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The RI-TELLER

The Newsletter for Rhode Island Teachers of English Language Learners and ELL Professionals

Picture Books to Help ELLs Access Common Core Anchor Reading Standards *by Judith O'Loughlin*

This article was originally written for the ELLs and Common Core blog on the Colorín Colorado website. The author discusses using picture books across the curriculum with students of all ages in order to master the Common Core anchor reading standards.

Whether you live in California and identify beginning ELLs as “emerging,” or are from a WIDA state and identify these same students as “entering,” the challenge of meeting the Common Core Anchor Reading Standards is the same. It’s a daunting task to teach ELLs at this

entry level as they grapple with complex text and struggle to meet the standards, as evidenced by California’s English Language Development Standards principle “Interacting in Meaningful Ways.”

Because the standards focus on reading and interacting with complex text as well as addressing the importance of interaction, collaboration, comprehension, and communication of ideas, ELLs need substantial support to meet these challenges. Picture books can help!

This blog post describes how picture books can provide ELLs access to the Common Core Anchor Reading Standards, provides suggestions for books that meet certain standards and also meet the defined skill(s) for understanding those standards, and offers a checklist for choosing picture books along with a sample lesson plan on using picture books with ELLs.

Why Picture Books?

I love picture books! Anyone who knows me knows how much I love picture books. I’ve used picture books in teacher training and various conference presentations to introduce topics *continued page 2*

Resources for Teachers: Pairing Fiction and Nonfiction to Teach Content to ELLs

by Nancy Cloud, Ed. D., Rhode Island College

Pairing fiction with nonfiction around grade level themes is an excellent way to develop language and literacy in English Language learners. Recommended by Stewart and Chesley (2010, 2014), ILA/NCTE (2015), the National Science Teachers Association in their *Picture Perfect Series*

(2011-2014) and Baer (2012) in the journal *The History Teacher* of the Society for History Education as an excellent way of teaching content area topics, this approach allows teachers of ELLs to dig into a particular semantic field and develop the language

and literacy needed for school success.

A variety of published classroom materials follow this approach. On page 7, you will find some available for purchase to get you started. You will also find teacher guides and professional articles that describe how to implement this approach in your classroom. *continued page 7*

related to the content reading challenges English language learners (ELLs) face in U.S. schools, or to explore culture and culture clashes through the lens of the second language learner. When I taught K-8 ESL in New Jersey, I focused on teaching thematically across content areas and used numerous picture books to introduce and develop concepts in topics such as Civil Rights, war, and key time periods in history, as well as to explore space, the ocean, land formations, and other earth science topics. I've even used picture books to explore mathematics concepts and health topics, such as nutrition and body battles with germs!

Although in the past picture books were used primarily by early elementary grade teachers in oral whole class readings to introduce story elements, today more and more picture books are being produced and are being used in upper elementary, middle, and even high schools to enhance instruction in social studies, science, and mathematics. To support the use of picture books in various learning contexts several published articles, such as *"A New Age for Picture Books"* and a few professional guides, such as *The Power of Picture Books: Using Content Area Literature in Middle School*, have supported the use of picture books for academic instruction with mainstream middle and high school students

Picture Books and the Common Core Anchor Reading Standards

Recently, I've been looking at picture books through a new lens – addressing the Common Core State Standards, specifically the Anchor Reading Standards. I have focused on each anchor standard with a variety of content topics that could be used to teach ELLs using picture books.

When I started exploring how picture books could provide substantial support toward meeting the CC Anchor Reading Standards, I carefully analyzed the criteria in each of the Anchor Reading Standards: Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, and Range of Reading and Levels of Text Complexity.

Through close reading and an analysis of what each anchor standard required, I was able to create a list of sample picture books that would provide a jumping off point to explore the standards.

Matching Picture Books to Content Topics and Anchor Standard

When reviewing these books to help ELLs meet the CCSS, I asked myself, "Were there picture books that would not only match a CC Anchor Reading Standard category but also provide instruction in a content topic, either as literary or informational text (or both)?" Additionally, it was important to consider the picture books needed to build necessary content background and align with the grade/subject curriculum. At first, I needed to determine if there were picture books that would meet the standard and also meet the defined skill(s) for understanding the standard. I have developed several sample lists for book choices. The table (*on page 3*) is one example.

A Checklist of Criteria for Choosing Picture Books

How do I determine the quality and accuracy of a picture book to not only address an anchor standard but also to provide substantial support for beginning ELLs? Here are a few things I look for in picture books for content studies presented as fiction, historical fiction, or non-fiction.

Illustrations and content are free from stereotypes and caricature representations of characters, settings, and artifacts

For example, books about Native Americans may depict stereotypes or misinformation, such as the idea that all Native Americans live in teepees or wear feather headdresses. Others may imply that Native Americans are part of history rather than part of today's contemporary world, or focus only on one dimension of history. *Buffalo Bird Girl* by author S. D. Nelson (a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe) is the biography of a young girl born in 1839 who was a member of the Hidatsa people living along the Missouri River on the Great Plains. The book includes information on her daily life, including her home, an earth-mound lodge. For recommendations on choosing culturally appropriate books *continued page 3*

Picture Books to Help ELLs Access Common Core Anchor Reading Standards

continued

Sample Picture Book Choices and CCSS Anchor Reading Standards

Standard in the Strand	Defined Understandings for the Standard	Picture Book Example
Key Ideas and Details	Close reading and inference	<i>Painted Words</i> , Aliko
	Themes and supporting details	<i>Shin's Tricycle</i> , Tatsuhara Kodama
	How individuals, events and ideas develop	<i>Baseball Saved Us</i> , Ken Mochizuki
Craft and Structure	Interpret words and phrases	<i>Amelia and Eleanor Go For a Ride</i> , Pam Muñoz Ryan
	Analyze structure of text	<i>Streets of Gold</i> , Rosemary Wells
	Point of view or purpose	<i>Passage to Freedom</i> , Ken Mochizuki
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	Integrate and evaluate content: diverse media and formats	<i>Through My Eyes</i> , Ruby Bridge (With online resources, YouTube, video clips)
	Delineate and evaluate argument	<i>Faithful Elephants</i> , Yukio Tsuchiya
	Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rosa</i>, Nikki Giovanni • <i>Rosa's Bus: The Ride to Civil Rights</i>, J. S. Kittinger
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity	Read and comprehend complex literary and informational text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Freedom Summer</i>, Deborah Wiles • <i>White Socks Only</i>, Evelyn Coleman

see the recommended resources from Colorín Colorado (*page 6*).

Text and illustrations support one another

There should be a correlation between drawings, words, sentences, and paragraphs in text. In Bunting's *So Far From the Sea*, the illustrations on each page support the story of a family returning to a California historic Japanese internment camp for the last time before moving East.

Appropriate academic vocabulary

This is introduced for the topic, both visually and in print. For example, essential vocabulary and idiomatic expressions, (e.g. "bright idea")

are illustrated in the pictures and used in sentences that provide sufficient context to help students understand the meaning. Sometimes the key vocabulary may be presented in a different font, color, or bold as in Johnson's *Levi Strauss Gets a Bright Idea*.

Abstract concepts are supported through visuals and controlled language

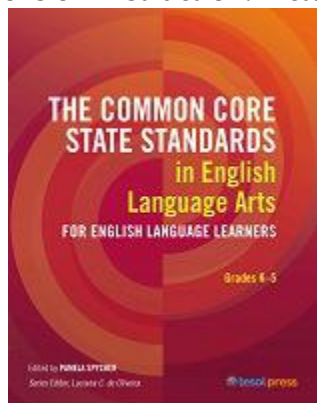
Dialogue supports both images and content concepts. For example, in Neuschwander's *Pastry School in Paris: An Adventure in Capacity* the concepts of measurement (liquids and solids) and an understanding of capacity are carefully explained through dialogue, visuals, and a recipe.

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In-depth approach

Address an aspect, if not the complete topic, by building background. For example, Mochizuki's *Passage to Freedom: The Sugihara Story* tells the true story of a Japanese diplomat stationed in Lithuania in 1940 who helped Jews escape the Nazis

Lens on Instruction: Picture Book Content Lesson

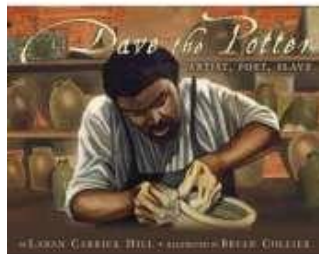


I've recently written chapters in two books in series about the Common Core where I incorporated picture books in each chapter's standards-based content lesson. In "Grade 3: What Time is It?" in Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit's (Eds.) *Academic Language in Diverse Classrooms*, the lesson on elapsed time uses picture books such as Hutchens' *Clocks and More Clocks* to model visually, as well as in words, how to comprehend and calculate elapsed time (CCSS.Math.Content.3.MDA.1). In "Beyond History: Glimpses into the Past through Picture Books." in Spycher (Ed.), *Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts for English Language Learners: Grades K-5*, part of a new TESOL Series CCSS for ELLs, I focused on enhancing the topic "From Slavery to Civil Rights" with picture books. My book selections help bridge the topic from pre-Revolutionary times to school desegregation and the Civil Rights Movement. **Sample Lesson Plan: *Dave, The Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave***

Here's an example of how to address an historical topic for ELLs with a picture book for a reading lesson:

Topic : Slavery (1800s)

Book: *Dave, The Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave* by Laban Carrick Hill



Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy CCRAR.1 Key Ideas and Details – evidence and inferences from the text; CCRAR.2 – summarize the central theme, support from key details and ideas.

Instructional Steps: This book is a biography focused on a slave who led an unusual life; he was a potter and he could read.

1. Generate a list of things students already know about slaves on the left side of a T-chart. Students may know, for example, that slaves were owned by a master, worked hard in the fields or house, and in general could not read or write. (For additional ideas, see the related lesson plans on *TeachingBooks.net* and the History Channel's *photo gallery* on the daily lives of slaves.)
2. Conduct a picture walk through the book. Ask and answer questions based on illustrations, which include steps in making a piece of pottery.
3. During the picture walk with students,
 - List information learned about Dave as a slave on the right side of the T-chart.
 - Generate a list of vocabulary words based on students' picture observations and questions.
4. Set the scene
 - Show a map of the stoneware region of South Carolina where Dave lived. Connect to where other slaves lived and worked.

continued page 5

- Show pictures of potters' wheels and explain how they work.
2. Review vocabulary generated during the picture walk. Later, after first reading, add vocabulary presented in similes (e.g., "as fast as a carnival's wheel of fortune," "like a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat," etc.). Clarify what these mean through drawings or pictures and help students connect concepts in the simile to creating pots/pottery.
 3. Read to students, asking questions about key ideas and details in the text.
 4. Reread, having students taking turns reading the pages (organize text in meaningful chunks for individual or choral readings). Depending on the English proficiency levels of the group, the rereading should be done 1-3 times, focusing on text details and a summary of events).
 5. Sequence – Have students explain the steps in making a pot, visually described in the pull-out pages. (CCRA – Key Ideas and Details – CCRA.R1)
 6. Symbolism – Focus on "Why is Dave both a slave and a free man? How do you know?" Use the pictures to determine the answer. (CCRA – Key Ideas and Details – CCRA. R1 and R2)
 7. Summarizing: Have students write 3-5 sentences summarizing what they learned.
 - Differentiation: Sentence stems or frames; storyboard graphic organizer (3-5 frames) or a student writes a few words/phrases (copied from a vocabulary bank) or dictates responses to a classmate who scribes the response on a graphic organizer.

Conclusion

As you can see in the brief lesson summary above, a teacher can use picture books to facilitate students' comprehension of complex content concepts and aspects of historical concepts, learn content vocabulary, and understand simple similes and metaphors presented both in words and through visuals. With the visual and textual support provided in picture books, beginning ELLs can use higher-order thinking skills, learn concepts beyond their current language proficiency level, and approach, if not meet, the CCSS Anchor Reading Standards.

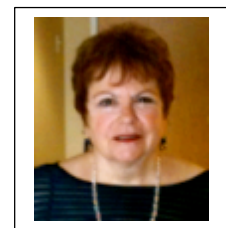
About the Author

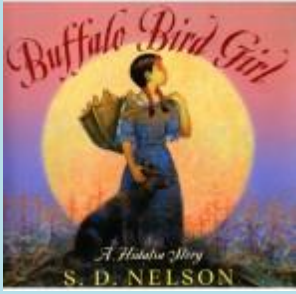
Judith B. O'Loughlin is an education consultant and teacher trainer, working with general education and ESL/bilingual teachers, school districts, and state departments on standards-based instruction and assessment, sheltered instructional lesson planning and implementation, and curriculum guidance projects. A veteran K-12 educator, Ms. O'Loughlin is the Past President of NJTESOL/NJBE and an e-list monitor for the Elementary Interest Section of TESOL.

Ms. O'Loughlin has been extensively involved in the field of second language acquisition, as a frequent presenter at state, regional, and national conferences and has published articles in *NABE News*, *CATESOL News*, *TESOL's Essential Teacher* and *TESOL Connections*. Her service to the field includes serving on the boards of NJTESOL-NJBE, CATESOL, and service on several TESOL standing committees, including chairing the Professional Development Committee. She has also been an adjunct graduate professor for online and blended graduate courses for bilingual/ESL endorsement and M.Ed. programs in New Jersey and Missouri, and currently as an eCoach for a grant project for Ohio State University. She provides training on the WIDA ELP Standards, ACCESS for ELLs®, and the W-APT™. She was the keynote speaker at the Spring 2015 RITELL Conference.

- See page 6 for article bibliography and additional resources.

- Special thanks to Lydia Breiseth at Colorin Colorado for permission to reprint.





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Additional Resources from Colorín Colorado

Themed Multicultural Booklists for Children & Young Adults

These booklists include some of our favorite titles for children and young adults, representing a wide range of cultures and languages. In addition, you can watch interviews with a number of the authors and illustrators who are featured, send free e-cards, and browse our books for educators in the Professional Booklists section.

Culturally Responsive Books in the ELL Classroom

In this excerpt from *English Language Learners: The Essential Guide*, ELL researchers David and Yvonne Freeman offer a comprehensive set of tips for choosing culturally relevant books in the ELL classroom. They also offer a number of book recommendations and a rubric that teachers and students can use to determine whether a book is culturally relevant.

Tips for Choosing Culturally Appropriate Books & Resources About Native Americans

Provides tips for choosing the right books for your learners, including: the right questions to ask yourself when researching for books, the strategies you'll need in planning lessons and activities, suggestions on how to avoid inaccurate or misleading information, and additional resource links.

Multicultural Publishers, Awards, and Resources

You can find booklists and resources for a wide range of titles representing diverse cultures and backgrounds, along with guidelines for selecting appropriate titles for libraries and classrooms.



Resources for Teachers: Pairing Fiction and Non-Fiction to Teach Content To ELLS

continued

Published Curriculum Series:

1) *Purposeful Pairs* (Grades 1-3), published by Teacher Created Materials (our spring RITELL conference sponsor)

<http://www.teachercreatedmaterials.com/series/purposeful-pairs-connecting-fiction-and-nonfiction-123/>

2) *Teaching through Text Sets*, published by Teacher Created Materials

<http://www.teachercreatedmaterials.com/series/teaching-through-text-sets-131/>

See Sample Pages of Teaching Through Text Sets: The Civil War (Grades 6-8)

<http://www.teachercreatedmaterials.com/estore/files/samples/21342s.pdf>

Text Set Topics:

- The American Revolution
- Constitution and Government
- American Indians in the 1800s
- Westward Expansion
- Citizenship and Government
- Ancient Rome
- Ancient Egypt
- Ancient Greece
- Medieval Times
- The Renaissance
- Exploration
- The Civil War
- Immigration
- The Industrial Revolution

3) *Paired Fiction and Nonfiction Grades 1-6*, Classroom Library.com

<http://www.classroomlibrarycompany.com/store/paired-fiction-and-nonfiction-books-sets.html>

4) *Book Flix* (Classic Fiction Paired with Related Nonfiction), Scholastic

Watch the story (fiction by Weston Woods); read the book (nonfiction)

http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/bookflix/freetrial/pdf/BookFlix_Title_List_FINAL.pdf

Teacher Guides with Lesson Plans:

1) National Science Teacher Association's (NSTA) Picture Perfect Science Lessons

<http://www.nsta.org/publications/press/picture.aspx>

Three volumes (Grade K-6 Science Topics, that may also be taught through grade 8)

See a sample from the latest version, "The Wind Blew"

<http://static.nsta.org/files/PB186X3web.pdf>

See also:

<http://www.pictureperfectscience.com>

<http://www.pictureperfectscience.com/books>

<http://www.nsta.org/publications/press/extras/evenmorepictureperfect.aspx>

2) Polk Brothers Foundation Center for Urban Education *Paired Fiction with NonFiction* (History, Current Events, Science)

<http://teacher.depaul.edu/Skill-Focused-Readings/PairedNonfictionandFictionReadings.htm>

Reading List (Professional Articles About Using This Approach):

Science:

See: *Perfect Pairs: Teaching Science through Literature* by Melissa Stewart

In Science Books and Films

<http://www.sbsonline.com/Pages/welcomesplash.aspx>

<http://www.melissa-stewart.com/pdf/PerfectPairs.pdf>

and for more Science Pairings, see:

<http://teacherweb.com/MA/LexingtonPublicSchools/LiteracyMathEnrichment/Fiction-and-NonFiction--Pairings.pdf>

History/Social Studies:

Baer, A.L. (2012). Pairing Books for Learning: The Union of Informational and Fiction, *The History Teacher*, 45 (2), 283-296.

Multi-Subject:

Read, Write, Think

Blending Fiction and Nonfiction to Improve Comprehension and Writing Skills

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/blending-fiction-nonfiction-improve-262.html>

Camp, D. (2000). It takes Two: Teaching with Twin Texts of Fiction and Non-Fiction. *The Reading Teacher* 53(5), 400-408.

Available at:

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson262/camp.pdf

Scholastic Teacher Resource Book: *Pairing Fiction & Nonfiction: Strategies to Build Comprehension in the Content Areas* (Scholastic Teaching Strategies) by Deanne Camp (2006)

<http://www.amazon.com/Pairing-Fiction-Nonfiction-Strategies-Comprehension/dp/0439297087>

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Six Essential Reasons

RITELL is the only association in Rhode Island that maintains an affiliation with TESOL. Joining RITELL can help you present yourself as a serious professional.

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There are few better ways to show your serious commitment to the field and distinguish yourself from others who don't join or participate in their professional associations.

2. Pay special member fees and use RITELL resources:

At RITELL Conferences in the fall and spring, pay discounted fees. Designed with our members'

needs in mind, visit the RITELL website regularly to stay up to date in your field. www.ritell.org.

3. Receive the association's newsletter--The RI-Teller:

Receive the *RI-Teller* twice a year and stay up to date on issues and developments in the field. Learn of changes in state policies, gain valuable information that can help you teach your students more effectively, and learn of professional conferences of interest to be held in our region.

4. Job Postings:

Receive job postings through *RIWorks*, our e-bulletin that will notify RITELL members of ESL and

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Network with colleagues who can offer you ideas, strategies, resources and encouragement.

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Benefit from the advocacy efforts of RITELL on behalf of Rhode Island ESL and Bilingual professionals, as well as ELL students and their families.

Get involved!

RITELL members are the backbone of our professional association. If you are looking for a way to contribute, RITELL is a wonderful option for you. Join others and make a difference!



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Contribute to RI-TELLER!

We welcome book reviews, articles, lesson ideas, notices or relevant meetings and any other news of interest to ESL educators in RI.

For more information, contact Doug Norris or Chris Bourret at either

Dougnorris1489@gmail.com

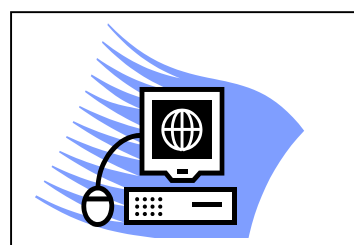
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It contains great links to all things ESL!



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Among its activities, Coordinating Council members organize and work at RITELL Conferences, manage the www.ritell.org website, advocate and present position statements for Teachers of ELLS, help form and support Special Interest Groups, and actively recruit new RITELL members.

Show your support for by purchasing a nifty RITELL hooded sweatshirt and other merchandise at our next conference!



Council members manning the registration table.



English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Communication Course at Salve Regina University: An Overview of the Coursework, Learning Outcomes, and Student Final Products

At the end of every semester, all EAP students are required to write a reflection paper and give an oral presentation to 1) demonstrate various communication and language skills acquired during the semester, 2) demonstrate their understanding of contents learned through the coursework, and 3) share their reflection on their own EAP learning process. Students deliver this required presentation in an end-of-semester event that the EAP program office holds to celebrate students' accomplishments with the members of the Salve community (faculty and staff members from various offices, international students, etc.). As in the past, we successfully completed this very important part of the EAP studies again during our final exam week earlier this month. EAP students were somewhat nervous at the beginning, but once they began their presentations, they managed to present the information they had prepared quite well. Most of them, actually, looked confident and comfortable using their own voices to express their opinions



EAP Class

and feelings in sharing their reflection on their own EAP learning process to date. After all the presentations were finished, students acknowledged each other's work and shared a great sense of accomplishment. Academic achievement never happens all of a sudden or without careful planning, continuous practicing, and reflecting on the learning process. As a result of reading course materials, actively participating in classroom discussions, and completing a series of projects throughout the semester, students indeed succeeded in achieving their academic goal – that is to prepare themselves to fully participate in undergraduate coursework with confidence!

“Understanding American Culture” as the theme of this communication course was one of the major contributing factors to the success in achieving the academic goal. In this course, using “*American Ways: An Introduction to American Culture*” (4th ed.) by Datesman, Crandall, and Kearney (2014), students studied a conceptual framework for understanding American cultural value system. Using the framework, students held academic discussions both online (*Canvas*) and in class to share their points of view and carried out five experiential projects that involved interviewing Americans, reading literature, and exploring specific aspects of American life such as American business and ethnic diversity in the United States. Using both their newly acquired knowledge about American culture from the course materials and their direct experience and observation in their new learning environment here at Salve Regina University, they deepened their understanding of American culture.

This learning process naturally allowed them to gain an insight into their own cultural values that they had not been aware of, enabled them to understand how they have acculturated into American culture, and even empowered them to discover who they are. As students began to see clearly how the framework helps explain what they have experienced and observed in real life situations and even what they have not thought of (e.g. their own cultural values) before, they discovered the coursework was for them and they took ownership of

continued page 11

Program Profile: EAP at Salve Regina University

continued

their own learning.

The final presentation was to present their final product – their learning reflection on their EAP communication studies to date, using the sentence structures, target vocabulary words, and presentation skills learned in class. Because reflection is so personal, we had a variety of different topics. While some decided to work with a partner, some chose to work independently. While some discussed how the framework is reflected in American culture, others did the opposite. Each presentation ended with their thoughts and feelings about the chosen topic, and their voices were well received by the supportive audience.

This academic year the students in the EAP program did create a strong learning community through studying American cultural values. In our last class meeting, all of them expressed that they felt safe sharing their thoughts and feelings without a fear of being judged by others. One student stated in his reflection paper that working with other students with different backgrounds and becoming friends with them allowed him to broaden his mind and he began to view his own culture and values differently. This success of creating and maintaining a positive learning environment was one of the greatest learning outcomes we achieved together. Other learning outcomes such as expanding academic vocabulary words, using varying sentence structures in their language production, and participating in academic discussions were also satisfactory met largely because of the safe classroom climate. Departing the one-year EAP program for students is of course an exciting moment but at the same time it is an intimidating event.

The evidence was clearly seen in their final products, and their confidence gained through the coursework will surely allow them to take risks with learning and achieving more in their pursuit of higher education in the United States.

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The author, front row left, with her EAP class.

Getting Students to Tell A Story

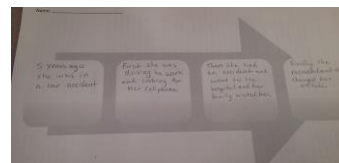
By Laura Vawter

If there is one thing I have learned from teaching ELL students, it is that stories have value. Knowing how to share and express yourself while telling a personal story is invaluable to a student, no matter their proficiency level. As a teacher, you provide students with the tools (lexicon, syntax) to express their ideas, opinions, passions, and history with the world around them. Storytelling is also a way to build a strong community in your classroom. After completing exercises that lead to the sharing of stories, the students in my class have strengthened their friendships and bonds with one another. Telling a personal story and having their stories listened to and celebrated has given my students confidence in their language ability as well as a feeling of acceptance and safety in the classroom. Storytelling is also very intimate and personable. Consequently it is a difficult task for many shy and introverted students. These students find the idea of presenting a personal story in front of the class terrifying, despite the class being big or small.

In my Beginner class I had several students who were very eager to share their stories with the class and were very dramatic in their storytelling abilities. Other students were painfully shy and very nervous about the exercise. So, I created activities to help both groups of students.

At the beginning of the lesson we started with a group discussion about movies. We talked about our favorite movies and worked on verbally explaining the story. Then I drew a chart on the board with the titles "bad" and "good" at the top. Then, as a class, we made a list of all the negative things that generally happen in movies and then we made a list of all the positive endings to a short movie as a whole class. After this discussion, I introduced a text book story* about a woman who had a bad thing happen to her and then a good ending. We listened to the story and answered comprehension questions. After that I had the students in pairs summarize this story and then divide the story into three "stages": what happened first, second, and third in a graphic organizer.

The next day, I had the class take out a piece of paper and I asked them to think of a story in their lives that was bad and then had a good ending. I gave them 3-5 minutes to think of their story and write notes about it. Some students who had thought of their story right away were squirming in their seats waiting to tell their stories. Finally I divided the class into pairs and had the students share their stories with a partner. I walked around and helped with grammar and pronunciation but did not interfere with their storytelling. At the end of the class I gave them the same graphic organizer to fill with their story, which I reviewed and went over with them the following day. To help students who were on the introverted side, I decided to have the students present their story using Google Voice. They called my Google Voice number and read their story to me. However, besides the pair work and voice mail message, a teacher could also have students present their story to the whole class, using a PowerPoint slide with pictures related to their stories.



Graphic Organizer of "Stages"

The students were very motivated and excited about this project. They were eager to learn how to express important events in their life in English as well as have the opportunity to share them with friends. The organizer helped my extroverted students think through how to express their story and take more time to choose what language to use. It helped my introverted students by building their confidence in their language ability and to feel safe expressing themselves more in English during class and over the phone. As my students demonstrated, modeled storytelling is an invaluable activity in any ESL classroom. - Laura Vawter teaches at MCPHS University.

**from Q: Skills For Success Speaking&Listening 1, Unit 4 "What Makes a Happy Ending". Cambridge Publishing.*

Upcoming Conferences

Adult Educator's Conference

October 1, 2015

New England Tech (East Greenwich Campus)

Consider submitting a proposal for presenting what works (for your learners, your program, or yourself as a practitioner). See riaepdc.org for a proposal form. Registration for attendees will open soon.



Save the Date!

Fall RITELL Conference

November 7, 2015

Topic to be announced. Look for updates on RITELL.org this summer.



TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo

TESOL 2016, TESOL's 50th anniversary, will be held in Baltimore, Maryland, Tuesday, 5 April, through Friday, 8 April 2016. –

See more at:

<http://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn/international-convention#sthash.ashBaTer.dpuf>



RITELL: Over 250 members strong! Help us to keep building.

Ask a colleague to join!

Increasing our membership means being able to afford top notch presenters at conferences, create professional development opportunities/trainings for teachers, advocate for teachers more effectively, and create awards for deserving members of our community. Thanks for your continued support.

Check out our expanding resources page at RITELL: <http://www.ritell.org/page-1800810>

Resources include Language and Country projects, booklist projects, recommended apps, and a slew of links to other resources. If you have a resource you'd like to share, please let us know!



RITELL Awards

RITELL is proud to sponsor two yearly awards.

Nancy A. Carnevale Grant for teachers of ELLs (Pre K-12)

Nancy Carnevale, M.Ed., a National Board Certified Teacher of English as New Language (ENL) invested her 38-year career in supporting urban ELLs and their families. She exemplified the "can-do" philosophy. She serves as a model of best practices in urban education for ELLs.

Every Spring Conference, The Nancy A. Carnevale Grant is awarded to classroom teachers who exemplify Nancy's life and career. The \$500 award may only be used to fund a project which meets the following criteria.

The 2015 winner is Lisa Salisbury, who works in Providence at Young Woods Elementary.



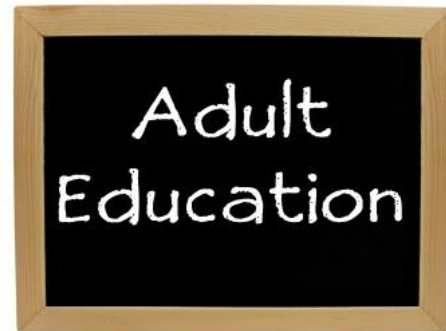
Lisa Salisbury, center.

See RITELL.org for nomination forms and details

Adult Education Practitioner Award (Adult/Higher Education)

Awarded every Fall Conference, the recipient for this award:

- Demonstrates high levels of commitment and makes significant contributions to the field.
- Demonstrates high levels of professionalism, collegiality and cooperation.
- Goes above and beyond to help ELL students and professionals in the field of Adult Education.



See past winners and nomination forms at RITELL.org.



Using Google Voice

by Chris Bourret

Earlier, you read Laura Vawter's piece (page 10), where she asks student to read personal stories using Google Voice. To build on that idea, this article, reprinted from *World Education's Tech Tips for Teachers Blog*, looks at using Google Voice as an assessment. Go to <http://techtipsforteachers.weebly.com/blog/using-google-voice> to hear student samples and see rubrics mentioned in the article.

My colleagues and I use Google Voice quite often for speaking activities with our English Language learners across many different language levels. If you are unfamiliar with it, Google Voice is a free voicemail service for anyone with a Gmail account. Once you set up Google Voice, you'll have a phone number and can access voice recordings of anyone calling that number - in this case, students. Voicemail files can be replayed and downloaded as MP3 files, and the advantage for teachers using this feature is that they have a recorded piece of spoken language from their ESL or ABE students. The teacher can listen to the recordings multiple times to examine and give feedback for the students. Teachers can also download and let students listen to their recordings as well.

We've used Google Voice for both homework and in-class assessments. The types of assignments vary by language level. At the beginning levels, we've asked students to describe *their daily routines, describe a person they know, typical foods they eat, what they did on the weekend, what their vacation plans are*, among other ideas. It's easy to emphasize a grammar point or subject matter that has been covered in class using Google Voice in this way. As the students' language develops, we make sure to increase the cognitive demand as well as the target language and content. Whereas, at the beginning levels, students may explain steps in a process, talk about what they are doing in that moment or do usually, describe a personal narrative, and give a short talk on opinions and beliefs, students at the higher levels can do much more. They can, for example, *do more complicated narrations of their life, give detailed reasons and examples to support opinions being expressed, persuade a listener to accept a new idea, give a mini-presentation on a researched topic*, etc.

Here is a Google Voice assignment at a higher cognitive level that a colleague used with an advanced group of learners. The activity is an assessment on a topic covered in class:

Research online and prepare a 1-2 minute talk about an alternative or traditional medicine or treatment. Choose a topic from this list:

- acupuncture
- massage therapy
- vitamin therapy
- diet-based therapy
- meditation
- visualization
- herbalism
- reflexology

In your talk, include information about:

- Where was the treatment developed?
- When was the treatment developed?
- How does it work?
- How is it used?
- Is it popular or not? With whom?
- Do you think that it is an effective medical treatment?

Call ###-###-#### (my google voice number)

Don't forget to introduce yourself so that I know who is talking.

These kind of activities work well with our advanced ELL learners, and it's also easy to assign these types of activities with native speaker ABE students, who are also getting used to using formal language and different registers necessary in formal presentation assignments. In order to ensure good quality of student responses, it is necessary to provide rubrics and to model language samples that students can hear. The language samples you want students to hear before doing an assignment are easy to bring to class using MP3s from Google Voice. A teacher can record his or her own sample for students to hear, or even better, use a good student sample saved from a previous class (the voicemails are saved visually like e-mails on

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Using Google Voice

continued

Google Voice, so you don't have to delete them like on a phone service).

Rubrics can vary, but generally we like to emphasize grammar, content, and speaking skills/clarity, as well as length. You may find the first few times that students only speak for 30 seconds (Google Voice mails show how long the recording is), and then, with some encouragement and pointing out the length expectations you may have, students will increase their output in terms of length and ability. Moreover, you'll find you have a virtual speaking portfolio of language samples of a student over a semester or year. It makes it easy to hear how that student has progressed over time, and you can have the students hear that progress for themselves by downloading and having students listen to their own recordings.

Besides being an effective assessment tool and a great way to show student progression in speaking skills, using Google Voice in class has had a few other benefits for our learners. One is that students get used to those small points of language learning that may get overlooked in class; for example beginning learners are able to say "This is John" rather than saying "I am John" over the phone. Additionally, you'll probably find students less afraid about speaking the more you use Google Voice. Much like what happens with writing journals, the communication is only between student and teacher, and students may be willing to express themselves more in this sort of one on one communication using Google Voice. You may find surprisingly, that some students feel less afraid of speaking on the phones generally as well, even though it is only a one-way communication tool. And the only tech necessary to use Google Voice for a student is a phone. It doesn't even need to be their own phone or a smart phone., Any phone will do.

There are some items for a teacher to be aware of in preparation for using Google Voice. One is the time issue. You need to be able to devote time to listening to student answers multiple times to give good feedback. Therefore, it is a good idea to set reasonable recording times from students to make the grading manageable. Also, the transcript feature doesn't work too well

with non-native accents, and thus doesn't transcribe their recordings too well. As this technology advances, however, it may one day create a nice transcript which a teacher can provide to students to help point out strengths and weaknesses of the students' language. Moreover, especially with beginners, students will invariably read their homework assignments on Google Voice, which may make it more of an oral reading than a true speaking activity. Don't be discouraged, as the students are still practicing pronunciation, intonation, oral reading fluency, and using grammatical forms in their answers.

To get more spontaneous responses, you can also use Google Voice impromptu in class, where you can give students a topic or question to discuss or take notes on (but not a whole written response), and have them call on their cell phones or classmates' cell phones to leave a response. This helps avoid the reading-rather-than-speaking answer you may get from some homework assignments. This approach also mimics some tests like TOEFL, which require students to take notes and record their answers quickly. Try using Google Voice both ways, for homework and in class assignments. You'll hear the difference in your students' speaking abilities.



WORLD EDUCATION

Tech Tips for Teachers was started in 2012 by Steve Quann and Leah Peterson at World Education, Inc.

The goal of the blog is to help adult education teachers use technology to aid instruction. See the site's lesson index at

<http://techtipsforteachers.weebly.com/lesson-index.html>

Thanks to Steve and Leah for permission to reprint this article.

Candid Camera at RITELL: 2014 - 15 Conference photos



Candid Camera at RITELL: 2014 – 15 Conference Photos



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**Thanks to all our members
for coming out and making
our Fall and Spring
Conferences so successful!
Look forward to seeing you
next year!**

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Call for Submissions

We are always on the lookout for RI-TELLER submissions from our members. If you have a great lesson plan, resource or activity, please share! Other article ideas include student profiles, research you've done relevant to the field, questions, among other ideas. Submitting an article is a great way to get published in the field, and an important step to building up our professional connections with one another in RITELL.

Also, if you have a colleague you would like to nominate for the Nancy Carnevale Grant or Adult Education Practitioner awards, please see the Awards page on RITELL.org.

We on the RITELL Coordinating Council wish everyone a nice summer and look forward to having you with us for our Fall Conference! Check RITELL.org for upcoming details.

