



The Kindergarten Chronicles

Robyn Markovic, Early Literacy Trainer, RPDP Kimberlie Bayer, Kindergarten Teacher, Darnell ES

Immersed in English

Imagine being totally immersed in the language and culture of an unfamiliar country. What if you were expected to learn the language while also learning the core subjects of reading, writing, math, and science? Now imagine being only five or six years old and having to accomplish this task. Our ELL learners require some different teaching strategies and additional support to become successful readers and writers of English.

The Reading First legislation brought about by the *No Child Left Behind Act* touts the benefits of "explicit and systematic" instruction in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies. This is a daunting task when considering our English speaking students. It is a Herculean feat in regards to our ELL students. However, there are a few things to keep in mind. First, studies have shown a high correlation between students' literacy in their native language and learning English. Next, priority should be given to developing students' oral English proficiency. Finally, formal reading instruction should begin only when students have an adequate level of English oral proficiency. So how do you best meet the needs of your ELL students?

This year, I have several students from Mexico, one student from India, and another student from Honduras. They have taught me a great deal thus far about my own teaching. Here are a few strategies I have gained in the areas of phonemic awareness and phonics. Next month's issue will contain strategies for supporting ELL

students in the dimensions of vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and writing.

Phonemic Awareness: Some English sounds (phonemes) are not present in all languages and may be difficult to pronounce. For example, I had to learn that the Indian dialect spoken by one of my students has no sound for /v/. His utterance of this sound is very close to our sound for /f/. Now I know when we sing *Willaby, Wallaby, Woo* with the /v/ sound, his version will sound like "fillaby, fallaby, foo." My ELL students are quick to memorize songs, poems, and chants that have rhythm and rhyme. Be careful to focus on only one sound, letter, or skill. ELL students can become easily confused if too many skills are taught at once.

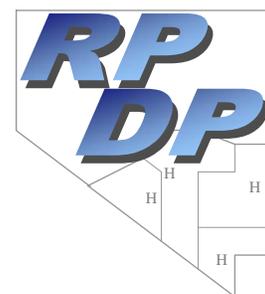
Phonics: This dimension encompasses concepts about print such as reading left to right and top to bottom as well as concept of word. Some of our English speaking students may also need to learn these concepts too. Activities such as Daily News and journal writing reinforce these concepts for students. Using picture cards to practice specific sounds and letters allow ELL students an additional reference for the unfamiliar English alphabetic principle. As I introduce each letter, I take special care to ensure my ELL students know the English words for the corresponding pictures.

Written By: Kimberlie Bayer, Darnell ES

Southern Nevada
Regional Professional
Development Program

Volume 1, Issue 5

February 2006



Bill Hanlon, Director

Food for Thought

"Reading is the greatest single effort that the human mind undertakes and one must do so as a child."

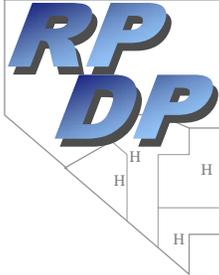
-John Steinbeck

"Our ELL students have rich backgrounds in their native languages, literature, and cultures. Each day, I wonder what they will teach me!"

-Kimberlie Bayer

**Southern Nevada
Regional Professional
Development Program**

515 West Cheyenne, Suite C
North Las Vegas, NV 89030



Literacy Websites

For Kindergarten and Other Grade Levels

www.kconnect.com

www.thekcrew.net

www.kinderkorner.com

* www.literacycenter.net

www.ilovethatteachingidea.com

www.abcteach.com

www.teachingheart.net

www.teachers.net

*Especially helpful for ELL and Special Needs Students.

◆ **Third Trimester Benchmark Classes**

Third Trimester Benchmark classes will be held March 9-11 at Katz ES. Register on Pathlore.

◆ **Literacy Centers for K-1 Teachers**

A few seats are still available for the upcoming classes at Jeffers ES and Lamping ES. Register on Pathlore.

Comprehension is "Key"

Below are the 7 Keys to Comprehension from the book titled, *7 Keys to Comprehension* by Susan Zimmerman and Chryse Hutchins and suggestions for implementing these strategies with your students.

1. **Encourage your student to create sensory images:**

- While reading a story, stop and ask your child to predict what will happen next.
- Share your memories when you hear an old song on the radio or read a favorite story.

2. **Help your student develop background knowledge:**

- Before you read to your student, ask him to share what he knows about the topic. Don't forget to share nonfiction books too.
- As you read, share your thoughts about how you relate to the book. These are your connections.

3. **Encourage your student to ask**

questions:

- Before reading a story, look at the cover and ask your child if she has any questions. Share your questions about the story.

4. **Help your student draw inferences:**

- Play word games such as 20 questions.
- Sing rhyming songs and omit the rhyming words. Your student should fill in the missing words.

5. **Assist your student in determining important details:**

- Help your student find answers to questions as you read.

- Talk about the main idea of the story or book.

6. **Enable your student to synthesize, or bring together, his**

thoughts:

- Have your student retell the important parts of the story to create a simple summary.
- Compare two different stories. How are they the same or different? Different versions of fairy tales work well.

7. **Provide fix-up strategies:**

- Define difficult words for your student.
- Ask your student if the story makes sense. Try skipping a page of a favorite story to see if she



notices.

Most importantly, read to your student every day and encourage your student to read to you.