

ELs in Education

Fall, 2013 # 6

Training for All Teachers Program @ SCSU

What School Leadership Can Do To Improve the Education of English Learners

During 2008 to 2010, the Training for All Teachers Program of Southern Connecticut State University provided professional development to over 225 public school educators throughout the state. In the culminating activity of these trainings – a gallery walk to process Aida Walqui's (2000) "Ten Priorities to Consider When Designing Instruction for Immigrant Students" – participants recorded what they could do in their own classrooms and what they needed from their school and district administration to support these steps. The recordings were analyzed, synthesized, and categorized, resulting in six clear, concise recommendations for administrators.

Provide needed support systems for EL students emerged as one of the most pressing areas for improvement, in which five specific needs were identified. Three of these needs are shared in the teachers' voices below.

A call from the classroom to the administration:

Ensure systematic inclusion of ELs and create a safe environment

"Teachers/staff, administrators need to provide opportunities to include ELLs in clubs, after-school activities, athletics, etc."

"Schools need to be positive, safe communities where ALL stakeholders demonstrate respect towards each other."

"More meaningful, specific, and ongoing community building."

Increase language awareness and allow use of L1

"Understanding the positive outcomes of using 1st language to adapt and learn English."

"Just because a child lacks language (L2), doesn't mean it reflects their intelligence."

"Students' L1 should be allowed, when necessary, to understand (especially for newcomers), and negotiation of meaning amongst Ss is important."

Educate ELs and their families about the norms of US school culture

"Provide more opportunities to learn about common US practices and cultural activities-videos, field trips, newcomer centers, etc."

"Have resources available to parents in multiple languages."

"Have expectations for class routines like goals on board, feedback to students that make a safe, predictable flow of the day students can depend on."

Scholarship Opportunity

See back for details.

ANNOUNCING OUR WEBSITE!

Visit the TAT Program's new website to peruse over 200 curriculum units that have been modified by area teachers for English learners. These units span K-12 to adult and cover all content areas.

<http://www.southernct.edu/groups/tat/>



Don't miss the next issue when we share teachers' voices that address:

- Provide PD on Sheltered Instruction for ELs.
- Provide PD for All of School Community: Teachers, Support Staff, and Administrators

Best Practices From the Classroom

Kathleen Wagner, 10th grade Sheltered English teacher, allowed her high school students to access her lesson about symbolism, using the story, "Fish Cheeks" by Amy Tan. After reading a modified version of the text using visual clues, text re-writes, and highlighting, Wagner asked her students to explain the symbols of Chinese culture in the text through a written paragraph. Students at different language levels could access the same higher order concepts through modifications of language. Through the use of sentence frames, word or phrase banks, Wagner makes the language task accessible for ELs, while not lessening the rigor of the content objectives.

Appendix C: Post-Reading Assignment: Level 3

Directions:

1. Read and discuss "Fish Cheeks" by Amy Tan.
2. In a well constructed paragraph, respond to the following question:

What symbolizes Chinese culture and American culture to the main character in the story, "Fish Cheeks"? What do those symbols represent to the main character?

3. Use examples from the text to explain your thinking
4. Be sure to proofread.

In the short story, "Fish Cheeks," the main character is torn between Chinese culture and American culture. One symbol in the story that represents her Chinese culture is _____.

To Amy, this represents _____

One symbol in the story that represents American culture _____.

To Amy, this represents _____

I thought it was interesting that _____

Appendix C: Post-Reading Assignment: Level 1-2

Directions:

1. Categorize the following symbols from the story, "Fish Cheeks" in terms of what they represent to the main character: American or Chinese
2. Next, write a statement about what the symbol represents to the character.

- | | | |
|----------|------------|--------------|
| • Turkey | • potatoes | • Squid |
| • Tofu | • Prawns | • Mini skirt |

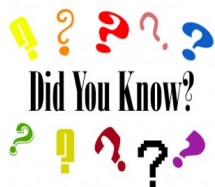
American	Chinese

Phrase bank:

American tradition American fashion something strange embarrassment

Select a symbol from above and identify what it means to the main character using the word bank: The symbol of the _____ represents _____ to the main character.

Quick Facts About Connecticut's English Learners



In the 2011-2012 School Year...

- Over half of ELs were in grades K-4.
- From 2007-2008 school year to 2011-2012 school year, the number of ELs in Connecticut whose dominant language is Arabic increased 48.7% to 1,647.
- The number of ELs who were also identified for Special Education services increased by one-third in the last five years. The ELs identified with ADD/ADHD increased by 85%.

(CSDE, Division of Assessment, Research & Technology Data Bulletin, June, 2012)

Scholarships available: TSL 518, Sheltered Content Instruction for ELs. Teachers learn to modify their own course materials, making them accessible to their ELs, while developing their new language. Contact TAT Program for the application, due November 1. Course is offered in Spring 2014.

Coffee Q & A with the Experts

Does your leadership team have questions about how to best serve your EL students? Concerns about program types? Assessments? Appropriate texts? We invite you to meet informally at your school with SCSU's EL experts for a personal Q&A. You bring the questions. We'll bring the coffee. **To schedule a meeting, call Marisa Ferraro at 203.392.5162, FerraroM4@southernct.edu**

