't know.

8. Read the story and answer the question that follows it.

Christmas was only a few days away. The wind was strong and cold. The sidewalks were covered with snow. The downtown streets were crowded with people. Their faces were hidden by many packages as they went in one store after another. They all tried to move faster as they looked at the clock.

When did the story probably happen?

- _____ a. November 28th _____ b. December 1st
_____ c. December 21st _____ d. December 25th
_____ e. December 28th _____ f. I don't know.

9. Read the story about a fish and answer the question that follows it.

Once there was a fish named Big Eyes who was tired of swimming. He wanted to get out of the water and walk like other animals do, so one day, without telling anyone, he just jumped out of the water, put on his shoes, and took a long walk around the park.

What do you think the person who wrote this story was trying to do?

- _____ a. Tell you what fish are like.
- _____ b. Tell you that fish wear shoes.
- _____ c. Tell you a funny story about a fish.
- _____ d. Tell you that fish don't like to swim.
- _____ e. Tell you that Big Eyes is a great name.
- _____ f. I don't know.

10. If you listen carefully to what a person says, you can usually tell a lot about him/her. Sometimes you can even tell how he/she feels.

Read the passage and complete the sentence that follows it.

"I'll be glad when this TV show is over. I like stories about spies, not this one about cowboys and Indians. I get to pick the next show."

The person who said this

- _____ a. likes spy stories.
- _____ b. doesn't like TV at all.
- _____ c. doesn't care what TV show is on.
- _____ d. likes stories about cowboys and Indians.
- _____ e. I don't know.

TEST A SCORING GUIDE

Item	Answer	Question Type	% of success for 13-year-olds
1	b	Vocabulary	76%
2	c	Reference	74%
3	a	Facts	68%
4	d	Organization	90%
5	c	Main Idea	88%
6	b	Inferences	86%
7	e	Inferences	72%
8	e	Inferences	55%
9	b	Critical Reading	56%
10	b	Critical Reading	50%

Silent Reading Comprehension Test B

Read the items and stories below. Then mark an **X** in the space next to the best answer to the question. You may look back at the story.

1. Read the sentence and mark the best answer with an X. You are looking for the group of words which tells what the sentence means.

"I certainly won't miss that movie."

- a. I like that movie.
- b. I'm going to see that movie.
- c. I'm not going to see that movie.
- d. I hope I'll see that movie, but I'm not sure that I can.
- e. I didn't see that movie even though it was here all fall.
- f. I don't know.

2. Read the directions from a can of insecticide spray and the question which follows them. Mark the correct answer with an X on the line in front of the answer.

A B C Bug Spray

Kills: spiders, roaches, ants, and most other crawling insects.

Directions: Spray surfaces over which insects may crawl: doorways, window ledges, cracks, etc. Hold can approximately 10 inches from surface. Do not use near uncovered food or small children.

Toxic.

Which of the following probably will not be killed by the spray?

- a. ants
- b. caterpillars
- c. flies
- d. roaches
- e. spiders
- f. I don't know.

3. What is the best way to find out if there is something about Eskimos in a book?

- _____ a. Look in the index. _____ b. Look in the glossary.
_____ c. Look at the title page. _____ d. Look through all the pages.
_____ e. Skim through the introduction. _____ f. I don't know.

4. Read the passage and answer the question which follows it.

It should come as no surprise to learn that 9 out of 10 Americans are in debt. In fact, 5 out of 10 are heavily in debt. How heavily is borne out by government statistics that show that income has increased 50% while debts have increased by 110%!

Putting statistics into their proper perspective: paying off the car, the home, the groceries, the doctors, and even the children's education is now a way of life for over one hundred million Americans. Very few of us could get by if we had to pay cash when we buy. Keeping up with the Joneses is made easier for us by easy payment plans, easy-to-acquire charge cards, and easy-to-borrow bank loans.

According to the article, how many Americans are in debt?

- _____ a. 50% _____ b. 2 out of 3 _____ c. 4 out of 5
_____ d. 9 out of 10 _____ e. I don't know.

5. Read the two stories and answer the question which follows them.

Story 1

A handsome prince was riding his horse in the woods. He saw a dragon chasing a beautiful princess. The prince killed the dragon. The prince and the princess were then married.

Story 2

Mary was taking a boat ride on a lake. The boat tipped over. Mary was about to drown when a young man jumped in the lake and saved her.

If Story 2 ends like Story 1, what would happen next in Story 2?

- a. A prince would kill a dragon.
- b. The young man would become a prince.
- c. Mary and the young man would get married.
- d. The king would give the young man some money.
- e. I don't know.

6. Read the story and answer the question that follows it.

Sammy got to school ten minutes after the school bell had rung. He was breathing hard and had a black eye. His face was dirty and scratched. One leg of his pants was torn. Tommy was late to school, too. However, he was only five minutes late. Like Sammy, he was breathing hard, but he was happy and smiling.

Sammy and Tommy had been fighting.

Who probably won the fight?

- a. Sammy
- b. Tommy
- c. Cannot tell from the story.
- d. I don't know.

7. Read the passage and answer the question which follows.

One spring, Farmer Brown had an unusually good field of wheat. Whenever he saw any birds in his field, he got his gun and shot at them to scare them far away from his field. In the middle of the summer he found that the insects had multiplied very fast. What Farmer Brown did not understand was this: A bird is not simply an animal that eats food the farmer wants for himself. Instead, it is one of many links in the complex surroundings, or environment, in which we live.

How much grain a farmer can raise on an acre of ground depends on many factors. All of these factors can be divided into two big groups. Such things as the richness of the soil, the amount of rainfall, the amount of sunlight, and the temperature belong together in one of the groups. This group may be called living factors. The living factors in any plant's environment also include animals and other plants. Wheat, for example, may be endangered by wheat rust, a tiny plant that feeds on wheat; or it may be eaten by plant-eating animals such as birds and grasshoppers.

It is easy to see that the relations of plants and animals to their environment are very complex, and that any change in the environment is likely to bring about a whole series of changes.

What important idea about nature does the writer want us to understand?

- a. Farmer Brown was worried about heavy rainfall.
- b. Nobody needs to have such destructive birds around.
- c. Farmer Brown didn't want the temperature to change.
- d. All insects need wheat, not just wheat rust and grasshoppers.
- e. All living things are dependent on other living things.
- f. I don't know.

8. Read the passage and complete the sentence that follows it.

Arthur says that the polar cap is melting at the rate of 3% a year. Bert says that this isn't true because the polar ice cap is really melting at 7% per year.

- a. Arthur is wrong.
- b. Bert is wrong.
- c. They are both wrong.
- d. They both might be right.
- e. They can't both be right.
- f. I don't know.

Building Reading Skills

9. Read the passage, and answer the question that follows it.

Johnny told Billy that he could make it rain anytime he wanted to just by stepping on a spider. Billy said he couldn't, that it was not possible. Johnny stepped on a spider. That night it rained. The next day, Johnny told Billy, "That proves I can make it rain anytime I want to."

Was Johnny right?

_____ a. Yes.

_____ b. No.

_____ c. Can't tell from the passage.

_____ d. I don't know.

10. Read the poem and answer the question that follows it.

My body a rounded stone
With a pattern of smooth seams,
My head a short snake,
Retractive, protective.
My legs come out of their sleeves
Or shrink within,
And so does my chin.
My eyelids are quick clamps,
My back is my roof.
I am always at home.
I travel where my house walks.
It is a smooth stone.
It floats within the lake,
Or rests in the dust.
My flesh lives tenderly
Inside its home.

Which word best describes the speaker of the poem?

_____ a. confused

_____ b. contented

_____ c. excited

_____ d. restless

_____ e. unhappy

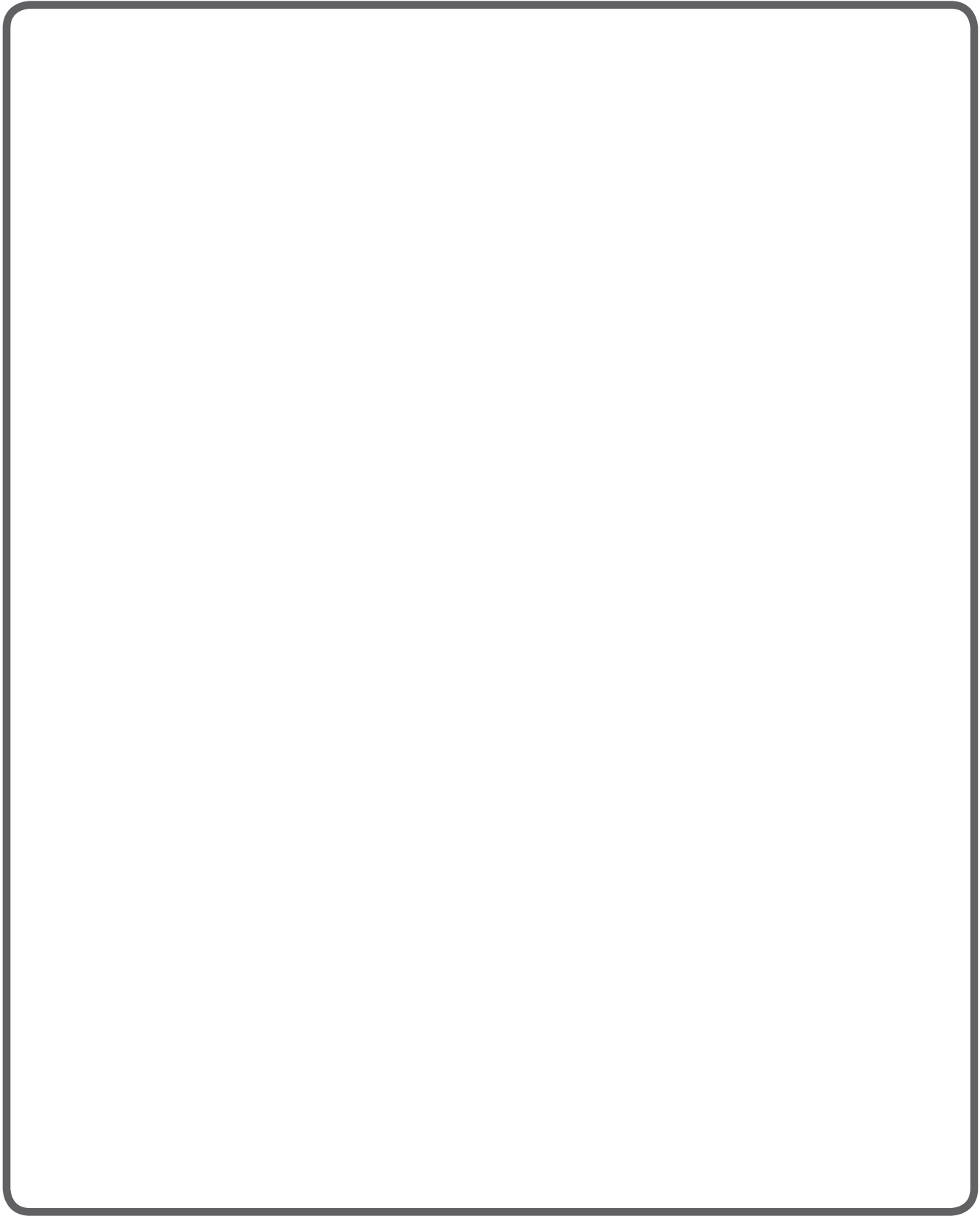
_____ f. I don't know.

Bonus Question: In the poem, who is the speaker? A _____

TEST B SCORING GUIDE

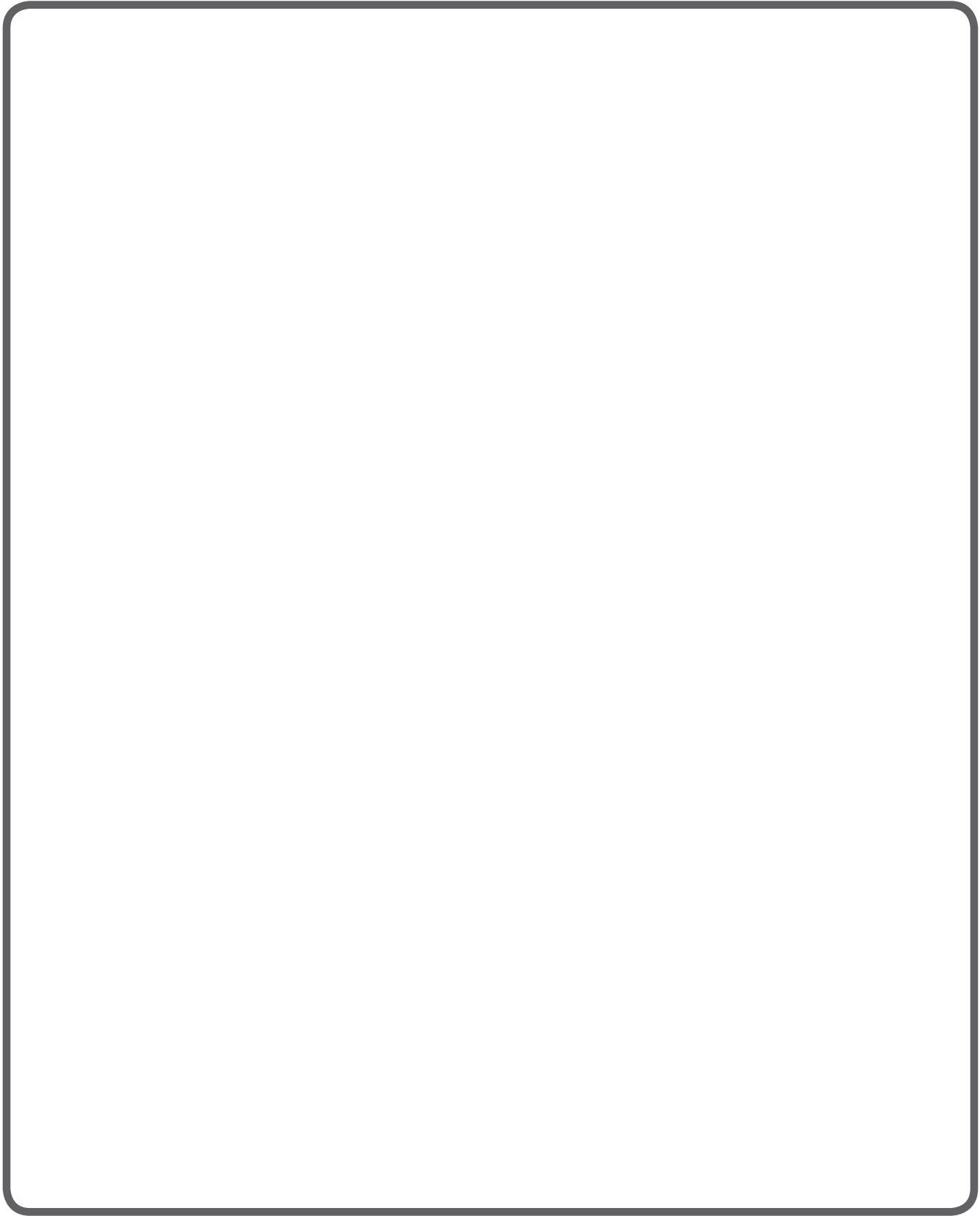
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5	c	Main Idea	88%
6	b	Inferences	86%
7	e	Inferences	72%
8	e	Inferences	55%
9	b	Critical Reading	56%
10	b	Critical Reading	50%

Building Reading Skills



Building Writing Skills

Building Writing Skills

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for writing. It occupies the central portion of the page.

I. WRITING: BACKGROUND AND BASIC THEORY

At the beginning of this volume, let's look at the basic skills that will be expected by students as they begin to learn how to write English assignments.

Kindergarten:

Identification of letters; saying the alphabet; writing their names; listening to stories and giving an oral summary or a drawing about the story; developing vocabulary

1st and 2nd:

The sentence: begin with capital letter; end with correct punctuation: . ? !

3rd and 4th:

The paragraph: main idea; indent for each new paragraph; supporting details; **adjectives, adverbs as descriptors**

5th and 6th:

3 – 5 paragraphs in a composition; using an outline

7th, 8th, 9th:

5 paragraph essay/composition; An outline prepared with:

- an introduction
- the information
- a conclusion
- using references and a bibliography

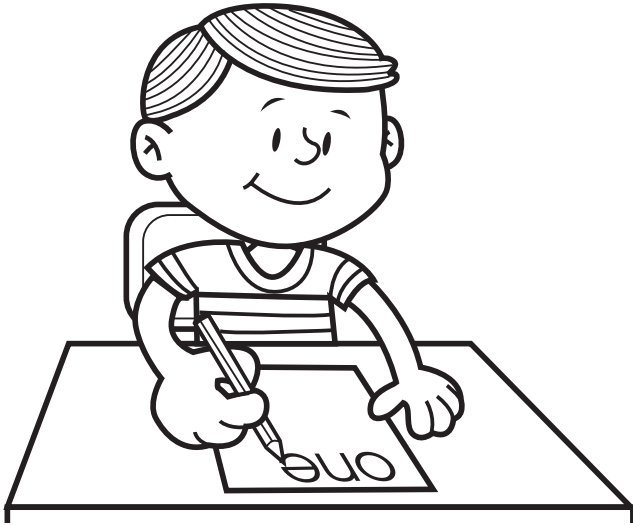
Now, let's look at writing skills that we will explore in this volume.

Learning writing skills can be a life-long, arduous, but rewarding, practice.

There are some basics (A - H) that you need to know in order to teach writing skills to your students:

A. Writing mechanics are the first things we learn about writing.

Writing mechanics can be learned and mastered in one school year, once students can write the alphabet from memory, if they are taught correctly, practiced daily, and valued as a way to communicate. By the end of 3rd grade of primary, every student should be able to exhibit his/her knowledge of the following writing skills.



Mechanics include the formation of individual letters (the alphabet), knowing the way that letters fit together to form words, how words form phrases and sentences, and how sentences are formed into paragraphs.

Writing mechanics also include the use of capital letters to begin a sentence and for proper nouns, correct spelling, indentation of paragraphs, punctuation, and the correct use of grammatical structures, when they are indicated.

B. Content of what is written is the part of writing that can take a lifetime to master.

Well-known authors say that they are constantly upgrading their writing, improving , expanding their skills and their use of the flow of words into ideas.

Except for copying, all writing is creative : something that comes from the brain of a writer. When the words come from the brain, the heart, and the soul of the writer, then we can say that the writer is being "creative".

When teachers begin to teach creative writing skills, there is an essential "law":

**NO ONE CAN WRITE
SOMETHING THAT IS
NOT IN HIS/HER
HEAD!**

That means if you can't think it, you can't say it, and if you can't say it, there is no way you can write it.

In other words, creative writing skills require oral fluency.

Until students acquire a fluency with speaking, they will not be able to write creatively, from their brains.



In the meanwhile, as students acquire and build oral language fluency, they can do two things to build a strong base for writing:

1. Master the mechanics of writing, with daily practice, led and guided by the teacher. This does NOT mean memorization of writing rules, definitions, or memorization of verb tenses and parts of speech! It means a daily lesson, using the mechanics, and copying complete phrases or sentences or structures being emphasized in the lesson.
2. Read...lots and lots of daily reading, both by the teacher to the students, (storytelling or book reading aloud), and silent reading for comprehension by the students from books at their reading levels.

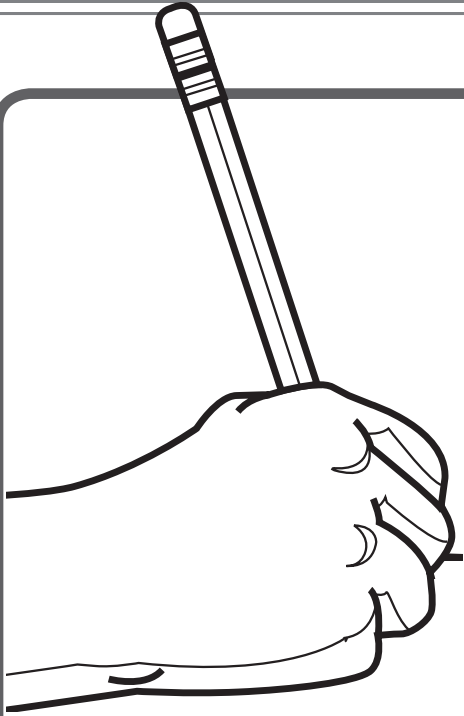
WHY?

READING supports and enhances vocabulary expansion, and reading shows students how words flow together to make a story. If you want to write well, creatively, you have to read well.

This book will look at writing from the perspective of the rule written and explained above...Remember:

**NO ONE CAN
WRITE
SOMETHING
THAT IS
NOT IN HIS/HER
HEAD!**





C. The teacher's role is to familiarize students with the mechanics of writing.

Practice them with a short, daily writing exercise, gradually building and solidifying the skills, so they become automatically implemented, and to support daily reading to and by the students, pointing out interesting words, phrases, allusions, symbolic writing, metaphors, analogies, use of adjectives and adverbs to "paint a picture" with words, and the use of high level vocabulary, in order to teach students how to elaborate creatively.

There are two major goals of this book:

(1) to show how mechanics and reading should be supported in class by the teacher to help build strong writing ability, and

(2) to exhibit ways teachers can begin to develop creative writing skills with students by the use of structured writing work, in class, and the expansion to independently-written writing activities, in class.

NOTE: "in-class" is used specifically because teachers need to be there to help and support the development of students' writing skills, and to observe / correct when problems might arise. Homework serves no purpose in the creative writing process until writers arrive at proficiency level, C1, and are well-prepared to write independently.

D. Writing versus Speaking is a very important concept to know.

Some teachers believe that writing is easy for students. The physical act of writing the alphabet or copying words is not what we are talking about here. Writing from the brain, creating words on paper, depends on two things, as previously explained:

1 *the speaking fluency ability and vocabulary level of the students, and*

2 *how much a student reads, so as to see how the flow of words projects images.*

Because of these two aspects, writing is more difficult than speaking a language. Other issues to consider are:



Speaking and listening comprehension depend greatly on body language, intonations, pitch, eye contact, and positioning. Writing does not, so the writer must be clear and precise, writing exactly what he/she wants readers to know.



Most of what is written is not written in the present time. The past and/or future are used much more than present time, yet students new to a language learn the present tense first. This is where much reading and support activities in writing mechanics can be of help.



The physical act of writing takes time, especially with young children who are still developing fine motor control skills, so they see writing as very tedious. Teachers must remember that writing at this stage should be short and meaningful because children's hands actually hurt (ache) from too much writing, and then they learn to dislike writing.



Teachers must keep in mind that writing is a mental ability, that comes from the brain, not a physical one of writing over and over.



As soon as children learn to use a computer, they should be encouraged to write creatively using a computer because they can write faster, helping to keep the flow of words in their heads, making it easier to transfer them on paper. When young children write with a pencil or pen, the act of writing can be so tedious, that they may forget what they want to say on paper because they are busy physically forming the letters, words, and phrases too slowly for their quick, active brain.



Content should be emphasized more than mechanics. Once the content is smooth, interesting, and well-written, the students can go back to correct the mechanics. The flow of ideas is most important. If you have to choose between fluency and accuracy, always choose fluency first.

E. There are many benefits to writing.

What are they?

It may seem obvious, but let's look at the list so we can make sure that students know these uses of writing: **We write to...**



send messages



express feelings and ideas



answer letters



keep records



communicate



provide research results

- When you write something, you have a chance to think, correct, and re-write it to portray the exact idea you want to share. If you speak, once the words are out of your mouth, they are fixed in the receiver's ears.
- When you write, it is something you can go back and look at years later. This is impossible with spoken words, unless you tape record everything you say.
- Writing activities allow for the conscious development of a language.
- Writing helps to consolidate learning in other skill areas and subjects. (CLIL)
- When we write, we use a larger vocabulary and language structures that we may not normally use in speaking, so we develop more language depth with writing.
- Writing is learning.
- READING gives you many ideas for writing.
- Writing is sharing your thoughts with others, or for yourself, such as in a diary.
- Writing is valuable in itself. There is a special feeling of pride seeing your work in print. Students love to see their written work exhibited! It is a product from their brain, so is really a work of art, using words instead of paints.
- And finally: **Writing leaves your mark on history!**



WIE SCHRYFT BLYFT!

This is a Dutch saying. People in Holland say this to show the importance of writing.

The Dutch words mean:

WIE	=	who
SCHRYREN	=	to write
BLYREN	=	to stay

It means:

**WE WRITE TO
PROVE WE WERE
HERE ON EARTH**

In other words, when we write something, part of us is in the words, our thoughts, ideas, our mind and soul....The writings we did stay, even after we are gone.



F. What are the 5 steps to writing?



1 Pre-writing

Pre-writing includes all the things you need to do in order to complete the assignment, such as brainstorming, vocabulary list, ideas for topics, time, setting, characters, an outline of the article or story, type of writing you will be doing, research sites, a graphic organizer to plot the plan of the writing, etc. It may take 1 to 3 days to do this.



2 Drafting

Once the pre-writing is done, students begin the first draft, their first attempt at writing the current assignment. It can have errors, and can be a simplified version of what the students hope the final version will be. It is the skeleton of the writing, to be fleshed out later.

Re-reading your first draft is a very important step for good writing.

Read it aloud to yourself or to another person to hear how it sounds.

Corrections and additions can be made at this time.



3 Revising

This is the second draft where the skeleton of the writing is expanded, with good elaborations, using adjectives, adverbs, higher quality nouns and verbs, smoother flow of words and phrases, etc.

Re-reading this draft again is a very important step for good writing

Read it aloud again to hear how it sounds.

Corrections and additions can be made at this time, too.



4 Proofreading

The second draft is looked at with an eye to making final corrections. The proofreading checklist (presented later in this book) should be used by the students to make a final check of their work. This is the final opportunity to add words, check grammar, correct spelling, and elaborate the work. Once all the proofreading is complete with corrections made, the FINAL copy can be prepared.



5 Publicizing

Students make a final copy of their writing to be shared with others, students, teacher, and parents. This is the copy that will be assessed and graded. This is the copy that may be hung on the wall, or submitted to the students' portfolios, or offered to be in print in a class newspaper or in a magazine.

From the pre-writing experiences to the final draft for publication, a span of several weeks may have passed, depending on how much time can be devoted to writing in class. If students only have 50 minutes of English a day, three days per week, then a writing project may take a month!

REVIEW of the WRITING STEPS USING a SAMPLE SENTENCE

SAMPLE sentence
First draft

A police officer visited our classroom last week.

SAMPLE sentence
Second draft, so I make my writing better.
I look for ways to be more specific.
I use clear words, adjectives, and adverbs.

Instead of

“A police officer visited our classroom last week,”

I now write:

Officer Ramirez visited our classroom last week during Safety Week.

SAMPLE Proofreading and elaboration:
Now I check and fix my writing to make it smooth and clear, with NO spelling or grammatical errors. I add more words if they are needed. I check the title, paragraphs, and punctuation.

SAMPLE: The original sentence:

A police officer visited our classroom last week.

FINALLY, I copy my writing again and share it with others.

SAMPLE: The final version:

Officer Ramirez visited our 4th grade classroom last week to talk about bicycle safety. His talk was informative, using a film and diagrams.

Proofreading marks should be taught to students from 4th grade up because they are used in some high schools and colleges, newspaper publishing, and they are easier for the teacher to use to make corrections or suggestions for improvements.

Some proofreading marks

—	take away
/	lower case letter
=	capital letter
^	add something
@	move something



G. What things help to enhance writing?

- The vocabulary level
- The precise choice of words keeps the writing more interesting.
- Elaboration, using adjectives, adverbs, painting a picture with words
- Correct spelling and grammar
- Smoothness, a nice flow to the words, not choppy
- Clarity, easy to understand what the writer is saying on paper
- A reason to write, with a topic that is meaningful and interesting to the writer
- To write well, you need to write daily.

H. Some writing techniques (1/10)

In the next section there will be a variety of activities, but here are some examples now to show how easy it is to have students writing. Note how closely integrated are speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

(1) Completion exercise

After reading, you can do a completion exercise to help students write clearly.

EXAMPLE:

You provide students with this model formula which they will copy in their writing notebooks. It is a model that can be used to summarize any movie, story, or book. The formula can also be used as a base for writing a story.

First you fill in the spaces below the words, from original ideas, or from a story you know.

Somebody	Wanted	But	So	Then
-----------------	---------------	------------	-----------	-------------

Using this model, here is how the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears can be summarized:

<i>Somebody</i>	<i>Wanted</i>	<i>But</i>	<i>So</i>	<i>Then</i>
Goldilocks	to eat and sleep	the bears came home	she ran away	The bears were alone.

This technique leads to better comprehension skills, and also serves as a basis for writing a story, because the skeleton of the story is within the content you will write under the five words of the formula:

somebody, wanted, but, so, then

Have the students learn these 5 words as a chant so they will remember them whenever they have to summarize a story or write an original one.

(2) How and when to use the dictionary

Dictionary use is best for students in 3rd grade and above. Younger students are still learning basic alphabetical order and basic phonics. Guide students with practice on how to use a dictionary, by expanding alphabetical order to the second and third letters of a word, and by using games.

Play a game:

Give students a word for them to look up, to tell its meaning, its part of speech, and use the word in a sentence. SPEED AND ACCURACY are the goals for this game.

(3) Explain variations of words

This will help the students to expand their vocabulary, leading to fluency.

Tell students about synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms. Use examples and vary activities. Remember that learning is over time. Practice as a regular procedure eventually leads to a routine. Things done routinely are done automatically. In order to write well, procedures need to be practiced regularly so that writing becomes a routine, with fluency and accuracy as final goals.

(4) How to teach vocabulary or spelling

This should be systematized, organized, and routinely taught. Some teachers begin every day of class with vocabulary for excellent results. They choose 5 -10 words for each lesson, depending on students' ages and abilities.

Here is a typical schedule for teaching vocabulary on a regular basis, each day of class, whether class is 5 days a week or 3 days, follow this suggested schedule:

DAY 1

Present the words. Students repeat, saying the words, and they copy the words, leaving several lines after each word for the next class lesson.

DAY 2

Teacher shows simple, clear definitions on a poster, the board, or a transparency. Students copy definitions. Teacher explains them using models and examples.

DAY 3

Review the definitions. Highlight key words in the written definition. Expand explanations, and show models or drawings, or explain definition again.

DAY 4

Students make and use flashcards of the words. They use a sheet of paper held vertically, drawing a line down the middle. Then they use a ruler to draw horizontal lines, leaving the same number of spaces as words. They then will write a word in the left column, and its definition in the right column, next to it. Once the words and definitions are copied, students will cut them in strips, separating the words and definitions. Strips are mixed, then students try to match words with meanings. Strips can be stored in small plastic sandwich bags so they can be brought home for practicing.

In class, students can use flashcards to practice in pairs or small groups.

DAY 5

TEST: using their own words, NOT memorized, word for word, definitions.

Words to be defined should be listed, and students, from their brains, write or draw in response to each word.

This is NOT a test using matching, or multiple choice, or true - false. Those are three examples that use LOW LEVEL THINKING skills! Information about the definition needs to come from the student's brain. They can answer in phrases or complete sentences. Drawings could be accepted, too, as a way to show comprehension of the words' meanings.

SUMMARY: Days 1 - 5

1. Day 1 : Present the new words
2. Day 2: Copy the definitions of the words
3. Day 3: Discuss / explain the definitions
4. Day 4: Continue discussion and make flashcards
5. Day 5: Quiz on the words

The following is what a test would look like for the students. The teacher decides which words to present, making numbered consecutive lists for the school year, provides simple, clear definitions, practices them with students, and gives the test on the 5th day.

TEST SAMPLE FORMAT

Student's name: _____ Date _____

VOCABULARY LIST # _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

BONUS: A SAMPLE SPELLING / VOCABULARY LIST FOR TEACHERS

1. *focus*
2. *closure*
3. *extended thinking*
4. *time on-task*
5. *motivation*



Definitions: Teachers' words

Key words are underlined in these definitions, or they can be highlighted, in order to guide students to note the most important aspects of the definitions. Teachers will need to guide students as to which words are "key" words; otherwise, students may highlight everything.

1. A way to provide students with a base for the day's lesson, stating objectives, tying yesterday's lesson to today's.
2. An oral review of the day's lesson provided by the students, and a statement by the teacher about the next class.
3. Reaching the four higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy above knowledge and comprehension, where REAL learning takes place.
4. A wise use of time, 90% A.L.T. in every class.
(Academic Learning Time)
5. Getting the student to WANT to do what you want him/her to do.

**REMEMBER: TO BE A WRITER,
YOU HAVE TO WRITE!**



(5.) What is a Quick Write or a Journal Prompt?

A quick write or a journal prompt is a brief written response to an idea that the teacher (or another student) announces in class. It should be done each class day as a writing routine, to get the students to think daily about writing something.

Writing 2 or 3 sentences about a theme in a story or a character in a story....
 The teacher gives the theme or character's name (greed, discrimination, life, death, love, Tom, Elizabeth, etc).
 It could be a very brief idea or comment, explaining something in one, two, or three sentences or phrases.
 Students think; then they write.
 A complete sentence is not necessary all the time.
 The objective is to write to share an IDEA.

(6.) How can we write better?

To be a good writer, you **MUST** be a good reader!
 We learn more vocabulary from reading than from listening.
 We learn writing structures better from seeing them in readings than from grammar lessons.
 SO? **READ!** Read a lot!

(7.) There are 3 basic types of writing:

- Narrative
- Persuasive
- Explanatory

These three major categories can be expanded to include:

Five styles of composition:

A. Informative narrative:	The writer tells how to do or make something.
B. Descriptive:	The writer gives a vivid description of an object or scene.
C. Expressive Narrative:	The writer sequences events into a story on a specific topic.
D. Classificatory:	The writer compares / contrasts or gives advantages/ disadvantages to 2 or more ideas/objects/places.
E. Persuasive:	The writer makes a choice and gives reasons to support that choice to an audience.

VARY THE CLASS ACTIVITIES AND THE TOPICS!

(8.) Writing tasks for 5 days

If we are going to have a systematized, organized routine for writing, it needs to be done each day of class or a "routine" will not develop.

A five class day sequence works best no matter how many days a week you have English because it takes 5 sessions to complete most work well enough to make it meaningful, and from which a student will learn something.

If you shorten the sequence, students don't have enough practice on the same topic. If you drag it out too long, for example for 10 sessions, the students get bored. So here is a usable routine to enhance classroom writing.

DAY 1 Brainstorm and review characteristics of the type of writing to be done.

DAY 2 Have the class elaborate on writing: vocabulary, ideas, a mind map.

DAY 3 Each student writes a first draft on his/her own.

DAY 4 Holistic review and editing...in pairs, using the proofreading checklist.

DAY 5 Rewrite, correcting errors found in the previous class, ready today to submit final, re-copied version.

(9.) What is most important for good writing? Elaboration

GOOD WRITING IS DETAILED WRITING

Ask the students to repeat that sentence to you so they will realize its importance.

ELABORATION IS THE KEY TO GOOD WRITING!

Adjectives and adverbs clearly describing people, places, and events, are essential!

Expressive verbs and nouns can make writing sound better.

(10.) The Writing Process

Students must learn the 5 steps to the writing process. It's not simply sit down, write something, and then pass it in. Students (and teachers) must remember the steps to good writing.

1. Brainstorm
2. First draft

3. Revising and editing
4. Second draft / proofread and final draft

5. Publishing/sharing
what we write

II. ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP AND ENHANCE WRITING SKILLS

In this book, we will look and practice WRITING activities

- To communicate ideas, feelings, and messages
- To persuade
- To narrate an event or story
- To explain something
- To entertain
- To commit
- To record data

We will practice two major categories of writing activities:

Structured writing with controlled activities
Self-expression, free writing activities

First, let's look at the wide variety of things that our students can write, using various subjects and topics to keep the interest high, and basing writing topics on CLIL principles. You can see that there is no lack of writing topics when students ask, "What can I write?"

WRITING TOPICS ACROSS CONTENT AREAS (CLIL)

- Dedications (to Dad, Love, Mary)
- Brochures
- Newsletters
- Anthologies (list of books)
- Yearbooks
- Book blurbs (short description)
- Thank You notes
- Greeting cards
- Summaries
- Recipes
- Lists (for shopping, gifts, parties, things to do)
- Calendars
- Messages
- Bulletins
- Posters
- Signs
- Charts



- Letters
- Postcards
- Conversations
- Want ads
- Announcements
- Song lyrics
- Magazine articles
- Guides
- Assignments
- Commercials
- Books
- Stories
- Reviews (of books, movies, restaurants, products)
- Author page (for books)
- Directions
- Notices
- Newspaper articles
- Reports
- Interviews
- "How to" manuals
- Advice columns
- Surveys
- Questionnaires / Surveys
- Evaluations
- Instructions
- Essays
- Advertisements
- Memos
- Poems
- Diaries
- Scripts/plays
- Comic strips
- Rules
- Proposals (what you want to do)
- Invitations
- Journals
- Crossword puzzles



CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES

1. Copying is a good start to controlled writing.

Short, simple copying exercises are the first way that most people begin writing. If the child can read, he/she should read the words silently as they copy, to see the relationship between the words they read, the sounds they make, and the written word. This will help the students because the sound-symbol system in English is rather complicated (compared to Spanish), because it is not 100% phonetic, so copying helps students to see relationships with sounds-written words.

If students can't read yet, just have them copy simple, short things, and read to them what it says. Even though they do not understand what they are writing, when they are done, they will have the satisfaction that they completed something.

If writing is too tedious for younger children, have them simply trace single words, so they will begin to build the concept of writing-spelling.

Examples of things to copy:

Single words

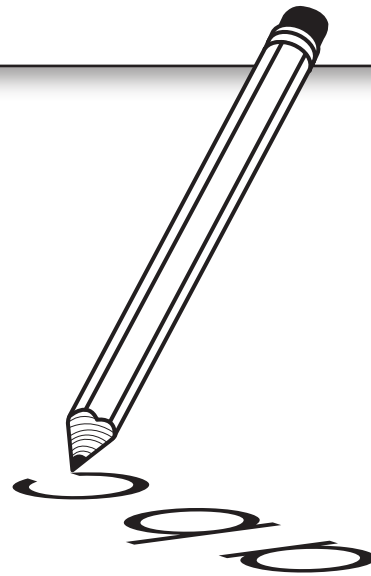
- English
- school
- book
- friends
- write

A silly poem

A sailor went to sea, sea, sea,
To see what he could see, see, see;
But all that he could see, see, see,
Was the bottom of the deep blue sea,
sea, sea.

Simple sentences

- See what I can write today.
- I am learning to write in my English class.
- My teacher speaks English to me in class.
- Do you have any pets? I have a dog.
- What is your name? My name is _____.



2. Matching pictures with words

Have a word bank written on the board or on a poster. Review the words orally with the students. Show a picture to the students, then have them write the word that names the picture. Students will get controlled writing practice, and use their brains at the same time.

Sample Words

dog	house	tree	meat	shirt	car
cat	bed	flower	milk	pants	truck
bird	couch	apple	beans	shoes	train
elephant	table	orange	hamburger	hat	airplane
horse	chair	banana	French fries	dress	boat

3. Using visual memory

This activity helps students practice reading, using visual memory, and writing. The teacher will write on the board a short, familiar sentence for students to read silently. After a short time, the teacher will erase the sentence. Students will try to remember it and write it. *THIS SHOULD NOT BE USED AS A TEST!* It is just a fun, practice activity.

Sample sentences:

What's your name?

My name is _____ .

I am in English class.

I am ten years old.

My mother is a good cook.

4. Dictation practice

Dictation is a safe type of activity because the teacher can keep the dictation at the students' levels. The teacher controls the vocabulary and the language patterns. For young learners we need to remember:

- Keep it short.
- Read or say it in a natural pace, not too slow.
- Have it connected to something the students are doing or will be doing soon in literature, science, mathematics, or social studies.

With older students, you can dictate longer phrases, sentences, or even short stories. They will need to have knowledge of vocabulary, punctuation, and rules for capitalization in order to have success with longer dictation activities.

DICTIONATION SENTENCE SAMPLES:

I love to eat hamburgers.

My mother tells me a story every night.

My dog is the best dog in the world.

What is your name?

Our English class is fun.

5. Writing / Copying Notebook

Urge your students to have a notebook where they can copy any new words, ideas, or even complete stories from a book. They can have two sections in their notebooks:

- A section to copy anything they want.
- A section to do any free writing they want, poems, stories, or factual articles.

6. Partial Dictation

The teacher dictates part of a sentence, and students finish it. This is a good activity to use as a bridge between totally controlled writing, and free writing.

Samples:

Today, we are going to...

One of the things I love to do is...

My favorite food is...

I want to go on vacation ...

My favorite TV program is ...

7. Fill-in-a-word

The students are given sentences with a word missing. They have to complete the missing word. They can get the word from their brain, or, if their English level is beginning, the teacher can provide a word bank for the class.

Samples:

I love to listen to the _____ sing in the trees or when they fly.

My favorite color is _____, the color of the sun and some flowers.

Mary's mother is my mother's sister, so she is my _____.

Every day our teacher reads us a _____.

When my _____ barks, he scares people.

WORD BANK (There are extra words you will not need.)

dog	birds	story	red
yellow	cats	cousin	aunt
singing	bird	uncle	dogs

8. Writing in alphabetical order

The teacher will give the students a random list of words and students will have to put them into alphabetical order. Words can be placed in order on the basis of their first letters (no two letters repeated in the list), or for more advanced students, the words can have some of the same initial letters, so that students will have to use second or third letters in order to place them in the correct alphabetical order.

9. Writing in a vertical line, using your name

This is fun for students to do because it is semi-structured, another example of an activity

between totally controlled writing and free writing.
The students will write their names vertically.

R I C H A R D	or	M A R I A
---------------------------------	----	-----------------------

Then students will write a word beginning with each letter of his or her name.The teacher can let students choose any words, or they can designate a specific type of word, such as using nouns, verbs, or adjectives.

USING NOUNS	USING VERBS	USING ADJECTIVES
Rain	Run	Red
Ice	Imitate	Intelligent
Cookie	Crawl	Crooked
Hand	Hop	Happy
Ant	Argue	Attractive
Rope	Run	Rapid
Dog	Drag	Dangerous

10. Listening to music and writing

The teacher will play a familiar song, one that the students know, and one they have learned to sing. A word box will be provided. Then the teacher will pass out a copy of the song's words, with some words missing. As they hear the song, the students have to write the missing words as they hear them sung. The teacher can play the song two times so that students will have ample time to listen for the missing words and to complete the song by writing in the missing words.

Below is a song with a familiar tune because Coca Cola bought rights to the song, and many people think it is Coca Cola's song. In reality, however, this was an anti-war song in the USA when there was great opposition to the Vietnam War in the 1960's and 70's. Later, Coca Cola bought the music. Here are the original words.

The image shows a musical score for the song 'I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a bass clef, with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass clef contains chords. The lyrics are: 'I'd like to build the world a home and furnish it with love Grow'. Below the bass clef, the Roman numerals 'I' and 'V7/V' are written. The second system starts with a '5' above the first measure, indicating a fifth measure continuation. The melody continues with the lyrics: 'ap-ple trees_ and ho-ney bees_ and snow-white tur-tle doves_'. The bass clef contains chords.

I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing

I'd like to build the world a home and furnish it with _____,

Grow apple _____ and honey _____ and snow white turtle doves.

I'd like to _____ the world to sing in _____ harmony,

I'd like to hold it in my _____ and keep it company.

I'd like to _____ the world for _____ all standing hand-in- hand,

And hear them _____ through the hills for _____ throughout the land.

That's the _____ I hear. Let the world sing _____.

A song of peace that echoes on and never goes _____.

I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect _____,

La, la, la...

VOCABULARY
WORD BOX
(for the song)

harmony	love	today	trees
bees	teach	echo	see
hand	song	once	perfect
peace	build	turtle	doves
hold	arms	away	

ACTIVITY 11

Using verbs

This activity practices oral and written use of verb tenses. Frequent practice, for short periods of time, will help the students learn to “hear” the correct word for the verb tense, especially for the irregular verbs.

Verb Practice (Oral and written)

Complete this chart using 5 verbs. Then say them aloud as a group, and then to a partner.

	VERB	PRESENT	PAST	PARTICIPLE	FUTURE
	to run	run	ran	has run, have run, had run	will run
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

Sentence Practice:

Use a different verb from the list to complete the chart . Here are some verbs to use. Write them in the infinitive form by placing a "to" in front of each word .

go	work	yell	win	compute	plant	lie
look	sleep	play	paint	arrange	clean	lay
read	travel	act	fly	organize	sweep	
ride	fight	run	sail	talk	wash	
love	study	sing	see	hug	breathe	

NOTE: to lie, and to lay are two verbs that confuse even native speakers. The lie here is NOT the verb used when you do not tell the truth.

PRESENT	PAST	PAST PARTICIPLE
to lie	lay	lain
to lay*	laid	laid

* requires an object

The past tense of lie is lay.....Yesterday Steve lay on the floor.
The dog lay in the mud after it rained.

The past tense of lay is laid..... Last week I laid the report on your desk.
Mary laid her ring inside the jewelry box.

The past participle of lie is lain.... Steve has lain on the floor for days.
The dog has lain in the mud for hours.

The past participle of lay is laid.... I have laid the report on your desk.
Mary has laid her ring in the box.

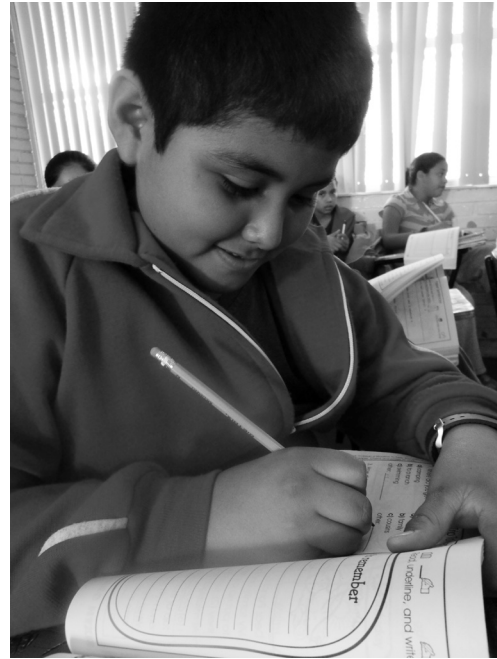
Writing Topics:

Using various verb tenses.

REMEMBER: It is more important to be able to USE the verbs, orally or in writing, than to IDENTIFY which tense they are!!!!

DISCUSS these topics with your classmates. Then write your opinion, response, or feelings about the topic.

1. You have lost your wallet with your I.D. , license to drive, and all your money and debit cards. Tell what happened, where, and how you think you lost everything. Then tell what you will do to resolve the problem.
2. Your 16 year old daughter did not come home after a party. Friends say she went in a car with her boyfriend. You did not even know she had a boyfriend. What will you and your spouse do? How do you think your daughter will react?
3. Your company just told you that you have to relocate to Hong Kong for one year. There is a very large raise, plus a great housing allowance. You are eager to accept the position...BUT your spouse and two teenage children do not want to move. What should you do? What will you do?
4. You are 40 kilos overweight and you have diabetes. What should you do? What will you do?
5. Your 21 year old son dropped out of university before finishing his career. He has no job and just hangs around the house all day, sleeping late and doing nothing. For 5 months this has been going on. He says that he is looking for work but with the "crises" there is no work. What will you do? What is your advice to him? How can you guide him? Will he follow your advice?
6. You just won the lottery of \$100,000 U.S. dollars. What will you do? (after you scream!)
7. Summer will be here soon. What is your "dream vacation" for three weeks? Where will you go? What will you do? Who will go with you? (Some dreams do come true...and they are free!)



Free Writing Activities

INTRODUCTION

It is sometimes difficult to go from controlled writing to completely free writing because the students may not know what to write, or may not have an adequate vocabulary. They also may not be too confident about writing mechanics; therefore, some "pre-writing" activities may be necessary.

Pre-Writing activities:

1. Conversation starter

Ask students a simple question or comment, and they have to write the answer.

EXAMPLES:

- What did you do last night?
- Where will you go on Christmas vacation?
- What is the best movie you have seen?
- What is your favorite animal?
- What food do you like best?

2. Brainstorming

The purposes of BRAINSTORMING:

- To create a great number of ideas which lead to more quality in those ideas.
- To share ideas without the fear of criticism.
- To enable members of the group to build on each other's ideas.

The teacher will write a word, as a topic, on the board, such as ELEPHANT. Then all the students will give ideas of any words or ideas that they get from the key word.

No answer is wrong in brainstorming. The teacher writes all the words and ideas that come from the children. Once ideas stop flowing, perhaps 5 minutes, the teacher stops writing, and the students then use any or all of the words on the board to compose a story or report, factual or fiction, as they want, because it is "free" writing.

3. Venn Diagrams

These can be used to compare or contrast topics. The teacher prepares the Venn diagram (2 overlapping circles) and shows them to students, writing words that students say in response to the topic.

EXAMPLES

Tell me two animals you like and two animals you do not like.

or

What is the biggest animal you have ever seen? The smallest?

Students respond orally, and the teacher writes words on the appropriate circles. From this guide, the students can write a fictional story or realistic article.

4. An upside-down Y chart

Make an upside-down Y on the board or on a chart.

At the top of the shape, write the category of a specific writing topic, such as LION .

You will then have 3 areas to label, on each side of the shape.



This activity can get the student to think and to learn to begin to write with more detail. Any word or words could be used at the top as a title.

5. A writing collage

A collage is a large piece of paper or poster with lots of pictures, drawings, words drawn or cut out and pasted on the paper, overlapping each other so no paper space is showing. In this activity, the teacher or a student names a theme, such as "Christmas".

Then the class brainstorms to come up with many words related to Christmas. Students write the words, stories, phrases, draw pictures, cut out snowflakes or Christmas trees , etc, and glue them on a big class collage.

6. Letters (or post cards) and addressing envelopes

With e-mail so prevalent, not many people write real letters that can be mailed or hand-delivered. The skill of letter writing, however, should not be overlooked as it is a social skill that can be essential in some business or social circles. So students need to be prepared.

Letters and post cards can be written to anyone, a family member, a pen pal, a famous person...the practice of writing will help students learn to express themselves. Thank you notes, invitations, or a general news letter to someone who is far away are examples of letters that can be written. Obviously, the teacher must have first taught the students the mechanics of letter writing, such as where to place the return address, the date, the salutation, the body, and the closing. Envelopes, too, have a correct way of being addressed, so must be taught.

Once students learn these basic writing skills, and practice them over several weeks, followed up by periodic practice reminders, they will become experts at letter writing and envelope addressing. It is a skill that will serve them for life.

7. Stories /fiction and non-fiction

Stories can be written, individually, once students have developed a working vocabulary. A circle story, starts with one line supplied by the teacher, with every student starting with the same sentence or phrase...such as:

"One morning John woke up to a huge surprise!"

First, each student writes his/her name at the top right side, so the teacher will know when the story has made the complete round of the class. Then the same student will copy the first sentence which was initiated by the teacher.

The students pass the paper to the person to his/her right, and that person adds a sentence, and so on....passing the story, students adding sentences, until each paper arrives to its original writer.

The original writer, whose name is on the paper, will read the story, then write a title for it. The teacher may not have time to read all the stories aloud, but there should be time for each student to read the title of his/her paper that was returned so the class can hear the great variety of stories that resulted from one sentence.

If there is not time to finish, the first thing the next class, the teacher should let the remaining students read the title of the story aloud, as they may be eager to share the title with classmates. Then the teacher can have some of the finished stories (with 20 or 30 sentences) read aloud. It is interesting to see how the same first line can be developed into a wide variety of different stories.

If a class is very large, the teacher may decide to have students do this activity in groups of 15 students per group, so that the final version of the story will have 15 sentences, or as many as the number of students who did the activity.

A follow-up writing activity can be that each student copies the complete story that he or she began, which now includes a contribution from each classmate. The proofreading checklist should be used so a high quality final version is completed. This final version is what the teacher will grade.

8. Recipes

Recipes can be used as a means of writing, too. Students can ask their mothers, fathers, or grandparents for a favorite recipe, bring it to class, and copy it there. All the students' recipes can be placed in a book that the teacher can copy for each child, so that everyone will receive a copy of



This cookbook, with accompanying drawings or colored designs, would make a wonderful Mother's Day gift!

9. Poetry

Poems are a way of writing and expressing ideas, feelings, and emotions. One of the easiest kinds of poems to teach, once students know how to count syllables, is a HAIKU.

What is a Haiku?

It is a poem, originally from Japan, that does not rhyme. It is usually about nature, and has three lines. The lines are very organized, as a formula, so they can be easy to compose.

The formula for a haiku is:

- A haiku is about nature.
- It has three lines, with no rhyme.
- Line 1:** always has 5 syllables.
- Line 2:** always has 7 syllables.
- Line 3:** always has 5 syllables.

Let's look at one.

*The sky is alive....
Movements catch my watchful eyes....
Colors, clouds, the sea....*

Let's look at this one again, more closely.

The sky is alive _____ (5 syllables)

Movements catch my watchful eyes _____ (7 syllables)

Colors, clouds, the sea _____ (5 syllables)

Sometimes a haiku is easier to write if the student has a picture of a nature scene, such as the sea, a bird, a mountain, a flower, an animal, etc. Usually a haiku is about nature...so a nature picture helps to give students ideas. Another help to students who are writing poetry for the first time is to give them a word bank that might be appropriate for nature poems, such as a haiku.

Optional vocabulary

These are some ideas. The vocabulary depends on the pictures that students will use as a base for their haiku. The list could include words such as:

sunrise	fog
sunset	bitter
shadows	cold
feelings	damp
mist	skeleton
	shadows



10. How to...

This is a type of writing which requires specific, organized data so that the reader can clearly understand the instructions. No steps can be left out because the reader is not a mind-reader. The "How to" must be so clear that anyone can follow the instructions and do what it says.

Examples:

- How to make a peanut butter sandwich
- How to write a haiku
- How to play Monopoly
- How to cook a hard-boiled egg
- How to address an envelope

11. Informative reports

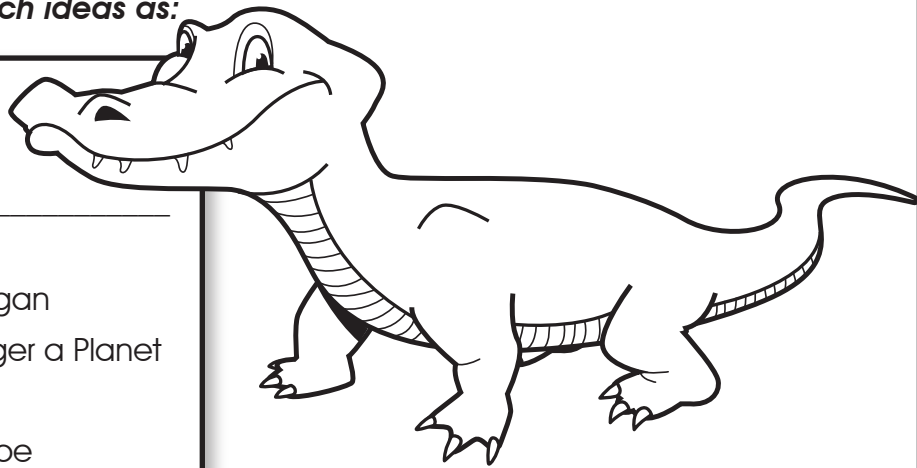
This is a writing assignment that requires some research or other kind of investigation or preparation, so that the writer can inform the reading audience about some information.

Usually an informative report requires a bibliography to show which material was used in support of the research. Whether books, encyclopedias, and / or Internet sources were used, they all MUST be stated and documented using the correct reporting style.

Obviously, the teacher must first have taught students how to investigate, how to quote sources, and how to prepare a bibliography correctly prior to giving this kind of an assignment.

Sample topics include such ideas as:

- Alligators
- What is DNA?
- The Biography of _____
- German Shepherds
- How the Internet Began
- Why Pluto is No Longer a Planet
- The Sun
- The Hubble Telescope
- The Ringling Brothers Circus
- Penicillin



12. Travel Magazine

This activity combines fact with imagination. Show a travel scene on a slide or screen a movie scene, or even a large poster if you don't have a projector. Discuss what you see. Then, instruct your students to begin by clearly describing the scene they've just seen. Invite them to write about an adventure in this new land. It doesn't have to be a full narrative, just an experience.

Afterwards ask the students to read their writing aloud in class. You'll be amazed that even with the same multi-sensory prompts, students convey incredibly varied experiences.

13. Musical writing

Tell the students that you will be playing 3 types of music, and for them to listen to all three. Then, play the musical selections, one by one, and while they are listening, students should write sentences, phrases, words, or poems that may come to mind by the music. What images do they see as they listen? They need to write with lots of images, and give a picture of their mind and what they feel/think/see with the music.

This activity can be repeated over time, because with every type of music, students will have different images and ideas.

Sample music could include:

- An American in Paris
- The William Tell Overture
- Stars and Stripes Forever
- The Blue Danube Waltz
- Tales From the Vienna Woods
- La Bamba
- Heartbreak Hotel
- Rock Around the Clock
- Hotel California
- Rhapsody in Blue



FREE WRITING SUMMARY

1. Concentrate on content.
2. Spend a lot of time on vocabulary development and pre-writing.
3. Make sure that writing comes from other course work, such as science or social studies so that it can be meaningful to the student.
4. Find something positive about every student's writing attempt, and tell the student, along with ideas for improvement.
5. Require rewriting for higher quality work.
6. Display student writing.
7. Have students begin to keep a portfolio of their best work, or have a notebook, for all writings, and note students' progress from brainstorming, drafts, to final copy...all in the same notebook.
8. Have students prepare for writing, with word lists, research, or outlines.
9. You do not need to correct all mistakes you find...just major ones.
10. Write something every day...even a "quick write" or added sentences to an on-going project.

II. ASSESSEMENTS FOR WRITING

When most teachers are asked, "Why don't you read aloud to students every day?" they answer, "I don't have time."

When most teachers are asked, "Why don't you have students write in class?" they answer, "It takes too long to correct writing."

These responses are sad, and reflect that teachers may not realize that they are cheating their students from receiving a solid language experience. Copying off the board, or from a book, or translating, or completing workbook pages are not the essentials of a language course.

Listening to stories, songs, or movies, students speaking aloud in class in pair work, reading for comprehension, and writing creatively are the essentials of learning a language, any language, even L1, if they are to be mastered well.

Teachers **MUST** make time to read aloud and for students to write. PERIOD. How? By good planning and by having daily routines. If the teacher has an on-going story, which she / he reads to the class 5 minutes a day, continuing it until it's completed, the students benefit from increased vocabulary, listening skills, and hearing the flow of the author's words.

If the teacher requires a writing notebook, and the students daily write the date, and add a few lines, words, or sentences to on-going assignments, the students will grow in writing skills.

TO BE A WRITER, YOU HAVE TO WRITE!

In free writing the language is the student's, no matter what language level he or she has. The more language the student has, the easier it will be for him / her to write freely.

What are some grading ideas?

Grade for content.

And grade for mechanics...

Not necessarily at the same time...

Grade for a specific mechanical skill, such as spelling.

Write something every day!

Even for only 5 minutes...practice daily.

Use time basis, not number of pages or words... at the beginning.

When students are in a pre-writing stage, or doing a first draft, you do not have to make many corrections or look for all the errors. The idea is that the students need to have a flow of ideas, and get them to paper. Later the corrections should be made.

Students need to learn how to proofread and correct their own work. Ideally, the teacher only has to correct the final copy. The brainstorming, outlines, and drafts do not need to be corrected by the teacher, who should be circulating around the room, helping with

corrections and improvements as students are working. Students learn how to write much better that way.

When a teacher collects all the students' papers, and takes them home to "correct", to be returned the next class with the corrections marked, students are NOT helped at all. They rarely learn from looking at marked errors. They do learn, however, when they are in the process of writing, and a writing coach (the teacher) helps guide them as they are working.

Corrections should be made while students are in the rough draft of their writing assignments, as the teacher is circulating around the room. This may mean that you do not correct ALL the work a student has written.

The idea is for the students to complete a piece of written work. Each time he or she writes, the work will get better. Practice is what is needed, and general lessons to the entire class about errors that the teacher sees in many of the writings.

For example, if the teacher sees that many students do not begin all sentences with a capital letter, or that they forget to indent every new paragraph, those are topics for a class lesson, and those are the very items that should be checked on the next writing assignment.

Students need to know that you are not looking for perfection in early writing stages (grades 1-5), but error-free writing, eventually, is the goal. By lots of reading to and by the students, they will see the flow of words and phrases, and will begin to incorporate the ideas in their writings.

Older students (5th grade up through high school) should be taught, and then required, to proofread their own work. Not only is it a skill for life, but it cuts way down on the teacher's correcting work.

What should you teach the students to check? All of the following are important, and even younger children, as soon as they begin writing creatively, should know which things need to be correct.



PROOFREADING CHECKLIST

Teach the students these writing skills and show them what to look for.

- Did I spell all words correctly?
- Did I indent each paragraph?
- Did I write each sentence as a complete thought?
- Do I have any run-on sentences?
- Did I begin every sentence with a capital letter?
- Did I use capital letters correctly in other places?
- Did I end each sentence with the correct punctuation mark?
- Did I use commas, apostrophes, and other punctuation correctly?
- Did I read my paper aloud to myself or a friend?

By 5th grade, all students should proofread their own work. Students can work in pairs to help each other. Sometimes, it is easier to spot errors in someone else's work than in your own. Here is a checklist that you can copy to give to students. When working with each other to complete second or final drafts, this checklist comes in handy.

When students use the checklist, it cuts back on teachers' tedious work.

It is highly suggested that teachers only correct and grade the final copy of any writing assignment. Students should submit the completed checklist (that they worked on with a partner), the final draft, any brainstorming notes, and the first or second drafts. They should be stapled or clipped together with the checklist and final draft on top. Have students staple first drafts to final version, with final version on top.

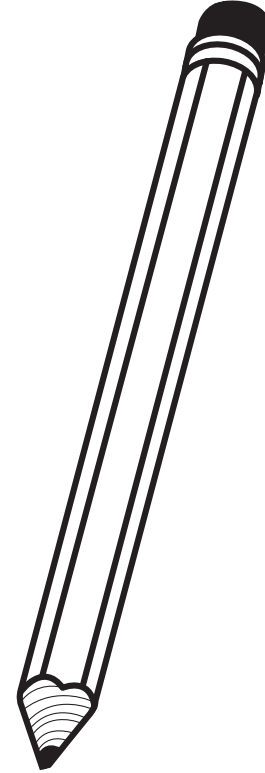
If this procedure is consistently followed, it will become routine, resulting in better writing by students and less correcting by teachers.

The form that follows could be passed out to students for their notebooks, to be used every time the teacher wants the students to check their work.

PROOFREADING CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS

Student's name: _____ Date _____

- Did I spell all the words correctly?
- Did I indent each paragraph?
- Did I write each sentence as a complete thought?
- Do I have any run-on sentences?
- Did I begin each sentence with a capital letter?
- Did I use capital letters correctly in other places?
- Did I end each sentence with the correct punctuation mark?
- Did I use commas, apostrophes, and other punctuation correctly?
- Did I read my paper aloud to myself or to a friend?
(This helps greatly in preparing your final version.)



Use the student proofreading checklist for any writing that will be graded.

SCORING WRITING: Summary

Teachers complain the most about the grading of writing. In fact, the time that grading takes ("excessive", say some teachers) is the prime reason why our students do not get enough writing practice.

Teachers: you do not have to grade everything! Teach students how to proofread, and how to work in pairs to check each other's work. If you allow enough time for a writing assignment, (5+ days, except for a Quick Write or Journal Prompt which can be done in a few minutes), students will have enough time to do first and second drafts...so that by the time you get the final copy, there should be very few corrections needed. Just use a highlighter to note major errors.

The goal is that students improve weekly, NOT to obtain a grade on every writing assignment.

An example:

Football / Soccer:

In sports, students practice over and over again. The only "assessment" is how they did in a competition match with another team.

Writing should be the same: practice, practice makes perfect...(or almost perfect). Just grade final, proofread copies once or twice a month. Everything else is practice, as in soccer, and an "active, positive participation" grade can be given for the daily class work the student is doing towards his / her attempt to become a good writer.

Goals for checking content and/or mechanics

- Use a rubric
- Correct the purpose of the writing
- Effective elaboration
- Clear sense of order and completeness
- Fluency is important
- Correct spelling and grammar

WHAT IS A RUBRIC?

• It is a scoring tool that looks at a variety of expectations, when the answers are not simply RIGHT or WRONG. It provides a fair and logical assessment tool.

• Students MUST see the rubric before the assignment; otherwise, it is not effective. Here is a sample rubric (a two-sided sheet) with the explanation and grade equivalents on one side, and the scoring qualifiers on the other side .

When students see the qualifiers, they know what the teacher expects.

RUBRIC FOR A CREATIVE PROJECT (Side one)

20 -19 points = 98% - 100 % EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS!

18 to 17 = 95% EXCELLENT!

16 to 15 = 90 % VERY GOOD!

14 - 12 = 80% MEETING EXPECTATIONS

11 - 9 = 70% Minimum

8 or below = Not acceptable:

Project / work must be re- submitted on the 3rd class day. There is NO option to fail. Students can help each other.
NO parental help!!!! Work is to be done in class.

STUDENT: _____

PROJECT TITLE: _____

SCORE : _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROJECT SUBMITTED

RUBRIC FOR A CREATIVE PROJECT (Side two)

Criteria Quality _____

	Points	5	3	1
Creativity/ Originality		The project exhibits 4 to 6 forms of expression (art, music, writing, pictures, etc.), all of which show a great deal of thought and planning in the creative or unusual way that the project is presented.	The project exhibits 2 or 3 forms of expression (art, music, writing, pictures, etc.), which show some planning in the area of creativity for the project's concept.	The project uses only 1 method to present the information. The work is mundane. There is no strong spark of creativity evidenced.
Content Completeness		The student included most of the guidelines in the project description, plus, he/she added more ideas so that the project is thoroughly complete.	The project is good, but several important guidelines provided were ignored, yet the student did not replace them with other ideas.	The project was not complete. Many important items were missing and project appeared incomplete.
Depth of Knowledge Exhibited		The level of vocabulary and content material appear to be at a maturity level equivalent to high school, with evidence of research exhibited in the final product.	The student understands and expresses work at a high level, and at a depth that good students, serious about their work, will often exhibit. Research is evidenced in the project. Vocabulary used is at grade level.	Very little evidence of research. The vocabulary level exhibited is below grade level of the student.
Attention to Detail		Neatness and effort are clearly evident, with attention to details. Drawings, exhibits, written work, models, etc. are first-class!	The work is neat with very few errors in the written or model material. A few details are overlooked (such as forgetting to paint one side of a model).	Project seems rushed with little attention to details. It seems to be of first draft quality rather than a finished product.

SUMMARY

STEPS TO BETTER WRITING

1. FIVE STEPS TO GOOD WRITING (Don't skip any step.)

- Pre-writing
- Drafting
- Revising
- Proofreading
- Publishing

2. PROOFREADING CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS

Give every student a copy for his/her notebook to use as a writing reference.

Student's name: _____ Date _____

- ___ Did I spell all the words correctly?
- ___ Did I indent each paragraph?
- ___ Did I write each sentence as a complete thought?
- ___ Do I have any run-on sentences?
- ___ Did I begin each sentence with a capital letter?
- ___ Did I use capital letters correctly in other places?
- ___ Did I end each sentence with the correct punctuation mark?
- ___ Did I use commas, apostrophes, and other punctuation correctly?
- ___ Did I read my paper aloud to myself or to a friend?

SAMPLE RUBRIC SCORING FOR WRITING

Use grade equivalents, such as:

- | | | |
|--|---|------------|
| • 4 = Excellent, well-above expectations | = | 95+ |
| • 3 = Very good, above expectations | = | 85 - 94 |
| • 2 = Good, meeting expectations | = | 75 - 84 |
| • 1 = Below expectations | = | 65 - 74 |
| • 0 = Do it again: no score | = | Seek help. |
- Failure is NOT an option. Then, do it again.

SCORING EXPECTATIONS

SCORE 4

- Correct purpose and audience
- Effective elaboration
- Consistent organization
- Clear sense of order and completeness
- Fluent, good vocabulary choices

SCORE 3

- Correct purpose and audience
- Moderately well elaborated
- Organized, but possible digressions
- Clear, effective language

SCORE 2

- Correct purpose and audience
- Some elaboration
- Some graphic details
- Gaps in organization
- Limited language control

SCORE 1

- Attempts to address audience
- Wrong purpose
- Brief / vague
- Unelaborated
- Wanders off / on topic
- Lack of language control
- Poor or no organization

SCORE 0

- Off topic, or copied the writing assignment
- Blank paper, or did not write enough to score
- Language other than English
- Illegible or incoherent

No ZERO scores are accepted.

IDEAS FOR COMPOSITION TOPICS

Teachers:

These are ideas for compositions, NOT titles of compositions.

Topics listed are for a wide variety of age groups and English levels.

Teach students, by giving some examples, to make their titles short, accurate, and attractive to a reader. The topics are grouped according to the verb forms you will probably use most often in the composition.

PRESENT TENSE

1. Your usual day
2. Your hobby
3. Your present job
4. Your view of economy
5. The thing you dislike most of all
6. Your home, apartment, or room
7. Your home town
8. Saturday afternoon in your home town
9. A holiday

10. Your favorite animal
11. The problems of an only child
12. Your big (little) brother (sister)
13. Your father's favorite sayings
14. Your father's sense of humor
15. Are summer camps good for children?
16. Do children need discipline?
17. Are murder mysteries (detective stories) bad for children?
18. The causes of juvenile delinquency
19. Why you are in school
20. Your favorite subject (teacher, classmate) at school
21. What education means to you
22. Are examinations necessary?
23. Government aid to education
24. Life in a college dormitory
25. Difference between high school and college/university
26. The importance of sports at school
27. Education outside the classroom
28. Your best friend
29. Your worst enemy
30. An interesting person you know
31. The strangest person you know
32. A character in fiction that you would like to meet
33. Who makes the best cars?
34. Are used cars good to buy?
35. Traffic problems
36. Traffic cops are nuisances
37. Your feeling about outside advertising (billboards)
38. The best kind of vacation
39. Why you like (or dislike) television
40. What makes a good movie?
41. Popular music versus classical music
42. Milk versus wine
43. Hospital insurance: government or private?
44. Small towns versus big towns
45. The high cost of living

PAST TENSE

46. A frightening experience
47. Your most embarrassing moment
48. Your first date
49. How you met your wife (husband, sweetheart)
50. Your biggest surprise
51. What you did last weekend
52. An untrue story (a lie) you told
53. Your most interesting trip
54. Your first long trip
55. An important event in your life
56. A punishment you deserved
57. One time when you were misunderstood
58. A misconception
59. Why you decided to come to this school, or to this city
60. The most important event in history
61. A famous inventor (musician, artist, politician, etc.)
62. A great man (woman)
63. A famous woman (man)
64. A folk tale
65. The most unforgettable character in your childhood
66. A story or incident that you think could be made into a book or a movie
67. A movie or play you enjoyed (or did not enjoy)
68. A case of injustice

FUTURE TENSE

69. The world in the year 2030
70. What will probably happen in the next six months
71. Things you intend to do
72. What you will probably do tomorrow
73. Your plans for a vacation
74. Your plans for next weekend (or next year)
75. Your greatest ambition
76. The plans you have for your children or your grandchildren

SHOULD OR IMPERATIVE

77. How to be a good tourist
78. Travel tips
79. An efficient kitchen
80. How to bake a cake (a pie, etc. recipe and instructions)
81. How to make a model airplane (a kite, etc. instructions)
82. The proper colors for rooms
83. Students should be dignified
84. Should married women work outside the home?
85. Should young adults serve in the armed services?

CONDITIONAL

86. If you had a million dollars (pesos, euros, etc.)
87. If you had three wishes
88. If you governed the world
89. If you had not come to this school
90. If you knew you only had two weeks to live
91. If there were no elevators
92. If the wheel had not been invented
93. If there were another Ice Age
94. What the Americas would be like today if Columbus or the Vikings had never discovered them
95. How you would teach English
96. How you would keep peace in the world
97. What you would say if you dared to be completely frank
98. What you would have done if you had been elsewhere this past Christmas (New Year's, Easter, etc.)
99. The changes you would make in this city
100. What you would be doing if you were not writing this composition
101. If you were the last person alive on Earth
102. What would happen if we lost all our mechanical devices?

DIRECT and INDIRECT SPEECH

103. The first conversation you remember hearing
104. A conversation you had this morning
105. A conversation you overheard
106. An imaginary dialog between two famous persons
107. An argument you had or overheard
108. An interview for a job
109. What you would tell a person who is going abroad for the first time

MISCELLANEOUS

These are very broad subjects, so if you choose to write on one of them, you should limit the topic, and only discuss a small, specific aspect of it.

- 110. Family
- 111. Home life
- 112. Childhood
- 113. Friends
- 114. Neighbors
- 115. Enemies
- 116. Memories
- 117. Ambitions
- 118. Personal habits
- 119. Education
- 120. University education
- 121. Studying
- 122. Fraternities or sororities
- 123. Manners
- 124. Customs
- 125. Social classes
- 126. Marriage and divorce
- 127. Race prejudice
- 128. Clothes
- 129. Religion
- 130. Holidays
- 131. Attitudes
- 132. Ways of thinking
- 133. Language
- 134. Amusements
- 135. Hobbies
- 136. Avocations
- 137. Reading
- 138. Sports
- 139. Nature
- 140. Radio
- 141. Television
- 142. Movies
- 143. Plays
- 144. Publications
- 145. Organizations

146. Business
147. Mass production
148. Labor relations
149. Atomic energy
150. Working conditions
151. Labor laws and regulations
152. Advertising
153. Civic problems
154. Government policies
155. Nationalism
156. Censorship
157. The Supreme Court
158. The Constitution
159. Foreigners
160. Going abroad
161. Tourists
162. Transportation
163. Animals
164. Farming
165. Food
166. Health
167. Medicine
168. Money
169. Weather
170. Satellites
171. Planets
172. Science fiction
173. Immigration policies
174. Child slavery or child labor
175. What is beauty?

TECHNIQUES FOR NARRATIVE WRITING

using any of the previously suggested topics

Write an expressive narrative...writing "a story".

The following guidelines can be changed by the teacher or by suggestions from students. This is for one, specific writing assignment.

The writer will sequence events into a story on a specified topic:

Assignment:

PRODUCT: A story

ORGANIZATION: Chronological (progression through time)

STORY ELEMENTS TO INCLUDE: Use the basic elements of a short story with a fully - developed beginning, middle, and end.

This must be more than a sequence of events. Writer must establish some sort of problem which is solved during the events of the story.

VOCABULARY for TRANSITIONAL WORDS and PHRASES:

then, after, after that, soon, while, later, before, during, next, when, meanwhile, as soon as, finally, at last

Narrative Writing Guideline:

1. INTRODUCTION

2. FIRST: Setting, location, characters, time

VOCABULARY:

once upon a time, far away, in old times when wishes came true, on a space station in the year 2134, yesterday, when I was a baby, before humans lived on Earth, in my grandparents' youth, today, etc.

3. THEN: The problem (Use your imagination.)

4. LAST: A solution (Use your imagination.)

5. CONCLUSION: happy ending They lived happily ever after. They woke up from a dream. They arrived home safely. She found her lost wallet. etc.)

A STORY FORMULA

SOMEBODY - WANTED - BUT - SO - THEN

TEACH ELABORATION STRATEGIES

1. Similies/metaphors.....color, shape, size, texture

(The clouds looked like cotton balls.

The lion was like a huge version of my pet cat.)

2.Conversation.....two complete exchanges.

3.Adjectives or adverbs....1 or 2 with nouns or verbs.

(The tall, handsome prince silently glimpsed the princess in the ugly, dark tower.)

WRITE SOMETHING EVERY DAY!

REMEMBER Good writing is detailed writing.

FINAL COMMENTS:

IT IS EASY TO WRITE!

- Practice any kind of writing daily for a few minutes.
- Build vocabulary by using 100% English and a high level vocabulary.
- Encourage creativity, not perfection.

