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A Letter from a University Student Requesting Exemption from UCI's ESL Requirement

Dear Mrs. Robbin

I really not need humanity 20 writing class because since time I come to United State all my friend speak language. Until now everyone understand me and I dont ' need study language. I don 't know Vietnam language. I speak only English. I have no communication problem with my friend in dorm. My English teacher in high school key person to teach me. My teacher explain to me that how important the book was for the student and persuaded me read many book. I get A in English through out high school and I never take ESL. I gree that some student need class but you has not made a correct decision put me in English class. Please do not makes me lose the face. I have confident in English.



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Letter from the Same University Student After Instruction

Hi Robin, I am apologize for having to send you this information at the last minute. I still need a letter. This letter should discuss my qualifications, skills and accomplishments. It should be written on letterhead and addressed “To Whom It May Concern” and submitted with a Recommendation Form (which I will give to you tomorrow). Please write a letter that addresses my academic achievement, seriousness of purpose, personal maturity, and whether or not I possess the skills necessary to adapt to a new environment. Also, please address my ability to think analytically, my aptitude, my overall maturity and my independence. Thank you so much Robin for doing this for me. I truly appreciate it. Let me know if you have any last minutes questions.



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Developing Academic Language

Facilitating connections across grades and content areas

Dr. Robin Scarcella

Southeast Comprehensive Center
English as a Second Language Institute

November 7, 2008 – New Orleans, Louisiana



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Developing Academic Language



Robin Scarcella
University of California, Irvine
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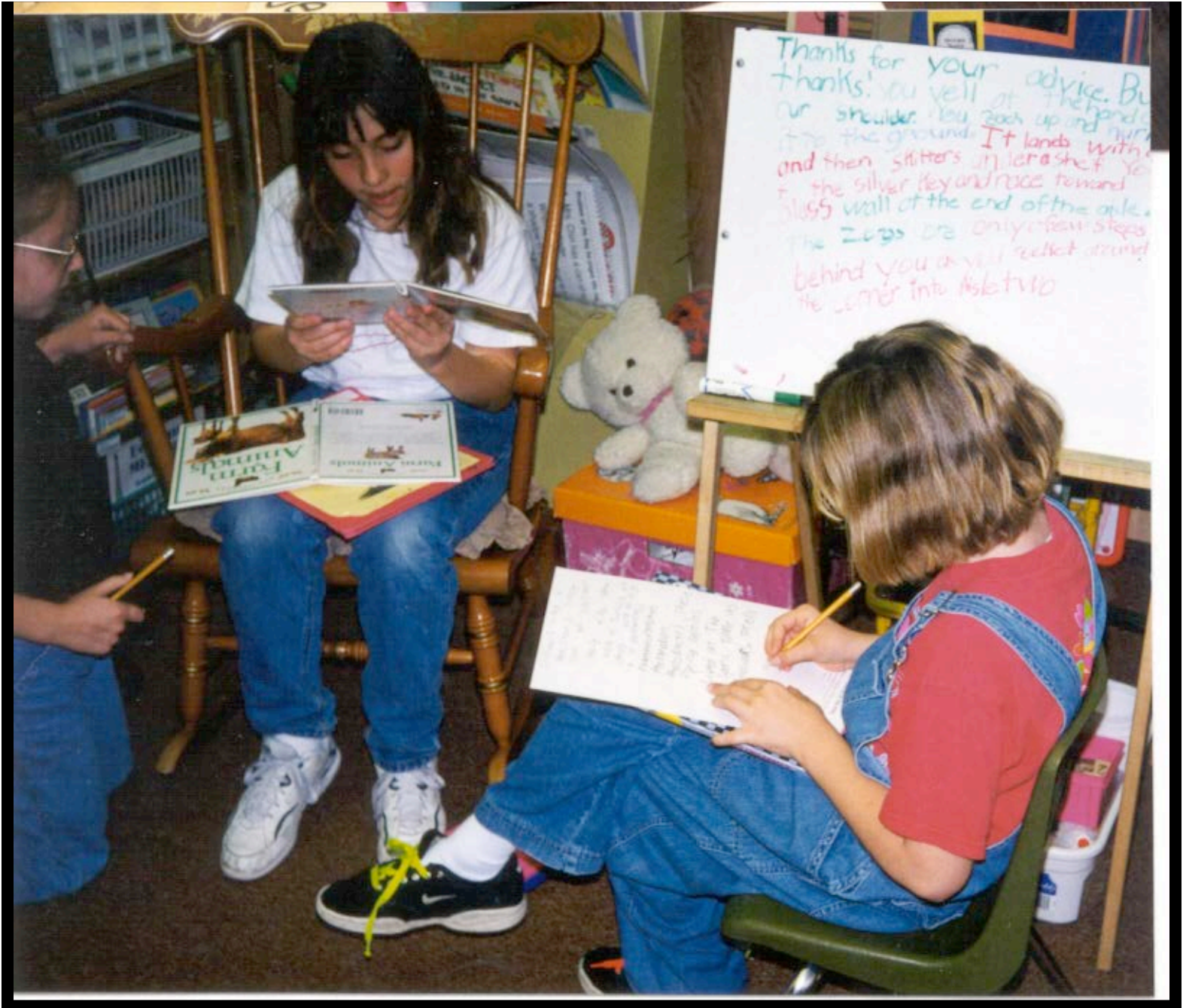
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It's all about the students.





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And the academic language

...

That students
need to reach
high standards, so
they can get to
their destination.



CM 282 © Clark Mishler,
Alaska Division of Tourism



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And everyone working
together to build bridges.



And hopefully *not* bridges to nowhere. . .



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And managing challenges...

Student
Mobility

Disrupted
educations

Low Level
Proficiency
in L1 and/
or L2



Inadequate
resources

Unqualified
teachers
Teacher turn-
over

Issues with
school
governance/
bureacracy

...

And these are just a few!



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**No time to go into details...
In the time I have, I will comment on...**

- What academic language is
- The steps teachers must take to teach it
- Challenges and ways to ensure that *all* students learn academic language





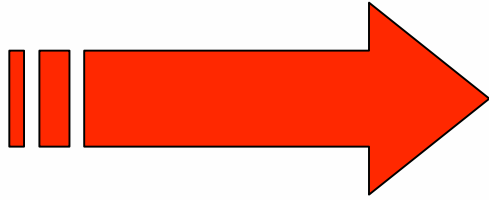
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Academic language: What is it?

**An *essential* component of
educating *all* students**



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Academic language

- Is associated with academic success and student empowerment
- Brings credibility to those who have attained it



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Lily Wong Fillmore and Catherine Snow
***What Teachers Need to Know about
Language***

ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and
Linguistics

[http://www.cal.org/ericcll/teachers/
teachers.pdf](http://www.cal.org/ericcll/teachers/teachers.pdf)



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Summarize texts, using linguistic cues to interpret and infer the writer's intentions and messages.

Extract meaning from texts and relate it to other ideas and information.

Evaluate evidence and arguments presented in texts and critique the logic of arguments made in them.

Recognize and analyze textual conventions used in various genres for special effect to trigger background knowledge or for perlocutionary effect.

Analyze texts, assessing the writer's use of language for rhetorical and aesthetic purposes and to express perspective and mood.

Compose and write an extended, reasoned text that is well developed and supported with evidence and details.



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When students use informal language instead of academic language, they might suffer from **linguistic discrimination**.

Linguistic discrimination is alive and well!





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**Let's look at the writing of a
person who had mastered
academic language.**





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"I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts, that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a **loss** so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of **the loved and lost**, and the solemn pride that must be yours, to have laid so costly **a sacrifice** upon the altar of Freedom."

The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln edited by Roy P. Basler, Volume VIII, "Letter to Mrs. Lydia Bixby" (November 21, 1864), pp. 116-117.



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**Hey, Lady--too bad your
kids kinda kicked the
bucket
sorry 'bout the newz,**

Abe



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Why do we need to teach Academic language?

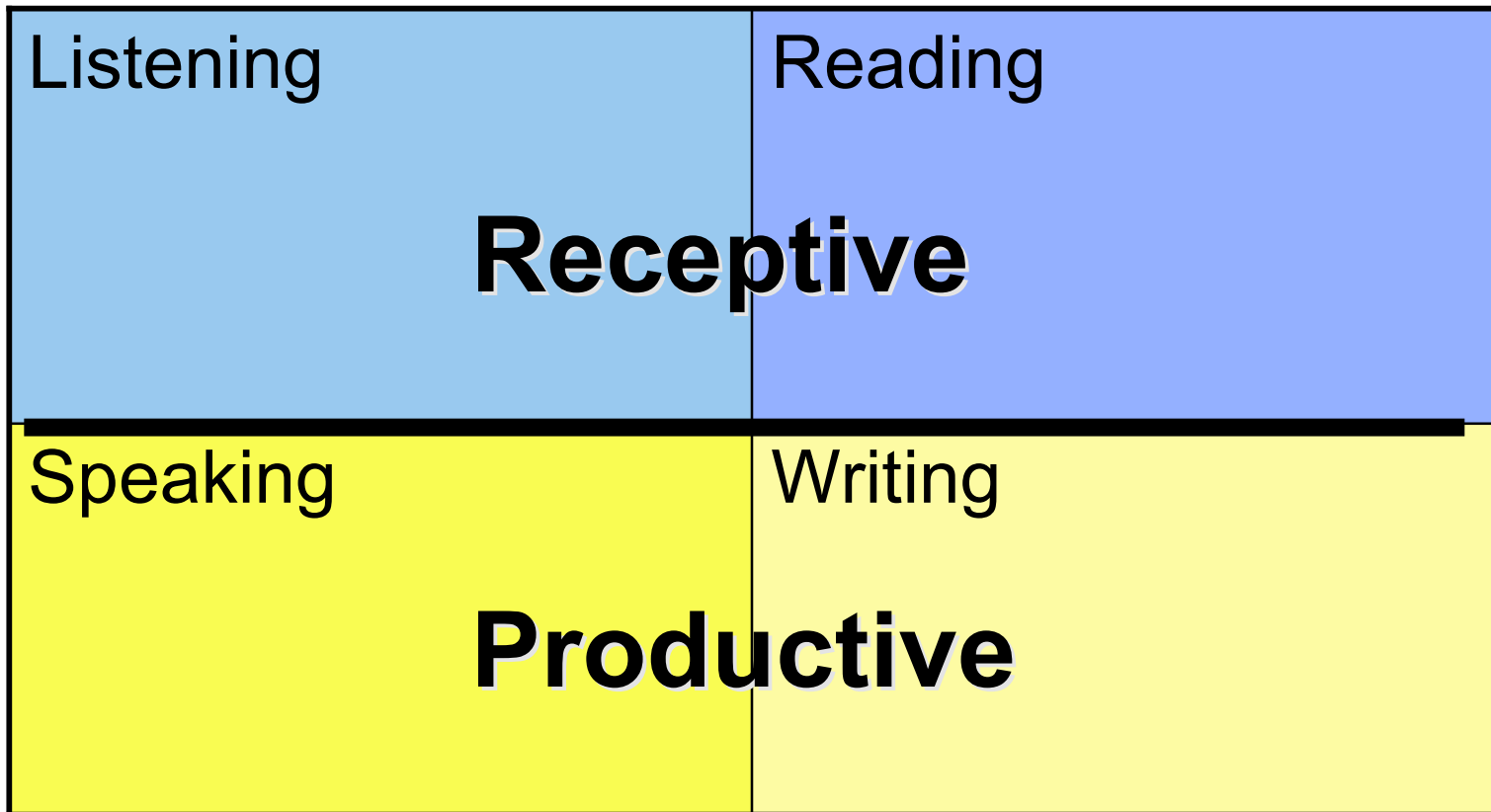
Overall, there is enormous pressure for many students to perform well in language, particularly in literacy.





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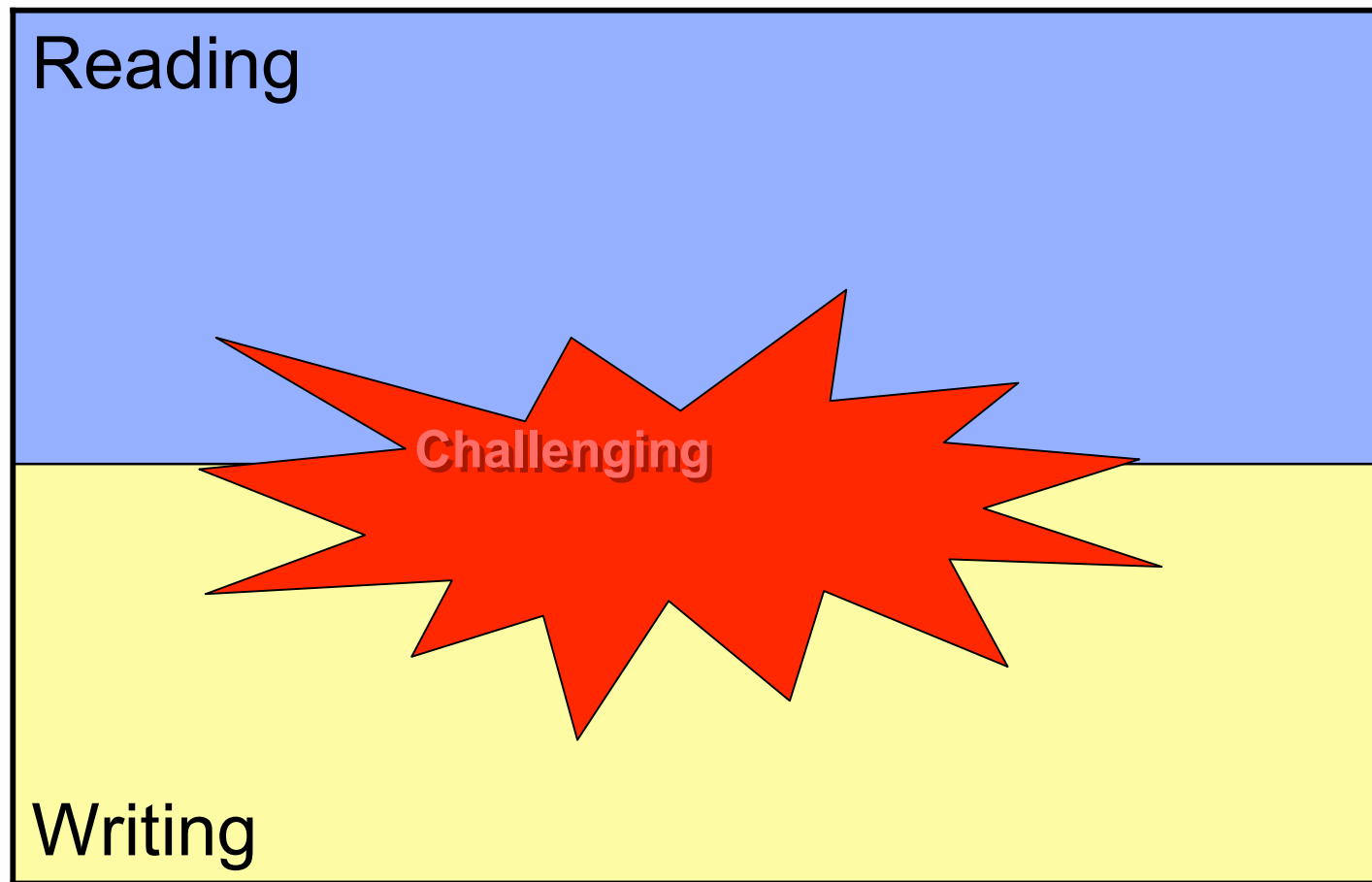
Four Skills Areas





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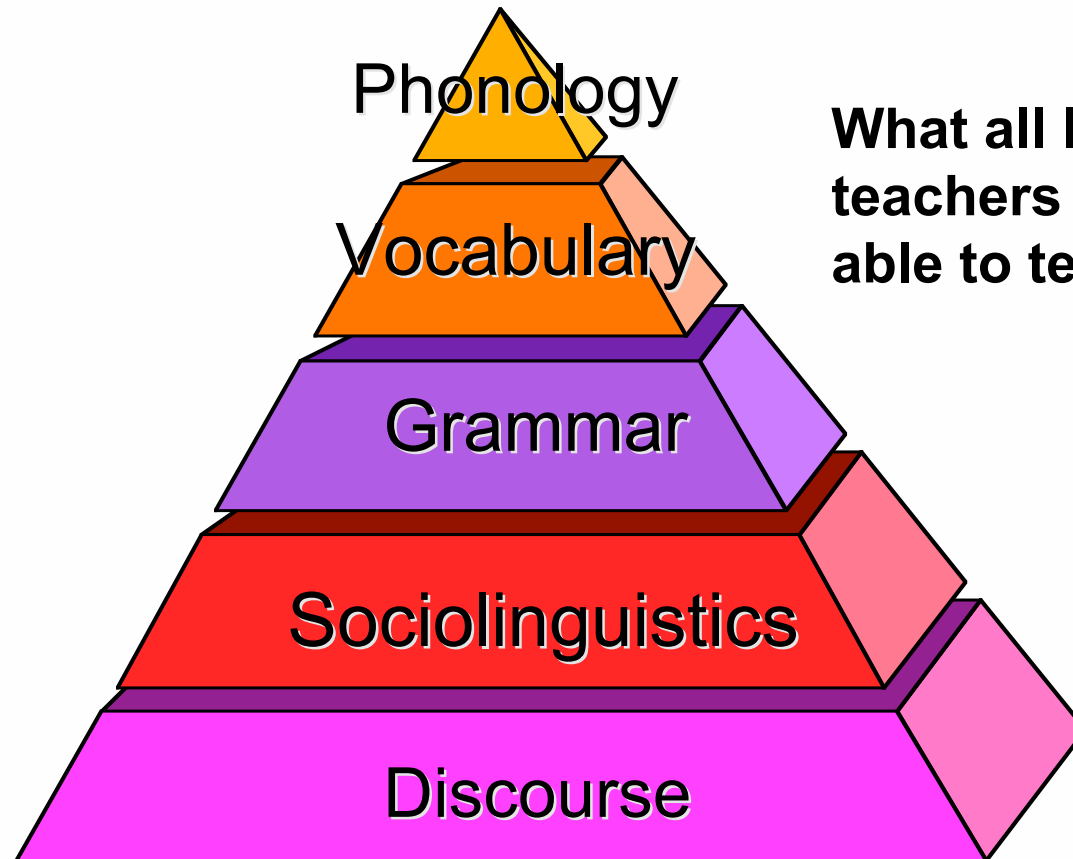
The Most Challenging Skills





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Language Components of Academic language



**What all language
teachers must be
able to teach.**



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The Phonology Component: Word Stress - A particular challenge

Science

ecology - ecolOgical

biology - biolOgical

technology - technolOgical

morphology - morpholOgical

Math

geometry - geomEtrical

Social Studies-History

history- histOrical

anthropology - anthropolOgical

etymology - etymolOgical



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The Phonology Component: Spelling - Another Challenge

An Ode to the Spelling Chequer

Janet E. Byford

"I've always had trubble with letters that
double

'Is it one or to S's?' I'd wine

But now, as I've tolled you this chequer is
grate

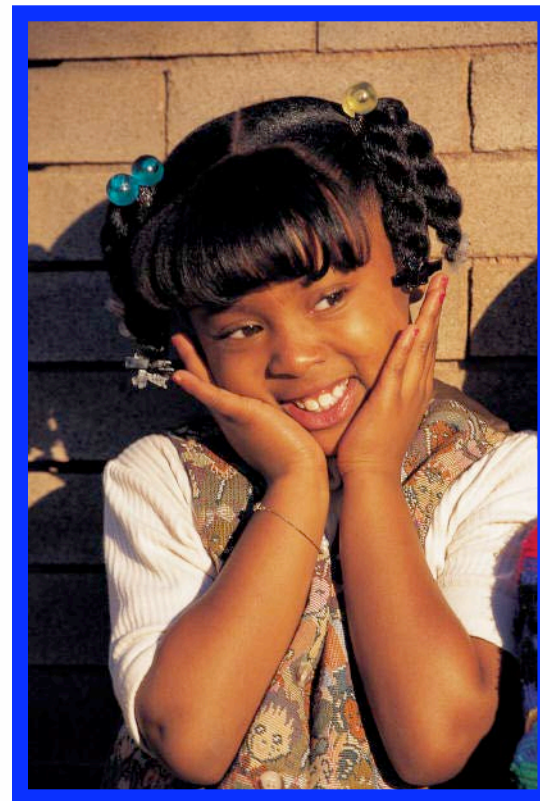
And its hi thyme you got won, like mine."



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The Vocabulary Component

We will not see many gains in reading scores unless we teach students vocabulary.





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Teaching vocabulary

makes an enormous

difference!



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What words should we teach?



Not words students can pick up easily on their own outside of class.

We should teach the words students need to read, discuss, and write about the texts they use in school.



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Needed: "Deliberate introduction of a wide range of vocabulary in the early primary years through oral sources (most children are limited in what they can read at this age level), ensuring coverage of about 4,000 root words by the end of grade 2." (p. 29)

Andrew Biemiller

Biemiller, A. (2004). Teaching vocabulary in the primary grades. In J.F. Baumann & E.J. Kame'enui (Eds.), *Vocabulary instruction: Research to practice* (pp. 28-40). New York: Guilford.



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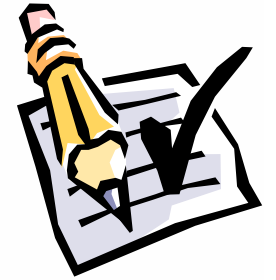
- All students require short, *structured* lessons focused on developing vocabulary, using approaches advocated by Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002 and Biemiller, 2003.

Laying the foundation for academic language!



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Vocabulary Instruction In the Upper Grades



- Sustained and focused vocabulary instruction is necessary.



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What words should be taught?

- Basic words students have not learned, especially those such as *since* that have grammatical functions
- Words used across the various content areas
- Content-specific words (introduced in content classes and practiced throughout the day)



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Basic, Everyday Words

- Everyday words that express relationships in time, space, quantity, direction, order, size, and age
hardly, scarcely, rarely, next, last, most, many, less, longer, older, younger, least, and higher.
- Everyday words that link sentences and that express logical relationships such as: *if, because, unless, same, alike, different from, opposite of, whether, since, unless, almost, probably, exactly, not quite, always, and never.*

Source: Wong-Fillmore. L. 2004. http://www.scoe.org/aiming_high/docs/AH_language.pdf



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Academic Words

Everyday Word

Academic Word

Live

Survive



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How is the use of **survive** different from the use of **live**?

My husband went to Catholic school. He says the nuns were lucky to survive.

- The nuns who taught him *lived*.
- The nuns *survived*.
- They are *survivors*.
- Their *survival* is remarkable.



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Content-Specific Words

- Photosynthesis
 - Estimation
 - Westward Expansion
 - Industrialism
- These types of words are best introduced and taught in content instruction, though they can be **reviewed and practiced** throughout the day—e.g., in ELD ELA, and reading instruction.



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Vocabulary Use In Specific Subjects Mathematics

Type of Words	Examples
1. Content words pertaining to mathematics	additive, monomial, denominator
2. Everyday vocabulary that has special meanings in mathematics	square, power, odd, even, equal
3. Synonyms	add, plus, combine, sum
4. Homophones	sum/some, whole/hole
5. Near Homonyms	fourths/fours
6. Difficult (semi-fixed) Collocations/Expressions	If ... then, If and only if... , given that, ...
7. Prepositions	divided into vs. divided by

(adapted from Mestre, J. 1988, p. 25)



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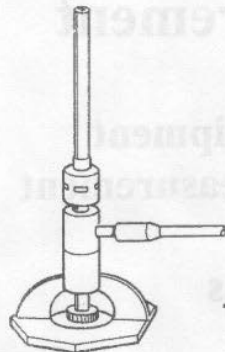
Lab #3 (Vocab)

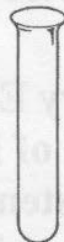
Lab #3. **LABORATORY EQUIPMENT**

Name _____

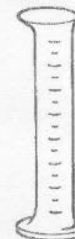
Match the following names of lab instruments and equipment with the correct picture.

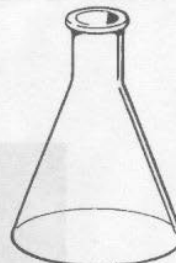
- a. beaker
- b. graduated cylinder
- c. balance
- d. Bunsen burner
- e. test tube
- f. test tube clamp
- g. funnel
- h. Erlenmeyer flask
- i. tongs
- j. ring stand

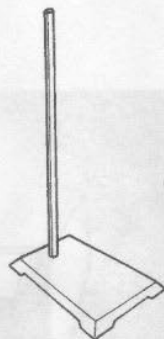








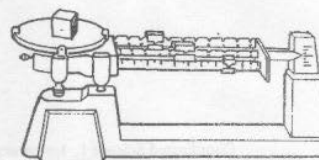








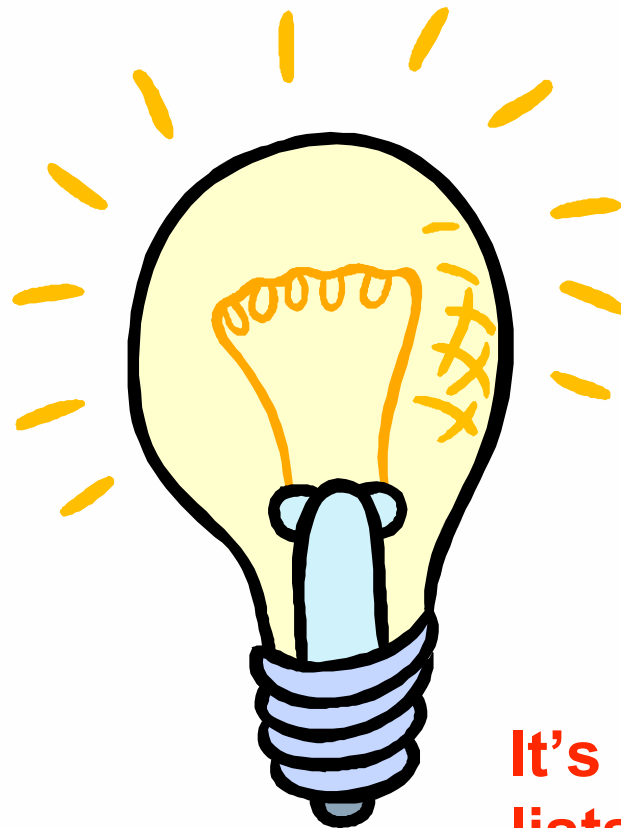






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Academic language is not just vocabulary!



**It's especially not word
lists!**



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Another Component: Grammar

- Knowledge that enables students to make sense and use grammatical features



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S

Grammar

Subject + Predicate

Scooby Doo + is a dog



S Conjunction S

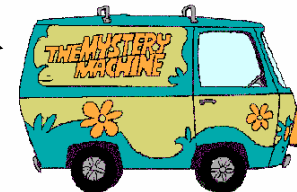
Scooby Doo is a dog + and + Shaggy is a human



Subj.

Pronoun
Noun

I
Mystery Machine



Article Noun the + Mystery Machine

Gerund

Driving

Noun Prep

Fred + to the right



NP RelClause Fred + who is standing



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Features of Academic Language

Passive Structures	<i>Five books were purchased by John.</i>
Conditional Clauses	<i>Assuming X is true, then Y</i>
Comparative Constructions	<i>If Thuy is taller than Harry, and Harry is taller than Miguel, then Thuy must be taller than Miguel.</i>



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Challenges For language Learners

Verb Tense	<i>I study language for three years.</i>
Modal Auxiliaries	<i>It might rains tomorrow.</i>
Gerunds and Infinitives	<i>She asked him help her.</i>



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Sociolinguistics

The ability to vary language
appropriately according to the
addressee



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Sociolinguistics

Knowledge of an increasingly large
number of genres



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Sociolinguistics: Genres

A **genre** is a type of writing.
Some call genres functions.



Genres or Types of Writing

Source: Jacqui D'warte

Math

Graphs

Tables

Proofs

Procedures/explanations

Problems

Proposals

Journals

Notes/observations

Science

Lab Reports - Procedures/explanations

Journals

Science Fiction

Field notes

Graphs

Explanations

Research

Arguments

Persuasive essays

Descriptions

Written debates

Letters

Editorials

Research papers

Data



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Genres or Types of Writing

Source: Jacqui D'warte

World Languages

Dialogues

Plays

Travelogues

Procedures

Narratives

Poetry

Newspaper Articles

Advertisements

Biographies

Letters

Interviews



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Genres or Types of Writing

Source: Jacqui D'warte

History/Social Science

Historical descriptions (factual, narrative)

Biographies

Posters

Research papers

Discussions of authors intentions and perspectives
(critical reviews)

Formulas

Timelines

Written debates

Persuasive essays

Compare and contrast essays

Arguments

Scenarios

Interviews



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Discourse

Knowledge of the ways in which language
(oral or written) is organized



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Discourse refers to the linguistic features that make organization salient.

- I. Introduction
 - A. Grab attention
 - B. State the thesis
- II. Body
 - A. Build the points
 - B. Develop ideas
 - C. Support main claim
- III. Conclusion
 - A. Reemphasize main idea

I. II. III.
Organization



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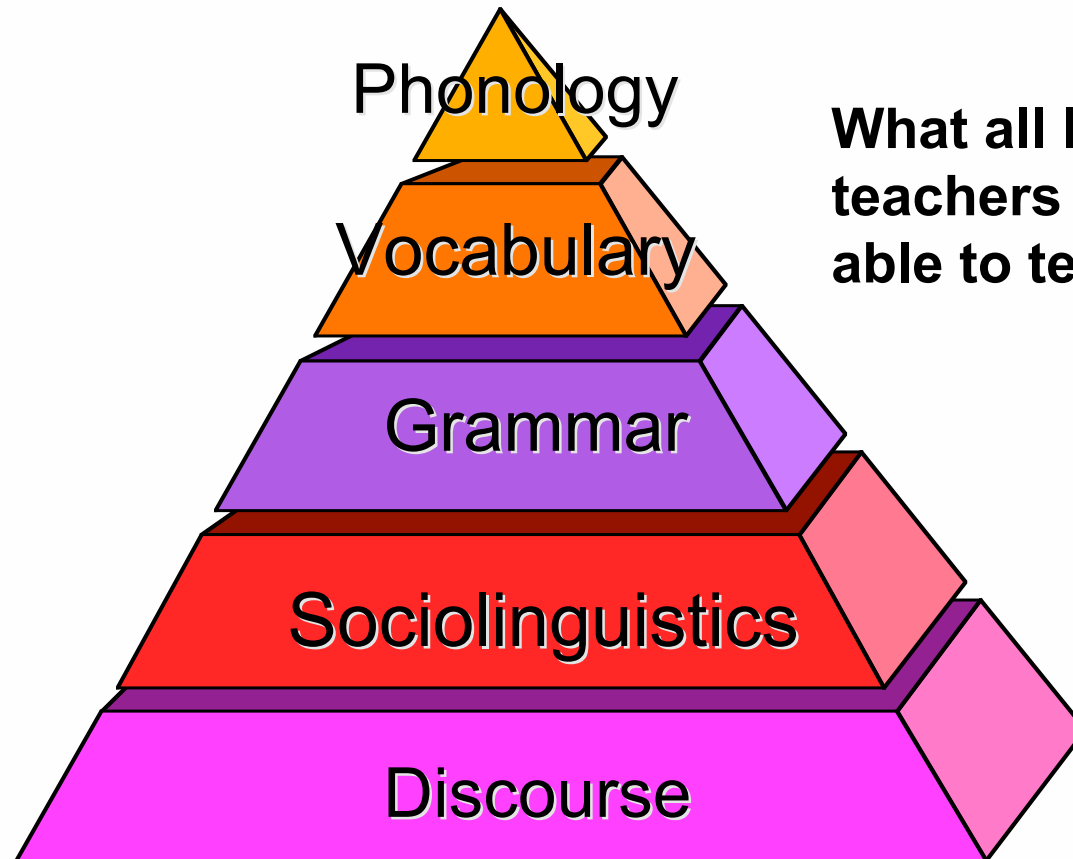
Discourse Features

Introductory statements	<i>This paper examines X.</i>
Transitional sentences	<i>Before discussing X, it will be useful to define Y.</i>
Linguistic ways to build on ideas (e.g., organizing words)	<i>This in turn leads to...; Another reason is that. . .</i>
Transition words that help to organize text	<i>In sum, In concluding</i>



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Language Components of Academic language



**What all language/ELD
teachers must be
able to teach.**

Why ELD standards will never be sufficient.



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Cognitive Aspects

- Knowledge of the world
- Content-specific knowledge
- Higher order thinking
- Study skills/Learning strategies
- Metalinguistic knowledge



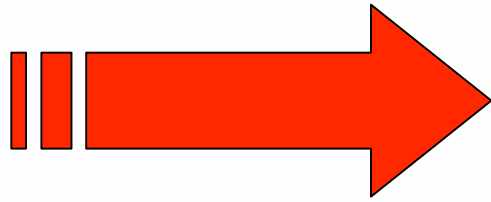
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The Dilemma

- If students do not receive challenging, academic instruction, they fail to acquire academic language.
- If they cannot understand their instruction or participate in their classes, many may eventually drop out of school.



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The Solution

- Teach students to access challenging academic instruction and participate in their classes.
- Provide scaffolded instruction.



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What's the problem?

Instruction that is *easy* for language learners to understand may help students understand the gist of concepts but *not* give them deep understanding of these concepts

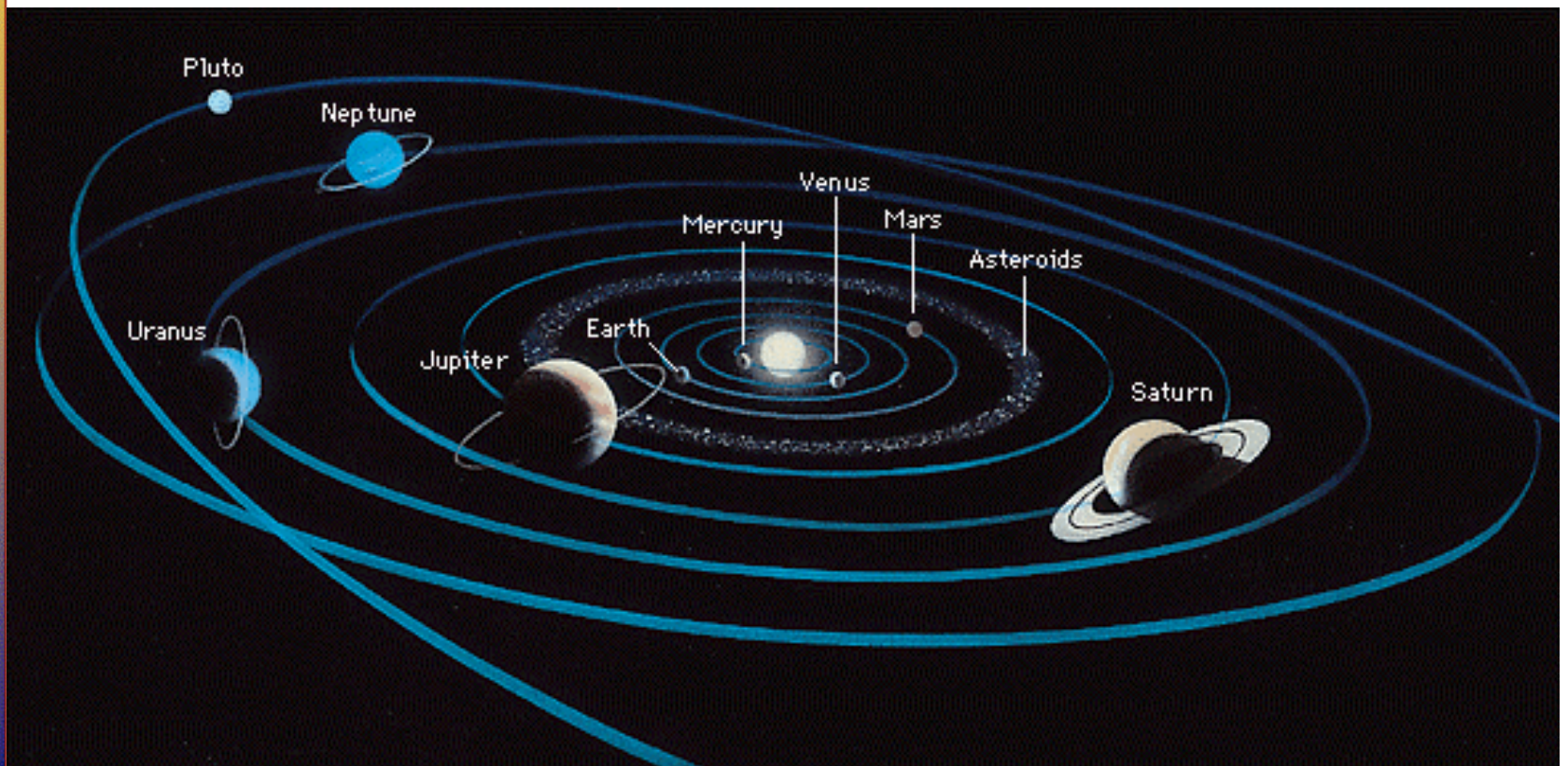
Got the picture?





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Making clay models of planets for weeks only helps students to understand the bare basics!





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**Simplifying
language
for students
does not
help them
acquire
academic
literacy!**



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Jupiter



Jupiter is the largest planet in the solar system. Its diameter is 88,846 miles (142,984 kilometers), more than 11 times that of Earth, and about one-tenth that of the sun. It would take more than 1,000 Earths to fill up the volume of the giant planet. When viewed from Earth, Jupiter appears brighter than most stars. It is usually the second brightest planet—after Venus.



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Jupiter



Jupiter is a big, big planet. Jupiter is very bright.



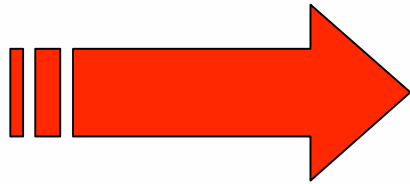
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**Comprehensible input is
necessary -- but not
sufficient.**

It will not lead to the development of
academic language.



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Not Less and Lower

- Not: *Less* instruction and at a *lower* level
- But: *More* instruction so children reach a *higher* level!



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Steps Teachers Must Take





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What *All* Teachers Must Be Able to Teach

- ✓ Reading comprehension
- ✓ Writing
- ✓ Vocabulary



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Steps
teachers
must
take...



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	Helpful	Necessary
• Include language objectives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Provide clear student-friendly explanations of language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Model language use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Provide sufficient review and practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Provide formative assessment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



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Differentiation Instruction



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One size does not fit all.



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Needs of all students who are not making much progress improving their language

- English fundamentals
- Academic language



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Obstacles



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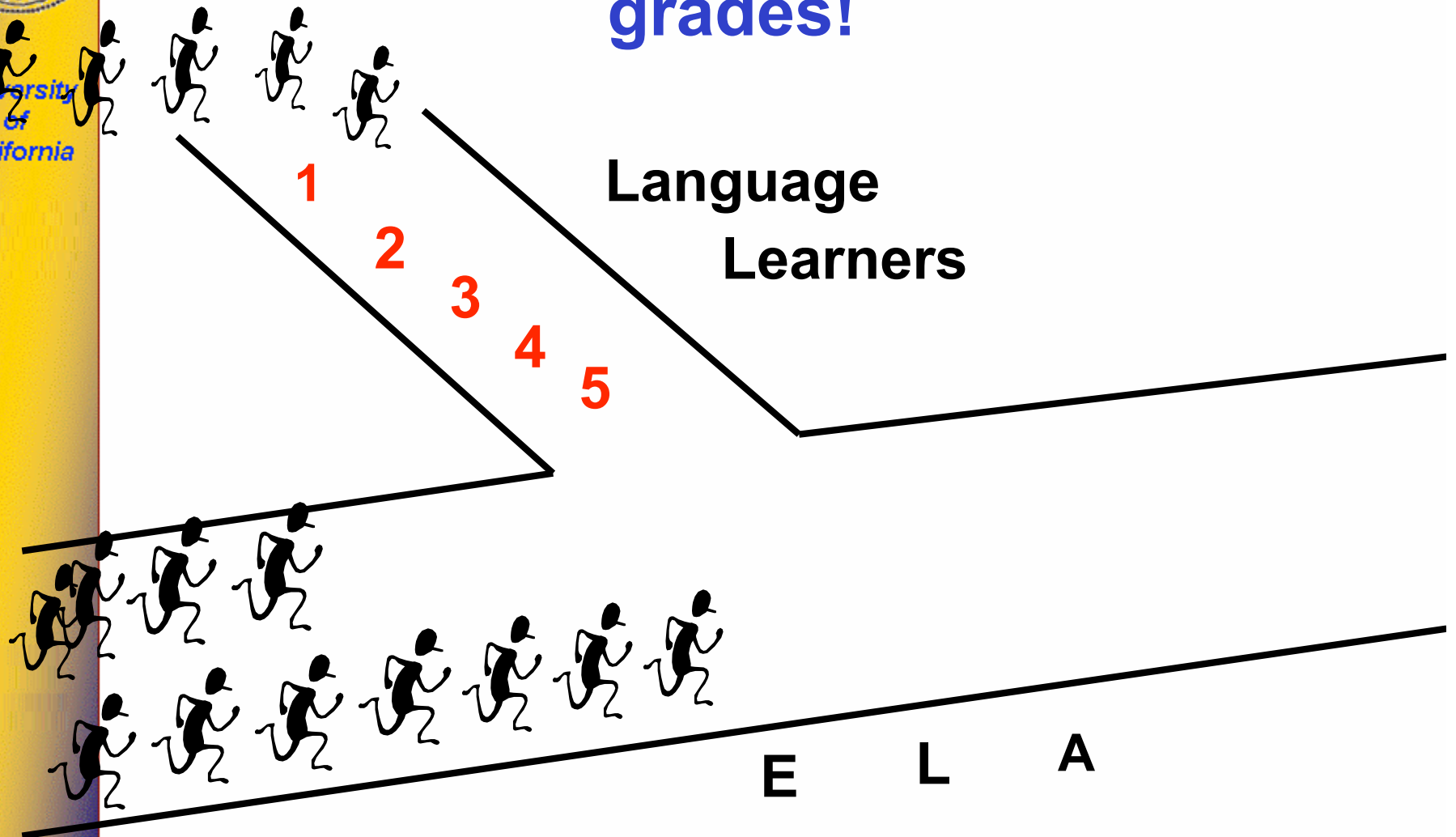
What are the obstacles?

- The misplacement of students in the incorrect programs and services
- A paucity of teachers with specialized knowledge
- Inadequate support for teachers and students
- Inadequate curricular materials and assessments



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There is a lot to teach,
especially in the upper
grades!



Language
Learners

E L A



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Solutions



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The good news: Teachers can work together and provide English learners with a coherent curriculum addressing the State's standards!



The critics argue:

Using a common, coherent curriculum is just another instructional bandwagon...

...There's no scientific evidence to support it...

It won't work, because it leads to "one size fits all" instruction. . . .

It limits teachers' freedom. . . .

...too many scripted tasks. . . .

It stops teachers from using their professional judgment...

It prevents students from developing English!



The evidence suggests:

When teachers lack expertise in teaching language. . .

they need a common curriculum.

When students need instructional routines. . .

they need a common curriculum.

When students frequently move from one school to the next . . .

they need a common curriculum.

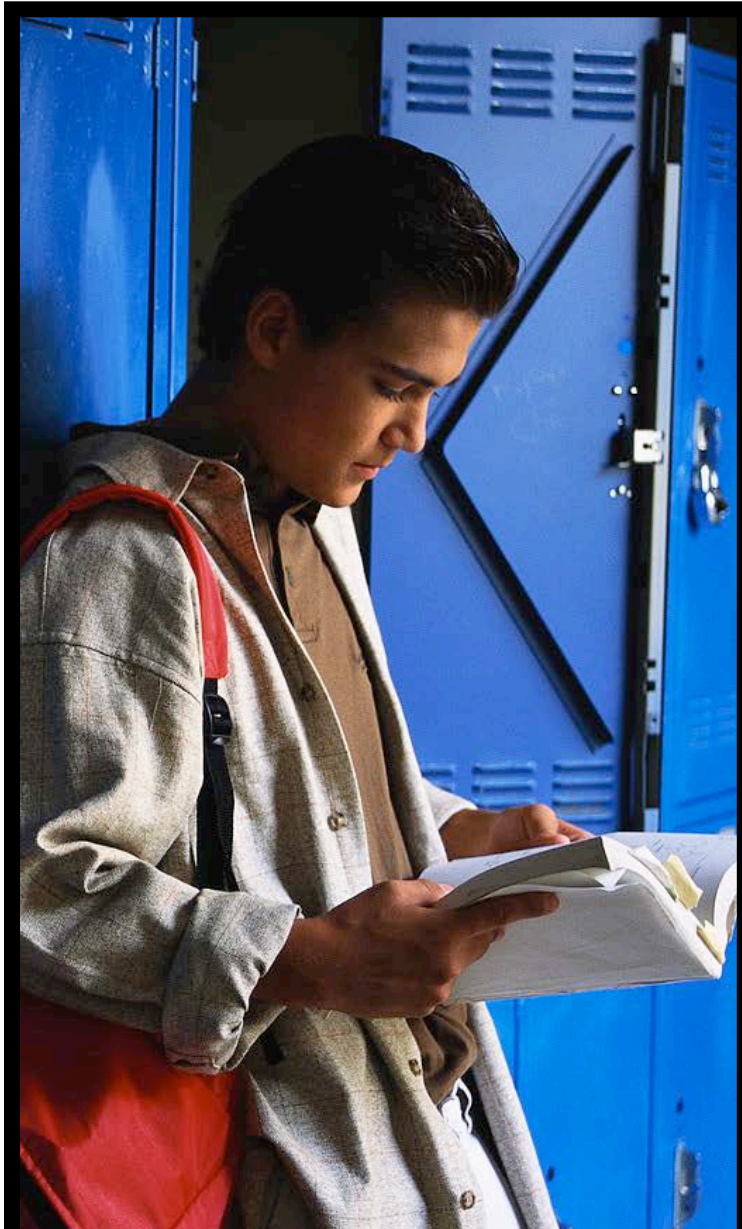
When teachers lack proficiency in the language they teach. . .

they need a common curriculum!



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Robin Scarcella argues:



When teachers need to teach something so difficult and so extraordinarily complex as academic English. . .

The goal of teaching is not entertainment; it's education.

. . .English learners deserve a strong common curriculum.



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Greater Emphasis on Vocabulary

- The inclusion vocabulary instruction on a regular, daily basis.
- The inclusion of scaffolded vocabulary instruction.
- The instruction of word use, not just word meaning.

Closing the Achievement Gap



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Comprehension	Production
Spelling	Spelling
	Pronunciation (sounds and word stress)
Word Meanings	Grammatical Information (e.g., whether a verb requires an object or is followed by a specific preposition, word placement)
Etymology	??
Synonyms	Synonyms (for cohesion in writing)
Antonyms	Antonyms (for cohesion)
Homonyms	
Orthography	Orthography
Idioms/Fixed Expressions (Collocations)	Idioms and Fixed Expressions (Collocations)
Metaphors, Similes, Figures of Speech	Metaphors, Similes, Figures of Speech
Word Associations	Word Associations (for cohesion)
Register / Word Choice	Register / Word Choice
Word Clines (list of words dealing with the same concept, arranged in order of intensity; e.g., <i>freezing, cold, tepid, warm, hot, and scorching</i>)	Word Clines (for cohesion and precision)
Parts of Speech (derivations)	Parts of Speech (derivations—for cohesion and accuracy)
Roots and Affixes	Roots and Affixes (for cohesion and accuracy)



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Greater Emphasis on Writing

- The inclusion of writing instruction on a regular, daily basis.
- The inclusion of instruction that *scaffolds academic writing -- not just informal, social everyday writing.*

Closing the Achievement Gap



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Guided Practice: Written Descriptions



Direction to Students: Write a paragraph describing Miss Lottie. You may want to use some of these words and expressions:

To be poorly clad	<i>Miss Lottie was poorly clad.</i>
To be/seem drawn	<i>Her face seemed drawn.</i>
To be sorrowful	<i>Miss Lottie was sorrowful.</i>
To look stoic	<i>She looked stoic.</i>



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Converting Informal language into the Language Of School





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Converting an Informal Text Into the Language of School



Jack Springer thinks that the government should allow people the right to own a gun but I don't agree with him. People like him think that the government is infringing on our democratic rights when it restricts gun ownership. They think that most people who own guns are responsible citizens who keep the guns for sport and recreation. They also think that the police are unable to stop violent crime and we need guns to protect ourselves. But I think he is wrong. I agree with Josephine Bluff who thinks that guns increase the amount of violent crime in the community. I also think that human life is worth more than giving shooters the right to go shooting on the weekend. And I also think that many of the guns that are kept around the house end up being used in violent domestic disputes or teenage suicides.



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Converting an Informal Text Into the Language of School

Jack Springer maintains that the government should allow people the right to own a gun. **This position asserts that** the government is infringing on our democratic rights when it restricts gun ownership. Most people who own guns, **so the argument goes**, are responsible citizens who keep the guns for sport and recreation. **It is further contended that** the police are unable to stop violent crime and we need guns to protect ourselves. **However, as Josephine Bluff states**, guns increase the amount of violent crime in the community. **Moreover**, human life is worth more than giving shooters the right to go shooting on the weekend. In addition, many of the guns that are kept around the house are used in violent domestic disputes or teenage suicides.

Adapted from: Bill Daley, 1997

<http://www.eslplanet.com/teachertools/argueweb/inform.html>



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What are the characteristics of informal and academic English?

Informal English	Academic English



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The Inclusion of Instructional Feedback

- Underlining/circling errors
- Using check marks (✓) in the margins
- Using symbols over errors
- Giving students a global response on their use of language at the top of the page (such as checks, ✓ +, ✓ , ✓ or grades, A-F)--used judiciously.



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Greater Emphasis on Reading *Comprehension*

The instruction of reading comprehension on a regular, daily basis.

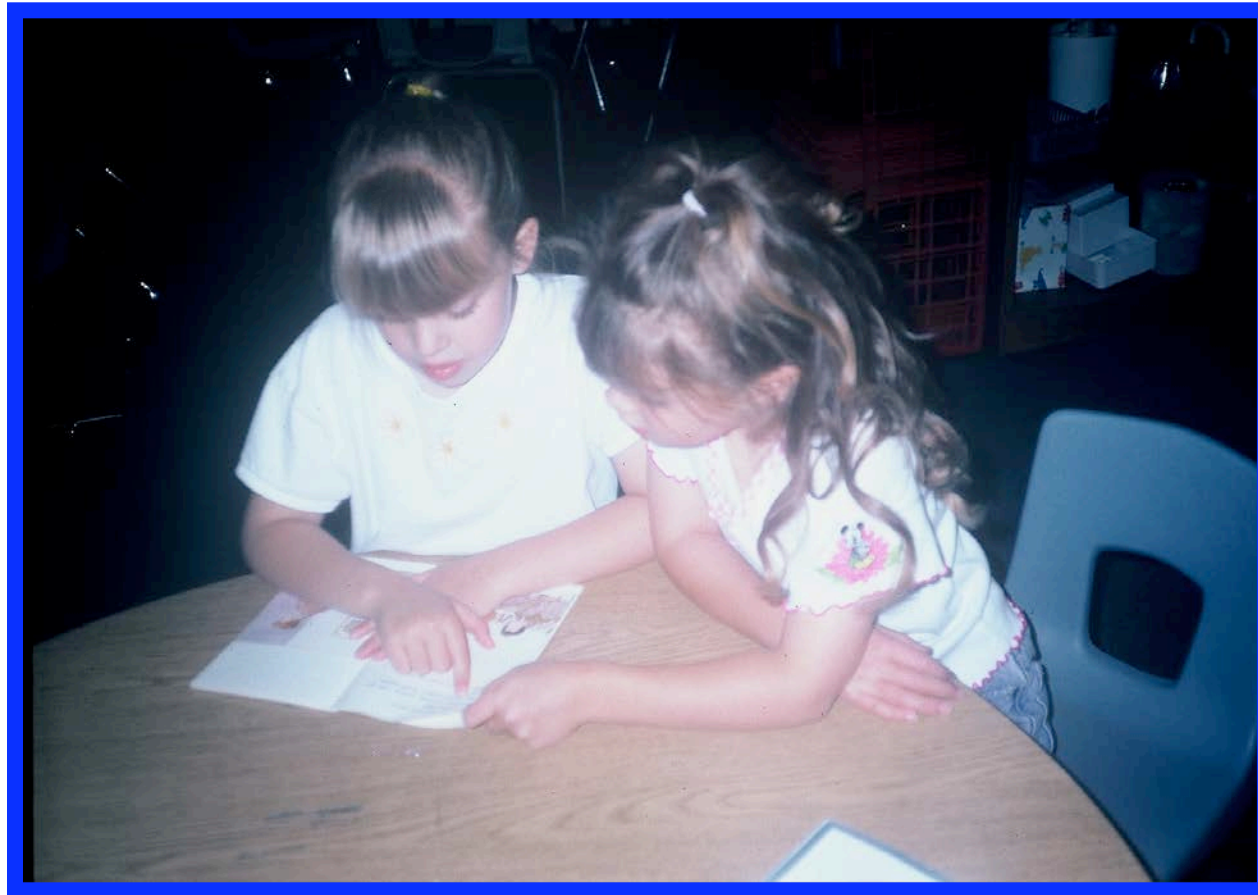
1. Reading strategies -- including note-taking with graphic organizers
2. Language analysis and discussions -- as a critical part of reading comprehension instruction

Closing the Achievement Gap



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Partner Work



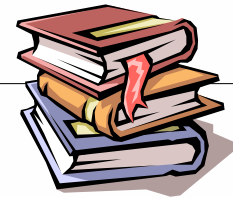


Example

Partner Sharing

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Partner Sharing
(6 minutes)



1 minute: Review “The Doggy Text.”

1 minute: Identify the main idea.

4 minutes: Take turns summarizing “The Doggy Text.” Use some of these words:

The main idea is _____ .

Take on human mannerisms

Share an ice cream cone

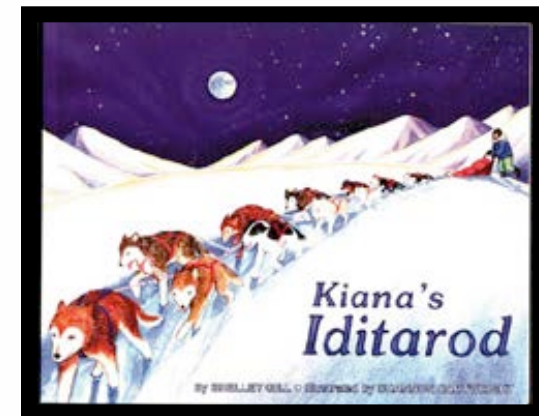
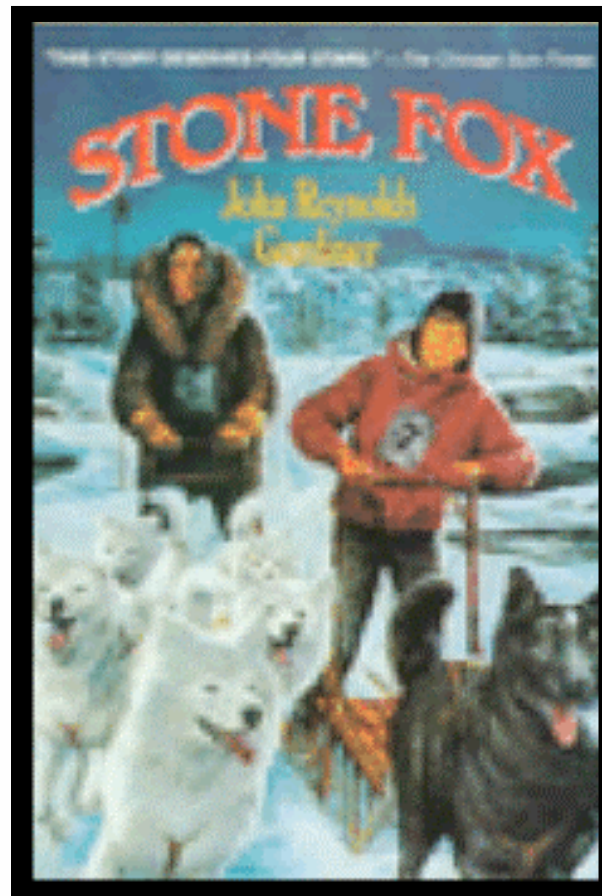
Mimic





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Greater Emphasis on Reading *Comprehension*





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Explicit Emphasis on the Development of Grammar

- In core instruction in the primary grades
- In core instruction in the upper grades
- In core instruction in ELD/ESL instruction

Closing the Achievement Gap



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Greater Emphasis on the Development of Academic Language in Oral Communication

- Well-structured activities designed to develop all students' oral language.

Closing the Achievement Gap



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Grouping Practices

Ineffective

Effective

Unstructured
Cooperative
Learning with NO
Reading Material

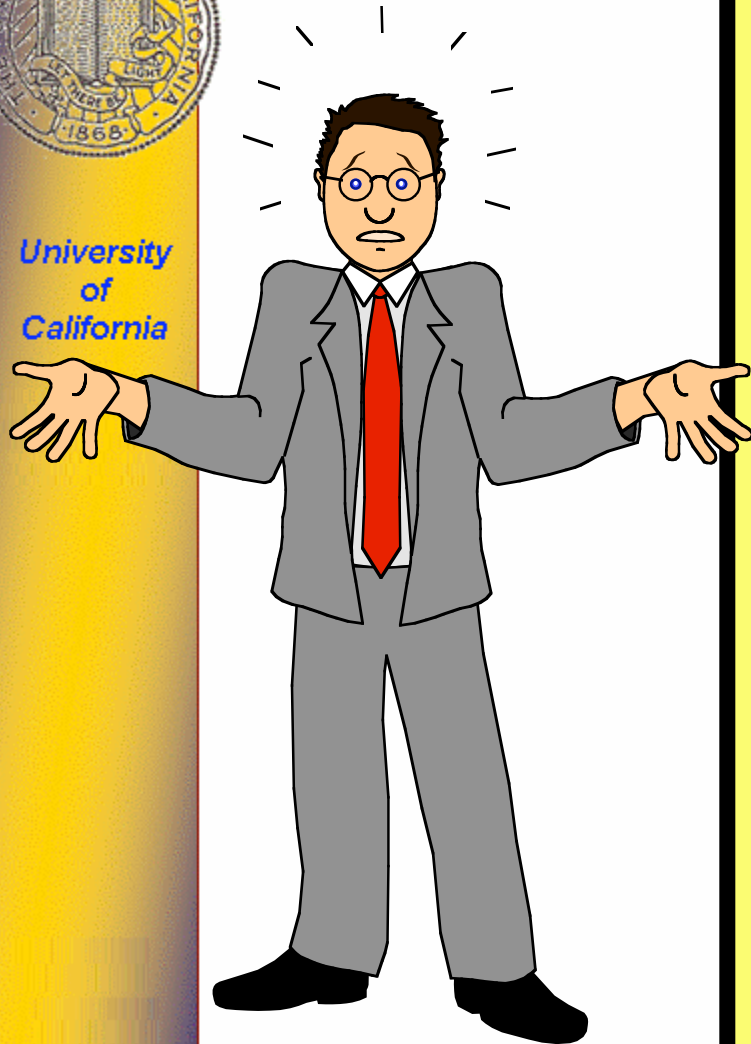
Carefully Structured
Cooperative
Learning Tasks with
Reading Material

Free Conversation

Carefully Structured
Conversational
Tasks



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**Remember:
Learners tend to
acquire the
language of
those with whom
they associate.**



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They understand that students learn new language by **correctly** practicing the language repeatedly until the language is mastered.

“Practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect.”

Vince Lombardi





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Correctly using language again and again leads to accuracy and fluency.

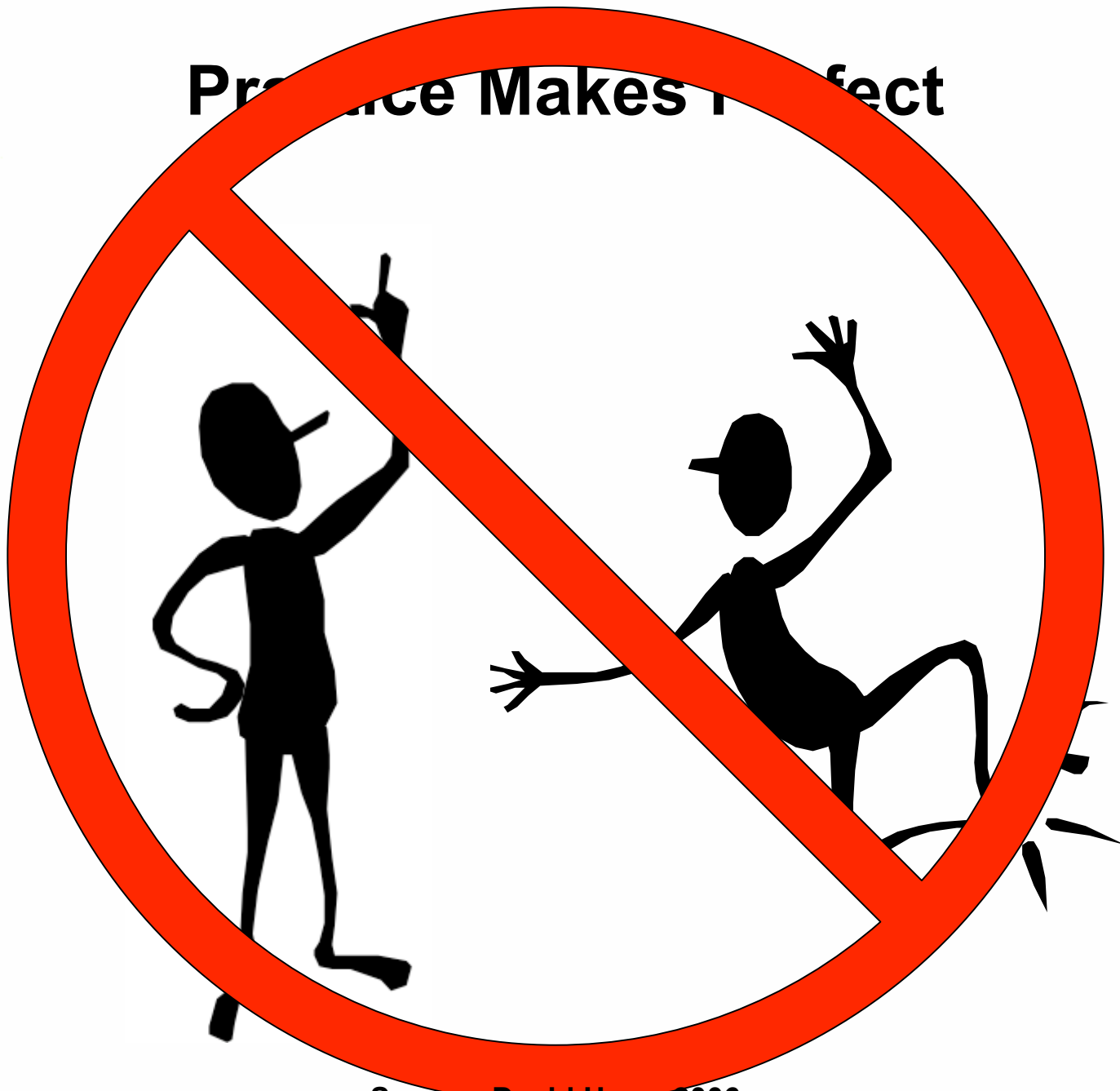


Adapted from David Howe 2006



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Practice Makes Perfect



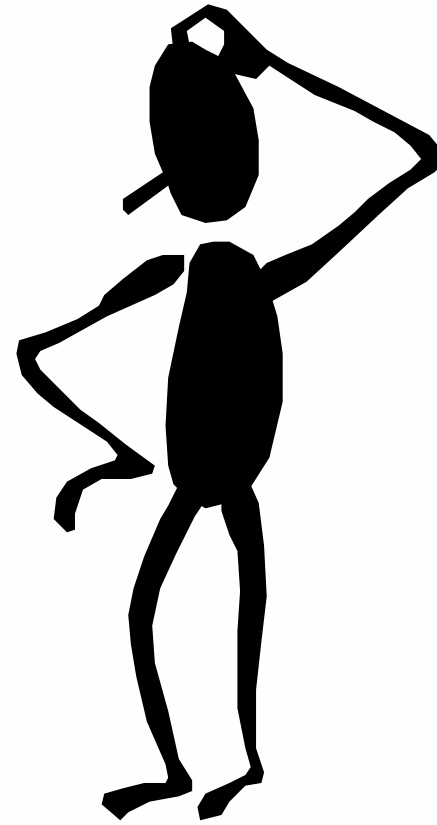
Source: David Howe 2006



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Practice Makes Permanent!

If you practice a feature of language incorrectly,
you can learn it incorrectly!

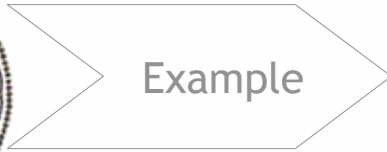


Source: David Howe 2006



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The importance of getting students to *use* specific language features is often overlooked.



Effective Guided Practice: Oral Descriptions



Teachers can ask students to describe an object, a person, or a concept that has been described in detail in their textbooks.



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Effective Guided Practice: Oral Descriptions

Direction to Students: Describe Confucianism. Use some of these words and expressions:

the establishment of	<i>The establishment of Confucianism as a theory took place after Confucius died.</i>
reliance on	<i>Those who came to have a reliance on Confucius followed his advice and honored him as a teacher.</i>
unification of	<i>The belief in Confucianism led to the unification of diverse regions.</i>



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The Inclusion of Language Objectives -- Core Instruction and ELD/ESL Instruction

- Instruction designed to help all learners reach particular language objectives tied to standards-based, curriculum-embedded materials.

Closing the Achievement Gap



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In the Primary Grades (K-3)

- A strong foundation in language required for the development of academic language
- Emphasis on reading
- Scaffolding to access content area instruction
- For newcomers: Survival language instruction, school navigational language



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In the Upper Grades (4-12)

- An intensive, leveled ELD/ESL curriculum for those two years and below grade level followed by a mainstream core curriculum with appropriate scaffolded instructional supports
- Continued emphasis on the foundation of academic language tied to content instruction in the core curriculum



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When do teachers need to teach students the foundation of academic language?

Each day! In all classes.



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Timing is critical if you want students to do well on important tests and succeed academically.





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How long does it take learners to acquire academic language?

Much depends on instruction.

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Why do students fail to acquire academic language?

- Absence of exposure to books and to people who use academic language
- Absence of opportunities to use the language
- Absence of motivation to develop and use academic language
- Absence of solid instruction including sufficient and supportive feedback



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What does the research show?

- ALL learners, must have interventions just as soon as their instructional needs appear. Gaps in learning need to be addressed as soon as possible. Otherwise students may ****never**** catch up to native language speaking peers.

Immediate intervention
based on assessment:



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Conclusions

- To gain advanced language skills, students need increased instruction in academic language-- whether in their first language or in their second.
- Those who have a strong foundation in the language, including an awareness of language use, are best prepared to develop academic language.



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**With academic English,
dreams can come true.**





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A Letter from a University Student Requesting Exemption from UCI's ESL Requirement

Dear Mrs. Robbin

I really not need humanity 20 writing class because since time I come to United State all my friend speak language. Until now everyone understand me and I dont ' need study language. I don 't know Vietnam language. I speak only English. I have no communication problem with my friend in dorm. My English teacher in high school key person to teach me. My teacher explain to me that how important the book was for the student and persuaded me read many book. I get A in English through out high school and I never take ESL. I gree that some student need class but you has not made a correct decision put me in English class. Please do not makes me lose the face. I have confident in English.



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Letter from the Same University Student After Instruction

Hi Robin, I am apologize for having to send you this information at the last minute. I still need a letter. This letter should discuss my qualifications, skills and accomplishments. It should be written on letterhead and addressed "To Whom It May Concern" and submitted with a Recommendation Form (which I will give to you tomorrow). Please write a letter that addresses my academic achievement, seriousness of purpose, personal maturity, and whether or not I possess the skills necessary to adapt to a new environment. Also, please address my ability to think analytically, my aptitude, my overall maturity and my independence. Thank you so much Robin for doing this for me. I truly appreciate it. Let me know if you have any last minutes questions.



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References

Doing What Works is a web site developed by the U.S. Department of Education. It summarizes findings vetted by IES and provides instructional implementation ideas and examples to assist teachers in the field. Currently the pilot site dealing with language Learners is ready at http://65.103.99.76/dww_new/index.html. You will find much of the research supporting this presentation cited on this web site.



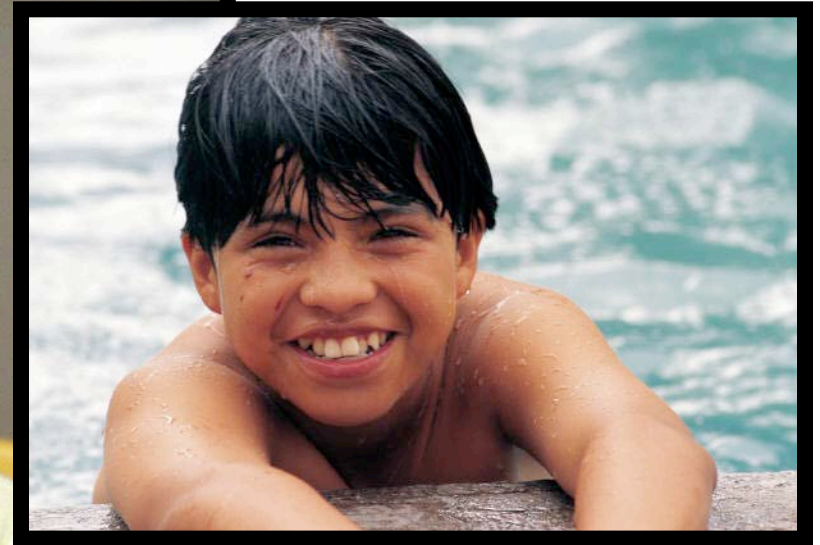
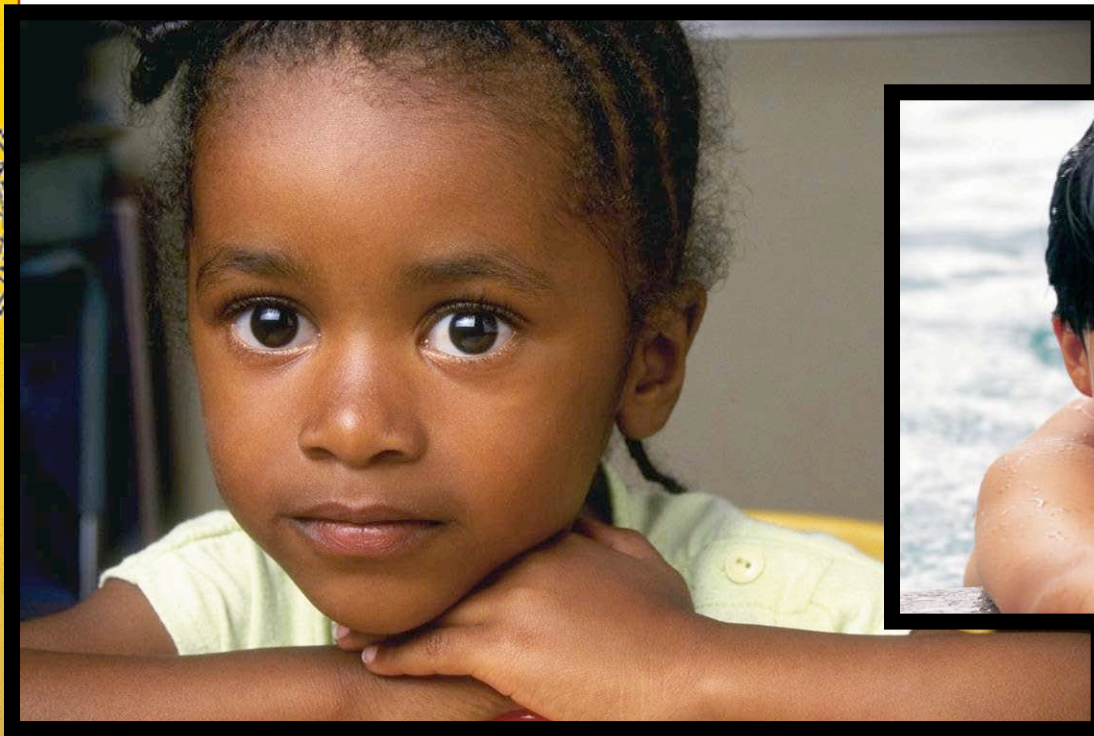
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- David J. Francis, Mabel Rivera, Nonie Lesaux, Michael Kieffer (2006). *Practical Guidelines for the Education of language Language Learners: Book 1: Research-based Recommendations for Instruction and Academic Interventions Book 2: Research-based Recommendations for Serving Adolescent Newcomers Book 3: Research-based Recommendations for the Use of Accommodations in Large-scale Assessments.*



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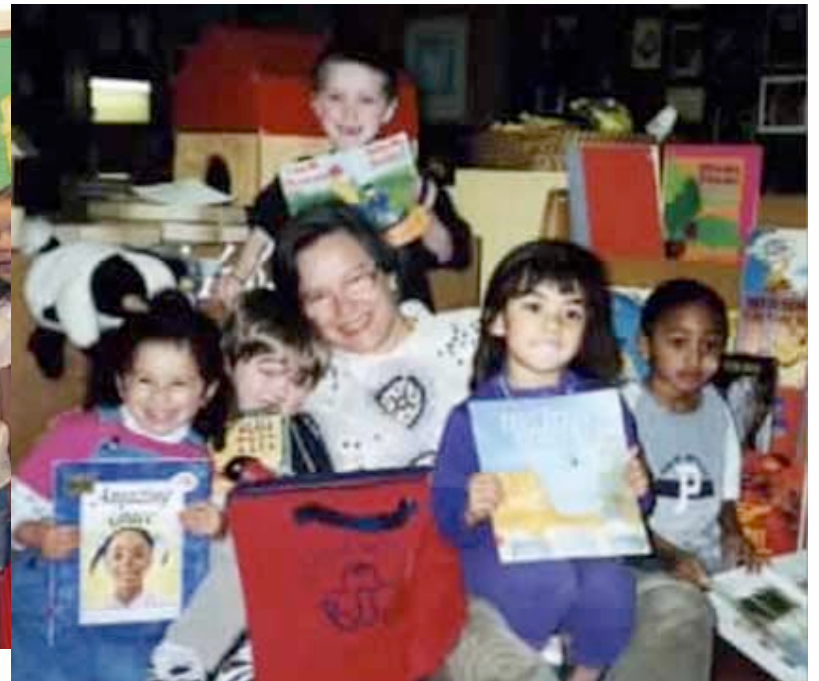


Thank-you very much





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