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ABSTRACT

This document describes changes in language arts instruction that are designed to recognize the unique strengths and abilities of Chapter 1 and migrant education students. The document also describes a particular vision of a new language arts program for these students, a program designed to teach to their strengths and provide them with opportunities to succeed. The chapters include: (1) "Changes in Language Arts Instruction"; (2) "The Curriculum in a Literature-Based Program"; (3) "The Language Arts as Tools for Learning"; (4) "The Assessment of Language Arts Processes"; (5) "The Classroom as a Place for Collaborative Learning"; (6) "Role of the Language Arts Teacher"; and (7) "A New Language Arts Program."
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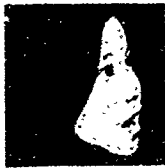
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Effective Language Arts Programs for Chapter 1 and Migrant Education Students



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Effective Language Arts Programs for Chapter 1 and Migrant Education Students

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Introduction

Most of us recognize the relationship between proficiency in language and the ability to participate as informed and effective citizens in a democratic society, that is, to work productively and realize personal fulfillment. We are aware that when we participate in civic activities, we are often judged by the clarity of our speech, the opinions gained from our reading, and the meaningfulness of our writing. Yet we also know that many of our students are lacking in ability to speak, read, and write well.

Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981 (Public Law 97-35) was established to fund programs for students who need special educational assistance, including assistance in the language arts, because of social, cultural, linguistic, or academic disadvantages. Programs for migrant students are included in Chapter 1, and these programs are designed to address the problems of the disadvan-

taged migrant youths, including the problems caused by their frequent moves. Chapter 1 and migrant education provide a mechanism for addressing the language arts educational concerns of this specific student population. The fundamental thesis underlying Chapter 1 and migrant education is that eligible students can succeed if they are provided additional assistance. These students can profit from a developmental language arts program that is designed to recognize their unique characteristics, teach to their strengths, and provide adequate instruction.

In this document we describe changes in language arts instruction that are designed to recognize the unique strengths and abilities of Chapter 1 and migrant education students. In addition, we describe our vision of a new language arts program for these students, a program designed to teach to their strengths and provide them with opportunities to succeed.

Changes in Language Arts Instruction

Our concept of instruction in language arts has changed dramatically over the past few years. Our goal of instruction was once to view speaking, reading, and writing as disciplines in their own right, often removed from content and application in real-life situations. However, now our goal is to view them as communicative tools we use to make sense of the world for ourselves and others.

We once considered language arts instruction complete if students had formal knowledge of the subskills of decoding (phonics), grammar, spelling, pronunciation, and so forth and applied these subskills when they spoke, read, or wrote. We now understand that language arts education performs a larger and far more useful function than we realized. We understand that speaking, reading, writing, and listening allow us to interact with others, to become aware of our own interpretations of information and events, to incorporate new information as we rethink our positions on issues, to learn from the experiences of others, to formulate new attitudes and beliefs, and to learn more about ourselves—in short, to learn to function in our world. As students interact with their world, make sense of the plethora of stimuli they encounter, and incorporate new understandings and learnings, they learn the functions of the language arts as they use them.

Organization of Language Arts Skills

At one time we assumed that there was a definite and necessary sequence for listening, speaking, reading, and writing instruction. Now we know that a harmonious organization of these skills is useful and fulfills the larger purpose of normal functioning. Likewise, we thought previously that each of the language arts could be segmented into smaller units for individual study and workbook practice (e.g., sound-symbol relationships, rules for punctuation, mechanics of capitalization, parts of speech, sentence structure, and others) and serve as prerequisites to literacy development, fluency in speaking, and the ability to think. Today, we believe that these subskills operate to facilitate listening, speaking, reading, and writing—the means we have for interacting with our world.

We are now aware that the development of the ability to use the language arts of listening, speaking,

reading, and writing relates to the students' communicative purposes, is dependent on their need to acquire and use these tools in negotiating meaning and communicating to others, and reflects the students' current knowledge of the topic and need and ability to derive meaning from it. Further, we recognize that these capabilities can be guided, modeled, and promoted through direct teacher intervention and instruction. Fluency, accuracy, flexibility, and competence in language arts develop over time; but their development relies on the access students have to the meaningful use of these tools in everyday educational and social situations.

Recognition of Students' Unique Abilities

We know that not all students are equal in their ability to master the language arts of speaking, reading, and writing. In the past we established special programs, such as Chapter 1 and migrant education, for those students in need of special educational assistance because of social, cultural, linguistic, or academic disadvantages. The performance of these students was judged to be below that expected of the more successful students at their grade and age level. Chapter 1 and migrant education programs were usually tutorial in nature, involved specialized instruction for individual students or small groups, and often were managed by educators other than regular teachers. A diagnosis to determine the specific nature of the problems faced by the students was conducted, and then a program of remediation was tailored to meet the students' needs. This compensatory program took place either in the classroom or at a specified place away from regular instruction. Those responsible for the program identified and remediated those deficiencies thought to prevent students from being successful in the regular language arts classroom.

We now realize that individuals speak, read, write, and listen in ways different from those they have been taught in school. We once asked, "What prereading skills should students develop to prepare for the language arts instruction they will receive later?" We now ask, "If students do not listen, speak, read, and write, how are they going to learn to do so?" If they are

not involved in using the language arts to seek meaning in what they hear and read or to communicate meaningfully when they speak or write, their potential is not being realized. We are turning our attention to what and how students learn in schools and relating what they learn to how they will listen, speak, read, and write in the real world.

Identification and Remediation of Problem Areas

We now believe that we can help students learn the strategies they need to make sense of their world, to generate thoughts, and to communicate those thoughts orally and in writing for others at a level of understanding consistent with their stage of development, current knowledge of the background information, and need and desire to communicate. We have learned, for example, much about the nature of language processing in generating meaning, the creative construction of messages that communicate, the relationship of learning skills to studying content, and the psychological nature of the learner.

Realizing that language arts instruction must be changed to reflect new research in language arts instruction, California is now reforming its school programs to mirror these new developments. In the past the State Department of Education encouraged directors of Chapter 1 and migrant education programs to establish programs that, by today's standards, might not be judged effective. However, the Department now recommends a reexamination of those practices. New departmental documents are aligned to provide a focus to language arts instruction

in California schools; e.g., *English-Language Arts Model Curriculum Guide, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight*; *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve*; and *English-Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*.

Changes in our concept of language arts instruction have occurred in the following areas:

1. Curriculum
2. Processes
3. Assessment
4. Classroom management
5. Role of the instructor

In parts two through six of this document, we identify and differentiate between instructional practices shown to be effective and those that are not effective and include specific recommendations for implementing the practices we recommend.

Most programs vary in the degree of "effective" practices employed. Obviously, if most practices that a Chapter 1 or migrant education program provides for its students are described as "ineffective," changes are warranted. If few practices are described as ineffective, perhaps only slight adjustments are needed to bring the program more in line with current thinking in language arts instruction.

This publication concludes with a description of our vision of a new language arts program for Chapter 1 and migrant education students. Our description is not intended to represent all that is possible in enacting the reform proposed for language arts classes. Instead, we provide examples of procedures that correspond to recommended changes in instruction.

II

The Curriculum in a Literature-Based Program

In effective English-language arts programs, literature is used as the base for the curriculum. Oral language, reading, and writing are drawn on to provide interesting reading; models for writing; and a way for students to understand themselves, their world, and their relationship to society. Students' insights are indications of success with this curriculum.

In ineffective programs, the skills of language arts subject matter are practiced by Chapter 1 and migrant education students in isolation through the use of work sheets; sequentially through the use of "kits" involving the reading of short, contentless passages with an elementary vocabulary and simplified sentences; or through composing only sentences or paragraphs. Mastery of skills is tantamount to success in this program.

Literature as the Basis for Instruction

Chapter 1 and migrant education students profit from having literature as the basis for their instruction because literature can provide the content from which they can begin to understand themselves, their cultural heritage, and the life experiences and world views of others.

In such a program, teachers emphasize the learning that can be effected through the study of quality literature. Since all writing affirms or challenges a moral judgment or interpretation of reality, it reveals a microcosm of the writer's culture and his or her understanding of and attitudes toward life, death, and the universe. By studying quality literature, students gain access to new knowledge; grow in their knowledge of similar and different values; increase their understanding of their environment and the environment experienced by others; and learn to make sense of the complexities of their world. Students study literature in a way that allows them to make connections between the text and their own experiences.

This study of literature is multicultural and is related to students' experiences. The types of written discourse we are expected to produce as literate adults (the types found in quality literature) are used in an effective language arts curriculum. Teachers know quality literature to which students respond, literature selections students willingly hear read to them or reread

themselves because they are able to connect with the selections in some way.

Students experience activities which help them connect their experiences to a coherent focus in a lesson. This coherent focus is the main idea or important learning concept or theme which unifies all aspects of the lesson. All activities prepare students for the text; lead them through the text through reading and discussion; help them make sense of the new situation or information; and communicate this understanding to others, either aloud or in writing. In this type of instruction, attention is paid to the overall meaning of a lesson and not to discrete, verifiable, and unrelated factual points in the content. Although many activities would be possible, those used are the ones which do not distract from the focus and assist students in achieving the expected outcomes. In such a lesson, oral language, reading, and writing are used as the means by which students make sense of new information, situations, interpretations, and so forth that they encounter.

As Chapter 1 and migrant education students hear and read literature, they become aware of the "sound" or structure of various types of discourse. It is this internalized awareness of sound and of these various structures on which students can model and build their own composing skills. For some students, this experience of reading quality literature can begin in their own language and continue until they are able to listen to and understand each work in English.

Students experience all types and genres of literature in a systematic way. For example, students read and write narratives, persuasive essays, reports of information, poetry, legends, autobiographical and biographical incidents and phases, memoirs, speculations about results or causes, remembered places, analyses, fables, myths, interpretations, lyrics, and solutions to problems. Students read and discuss all types and genres of literature before they are expected to produce these types of written discourse. Teachers model the processes of getting meaning from the text and writing as a process. Students view teachers of literature as writers who model and share their struggles.

Students eligible for Chapter 1 and migrant education assistance study the same literature as students in

mainstream literature programs. Chapter 1 and migrant education resources can be used to provide additional tutorial assistance; allow more time on tasks; monitor involvement; and provide immediate feedback, thus making the education of eligible students more efficient and effective. As a result, we can anticipate the same cultural literacy expected of students in regular literature programs to be expected of eligible Chapter 1 and migrant education students as well.

Recommendations for Implementing a Literature-Based Program

In a literature-based program, literature is used as the basis for the curriculum. The following recommendations are designed to help teachers create an instructional program with literature as its basis.

General Recommendations

1. Align the curriculum with the core curriculum recommended in the *English-Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* (California State Department of Education, 1987).
2. Ensure that Chapter 1 and migrant education students study the same quality literature assigned to all students.
3. Establish literature as the core of the language arts curriculum.
4. Systematically expose students to different genres of written and oral English discourse.

Specific Recommendations

1. Encourage students to read quality literature.
 - a. Use extended passages that are purposeful and provide examples of quality literature and insights into the way the world can be interpreted.
 - b. Use worthwhile fictional and nonfictional selections, including trade books, well-written textbooks, and other examples of quality literature. (See *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight, Annotated Edition* [California State Department of Education, 1988] and *Model Curriculum Standards, Grades Nine Through Twelve* [California State Department of Education, 1985]).
 - c. Encourage students to read quality literature in their primary language until they are able to

listen to and understand literature written in English.

2. Guide students in the study of literature which embodies significant cultural and personal concerns or increases their understanding of the world in which they live or both.
 - a. Organize lessons around a unifying concept or life experience which is identified for each lesson.
 - b. Help students recall and apply knowledge they already have to new content.
 - c. Help students see relationships between what they experienced previously and now understand and what they will be exposed to in a new lesson.
 - d. Encourage students to anticipate the content of new lessons.
 - e. Guide students in recognizing the unfolding logical and organizational relationships inherent in their reading, writing, and oral discussions.
 - f. Allow students to interpret the meaning of lessons.
 - g. Encourage students to discover the overall generalizations or conceptual learnings in new lessons.
 - h. Help students relate these learnings to their own experiences and personal milieus.
 - i. Allow students to develop, express, and defend ever-changing "world views" from the study of literature.
3. Assist students in systematically experiencing each type of discourse.
 - a. Help students become aware of the purposes accomplished by different types of discourse.
 - b. Instruct students by providing opportunities to model and practice each type of discourse and guide a discussion of structures encountered in English.
 - c. Help students become aware of, see models of, and discuss features and characteristics of different types of discourse as they practice and receive feedback on their reading and writing. (Writing assessment handbooks are being prepared by the California Assessment Program, California State Department of Education. The handbooks will include discussions of different types of discourse.)
 - d. Require students to read extended and recreational literature passages.

The Language Arts as Tools for Learning

In effective English-language arts programs, oral language, reading, and writing are tools useful in facilitating thinking, making sense of new information, and communicating with others. Oral language is used to negotiate meanings with others; reading is employed to perceive new insights into the thinking of others; and writing is used to clarify our thinking and to communicate our thoughts to others. For each tool, there is a process (a manner of using each tool) that helps students efficiently fulfill the communicative and thinking objectives that educators hope to accomplish through language arts instruction.

In ineffective programs, drill and practice of the subskills of reading (such as decoding), writing (i.e., formal language study), and oral language (i.e., "correctness" of accent) are practiced in a manner unrelated to their use later in real-life listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities.

Learning Through Language Arts Processes

The language arts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing have value as they are used as processes in thinking, interpreting, problem solving, analyzing critically, and communicating some content. We no longer believe that reading for reading's sake or writing for writing's sake should be the focus of our instruction. We know that all students can use the language arts to interact with their world, learn from it, and communicate their interpretation of it clearly to others. All students only become better at using these processes if they have opportunities to practice each meaningfully.

For the language arts to function, they must be applied to some content. All students learn to listen by attending to that which edifies. They learn to talk not only by talking but also by talking about something substantive. They learn to read by reading something which engages their interest and fulfills a purpose and to write by composing that which records or clarifies. The emphasis in instruction becomes teaching for content. The language arts of oral language, reading, and writing become those tools used to establish an understanding of text and generate the meaning students wish to express.

The language arts are not instructional ends in themselves. Overteaching and overemphasizing the subskills commonly associated with language arts too often result in an artificial fragmentation of the language arts. Examples of overteaching and overemphasizing the subskills commonly associated with oral language include correcting accents, insisting on the production of complete sentences, mimicking of patterns of sentence types, insisting on formality in production, and so forth.

Examples associated with reading include emphasizing the identification of sound/symbol relationships and the blending of these isolated sounds into words, studying affixes, and answering factual questions based on unrelated bits of information taken from the text. Examples associated with writing include studying grammar, identifying parts of speech, writing with a focus on sentence-level editing rather than on revising the entire document, reciting spelling words from predetermined lists of words, and memorizing rules of usage.

Overteaching and overemphasizing often take up so much time that practice with the functional uses of oral language, reading, and writing is neglected. This practice of overteaching and overemphasizing subskills is especially debilitating for low-achieving students for whom meaningful engagement in oral language, reading, and writing activities is especially important. If Chapter 1 and migrant education students do not listen, speak, read, and write both fictional literature and subject matter content, how are they going to learn to do so? Yet too often the bulk of the instruction provided Chapter 1 and migrant education students centers on English language arts subskills. Consequently, little time, if any, is left to practice each skill in realistic situations.

When teaching for content, teachers do not ignore the language arts skills altogether. However, they receive value in proper relation to their importance in communication. Students are asked to work on skills that will enhance their comprehension and written communications in the context of their immediate need within the experience. Thus, skills are judiciously selected in a manner which allows students to general-

ize about the skill or communication across and into other experiences.

We want eligible Chapter 1 and migrant education students to engage in activities in response to literature and personal experiences which connect the various language arts (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in a manner which enhances their comprehension of an experience and their communication of their interpretation of that learning to others. Time is spent talking in order to negotiate meaning among peers; reading in order to seek new insights into the thinking of others; and writing in order to figure out their own understanding and to communicate it to others. It is important that listening, speaking, reading, and writing are not isolated for instruction into meaningless activities for these students. Chapter 1 and migrant education students come to us with experiences which can be used as the basis for their language arts instruction. Beginning with the recording of language experience stories, students can communicate meaningfully as well as make sense of the various language arts in the context of their own experiences. Later, in a like fashion, oral and written language experiences are used as means of recalling students' life experiences and clarifying and expanding their world views.

Recommendations for Learning Through Language Arts Processes

The language arts processes can help students learn to think, make sense of new information, and communicate with others. Teachers can use the following recommendations to help students use the language arts processes effectively.

General Recommendations

1. Teach the language arts processes of speaking, reading, and writing as holistic operations.
2. Teach the language arts as communicative tools fulfilling a real communicative function.
3. Help students make the connection between the language arts processing skills and their application in other content areas such as social studies, science, mathematics, and so forth.

Specific Recommendations

1. Teach students to use language arts processes to interact with literature and derive meaning from it. Students should learn to communicate interpretations of literature clearly to others.
 - a. Teach reading as a process of generating meaning from text.

- b. Teach writing as a process of recording or discovering thoughts and communicating them to identified audiences.
 - c. Help students to develop oral language as a means of interacting meaningfully with others.
2. Teach students to monitor their understanding of written or oral language lessons and fix comprehension and composition difficulties. As students read or write, they should seek meaning by using the following strategies:
 - a. Writing/rewriting and editing/reediting
 - b. Selective reading/writing
 - c. Imaging
 - d. Changing rate depending on familiarity of topic and purpose
 - e. Relating to personal experience
 - f. Focusing
 - g. Interpreting passage events
 - h. Seeking salient details
 - i. Synthesizing
 - j. Dialoguing with peers
 - k. Actively questioning
 - l. Anticipating and predicting
 - m. Rehearsing
3. Avoid the practice of isolating a skill from its purpose in deriving or communicating meaning. Remember that the overall objective of listening, speaking, and learning to read and write is not to require students to demonstrate rote memory of the principles of the subskills of the language arts but to use each subskill as they interact with their environment.
4. Avoid confusing language knowledge with language usage.
 - a. Have students listen, speak, read, and write as we would want them to use these processes in real-life situations.
 - b. Practice subskills such as phonics, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and so forth in the context of a meaningful message.
 - c. Avoid skill builders that attempt to develop listening, speaking, reading, or writing abilities devoid of content.
5. Teach oral language, reading, and writing as communicative experiences in which:
 - a. Oral language involves the strategies of:
 - (1) Conversing
 - (2) Discussing
 - (3) Reporting
 - (4) Debating

(5) Entertaining

(6) Questioning

b. Reading is a cyclical problem-solving process involving:

(1) Interacting

(2) Predicting

(3) Confirming

(4) Integrating

c. Writing is a recursive process of:

(1) Planning

(2) Drafting

(3) Sharing

(4) Revising

(5) Editing

(6) Evaluating

(7) Publishing

The Assessment of Language Arts Processes

In an effective English-language arts program, oral language, reading, and writing are assessed as whole processes. Of major concern is whether students can generate an understanding and interpretation from written and oral language and communicate their thoughts successfully to others. In this sufficiency type of assessment, it is important to determine how students are able to use the language arts processes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and arrive at meaning when studying literature.

In an ineffective program, assessment involves the testing of isolated information about oral language, reading, and writing processes. Each rule and competency and the accurate use of the conventions of language (e.g., grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling) are considered to be indications of the adequacy of the program. This clearly is a deficiency model wherein assumed problems are identified and remediated in the Chapter 1 and migrant education programs.

Assessing the Processes of Language Arts

We recognize the limitations of standardized tests which do not measure students' skills in oral communicative competence, reading comprehension, or written expression. At best, most current tests provide a small and only partial glimpse into the abilities of students to speak, read, and write. At worst, these assessment instruments distort the language arts into fragments that no longer resemble the competence they are presumed to measure. Such a distortion presents us with scores that can be considered meaningless, invalid, and misdirected if used in instructional planning and curricular development, evaluation of progress, and determination of the adequacy of the program.

In the new language arts curriculum, we need to match the assessment instruments used with the goals and objectives of an integrated language arts curriculum, a curriculum that has literature as the basis of instruction. We need to determine students' abilities to speak, read, listen, and write in ways we would expect them to apply such tools in understanding and communicating in real life. Although the use of such

whole-language assessment instruments is not the norm today, the California Assessment Program is currently examining their use.

Since we know that both Chapter 1 and migrant education students learn best when we teach to their strengths rather than their deficiencies, it is important to ascertain what students can discuss, what they understand as they read, and what they are capable of communicating as they write. We once believed that we could identify specific skill deficiencies that prevented students' continued growth. However, we now realize that students' interactions with meaningful content, structure, or logic of presentations as well as their ability to use composing and comprehending strategies to ascertain meaning are more useful to teachers.

Three types of determinations useful to teachers include (1) students' understanding of the specific content of the speaking, reading, or writing, situation; (2) their ability to organize or structure that content (that is, to determine relationships among this information); and (3) their access to those strategies or scripts needed to successfully seek meaning for themselves or express their understanding to others. For example, if we wanted to determine how well students read a selection about photosynthesis, we would need to test this reading directly by including questions about (1) what information was possessed prior to reading the selection and what new understandings resulted (content); (2) what interpretations unfolded as the students read the passage; (3) what relationships existed between this content and other topics they had studied in botany (structure); and (4) what procedures they employed as they sought meaning or encountered difficulties in their comprehension of the text (scripts).

Likewise, in response to an assignment requiring students to write a persuasive essay in which they argue against a controversial policy passed by the local board that prohibits teenage smoking on campus, we might wish to determine (1) students' familiarity with the policy; (2) the logic of their arguments as well as possible arguments for and against those included by students; and (3) the rhetorical devices used to convince readers of the viability of the essay. All three assessed factors (content, structure, and script) have direct implications for classroom instruction.

Content, structure, and script change with each new communicative situation. Students' speaking, reading, and writing abilities are not static but vary with each new topic, purpose, task, and need within a specific situation. For example, students may read with full understanding a newspaper editorial regarding a local issue but may fail to comprehend the humor of a satirical piece appearing on the same page and written at the same readability level. For each lesson, we need to determine whether students (1) have sufficient background knowledge to understand the topic; (2) are able to interpret the lesson's content in a logical manner; and (3) have the processing skills necessary for interacting with the subject matter of the lesson.

The April, 1987, issue of *The Reading Teacher* is devoted to a discussion of the state of reading assessment. This issue offers an analysis of existing assessment practices, rationales for new testing formats, and suggestions that reflect the current state of reading technology.

We believe, however, that actual student functioning in the classroom is a more valid indicator of potential than the results of formal standardized tests. Situation variables as well as the students' self-perceptions and the expectations of the teacher greatly influence the success of students in regular language arts classrooms.

Recommendations for Assessing Language Arts Processes

In an integrated language arts program, assessment is based on the processes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The following recommendations are designed to help teachers develop effective assessment procedures.

General Recommendations

1. Use whole-language assessment.
2. Realize that most assessment instruments only partially measure students' true communicative capabilities.
3. Assess the subskills of speaking, reading, and writing only in the context of their use with meaningful content in a purposeful communicative situation.

Specific Recommendations

1. Realize that standardized tests are useful only for comparison (and then only against the national population on which the test was normed) and should not be used as the basis for either a developmental or remedial language arts program.
2. Rely on assessment instruments designed to measure speaking, reading, and writing abilities in the way they are used in the real world.

- a. This whole-language assessment provides a few meaningful scores that tell how students are performing and avoids the artificial fragmentation of each process into subskills that do not resemble the speaking, reading, and writing acts they are designed to develop.
 - b. Teachers should assess student performance in seeking meaning from printed texts, mediating thought through oral discussions, and generating coherent written discourse.
3. Understand that assessment is ongoing and varied.
 - a. Assessment also is content specific.
 - b. Assessment measures students' ability to perceive and use relationships from this content.
 - c. Assessment involves oral discussion, reading, and writing strategies.
 4. Use each language arts instructional session to assess informally students' capabilities and determine students':
 - a. Knowledge related to the topic
 - b. New understandings of the content
 - c. Ability to anticipate or impose a logical organization in written discourse
 - d. Ability to interpret the subject matter or life experience
 - e. Development of world views, attitudes, and applications
 - f. Ability to make sense of situations and communicate thoughts effectively
 - g. "Fix-it" strategies in listening, speaking, reading, and writing
 5. In an integrated literature-based lesson, assess language arts processes directly and holistically. Assessment techniques include:
 - a. Trial lessons to determine whether students can handle actual classroom instruction and materials
 - b. Discussions of substantive topics from the lesson
 - c. Tests of reading for unfolding comprehension of the text
 - d. Determinations of students' ability to compose and clarify thoughts and communicate them to others
 6. Conduct informal evaluations to determine the program's adequacy by checking the following indicators:
 - a. Attendance
 - b. Dropout figures
 - c. Students' attitudes
 - d. Participation
 - e. Integration (acceptance by peers)
 - f. Students' initiative in novel situations

The Classroom as a Place for Collaborative Learning

In an effective language arts program, students participate within the regular classroom in interactive groups. The groups represent the ranges of students' abilities and skills in the language arts. Collaboratively, they produce individual and group products which are designed to build their skills in communicating, both orally and in writing.

In an ineffective program, students judged to be incapable of performing all language activities occurring in mainstream lessons are isolated within the classroom or removed physically (to another site) for instruction. There they work alone on tasks, and their work is monitored by teachers. Students are often deprived of other important content instruction to participate in this pullout program.

Collaborative Learning in the Classroom

The core curriculum described in the *English-Language Arts Framework* should be considered the language arts curriculum for all students, including Chapter 1 and migrant education students. The content and the instructional activities designed for comprehension and composing in the regular classroom should be designed to incorporate Chapter 1 and migrant education students inconspicuously in the regular classroom. Because proficiency in language is acquired through the negotiation of meaning, it is necessary for these students to interact with, react to, and be responded to by their more proficient peers.

Chapter 1 and migrant education students need to be perceived as capable and worthy. They need to see themselves as part of the "Literacy Club" in which they envision themselves as students who can comprehend and compose as part of the mainstream language arts program.¹ When students are actively engaged in meaningful tasks and know they can make a mistake and that other students, including those more proficient, will help them with no risk of educational embarrassment, they are motivated by devices far

more powerful than controlling activities such as "quiet work" (work sheets), assertive discipline, or segregated pullout programs.

In these classrooms, both the more successful and less successful students work on individual and group tasks. At times, Chapter 1 or migrant education students take the lead in groups. At other times, other students may be in charge. In each situation, students understand the task to be accomplished, the goals to be achieved, and the processes to be used and have a notion of when they have successfully achieved the learning.

In such classrooms, cooperation among students is promoted and competition is lessened. No one is ridiculed for not understanding or knowing how to proceed in a lesson. Groupings or pairings are not static but are constituted flexibly and changed with each new assignment. In this way, the best education for the best becomes the best education for the many. More and less successful students work together to determine meaning from the written text. Cooperatively, they plan oral presentations and dramatizations. Together, they share their written drafts and provide responses (feedback) for the revision stage in the writing process, as described in the *Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program*.² Students learn from each other. The number of monitors and explainers grows, and the opportunity to secure feedback increases.

Student involvement is active. Students are challenged to resolve dilemmas, conflicts, or problems they encounter through problem solving and decision making. Students are given guidelines but are not lock-stepped into a sequence of steps in a lesson. Students take ownership for their learning and look to each other for guidance before seeking the assistance of the teacher and aide.

The classroom resembles a resource room with reference material, a small library, learning centers, and clusters of desks, all focused on the learning at

¹Smith, Frank. *Joining the Literacy Club*. Victoria, B.C.: Abel Press, 1984.

²*Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*. Sacramento, California State Department of Education, 1986.

hand, not on the teacher. Groups of students work collaboratively on projects, and individual or group products are produced.

Recommendations for Facilitating Collaborative Learning

In a classroom where collaborative learning is stressed, students work together to build communication skills. The following recommendations are designed to help teachers and administrators facilitate collaborative learning in their schools and classrooms.

General Recommendations

1. Integrate Chapter 1 and migrant education students with other more proficient students.
2. Support collaborative learning and flexible pairings; guide efficient speaking, reading, and writing activities stimulated by good literature; and monitor the involvement of students in meaning-seeking and meaning-generating activities.

Specific Recommendations

1. Establish a school and classroom setting where:
 - a. The greatest possibility of success exists.
 - b. Learning is meaningful.
 - c. Learning is collaborative.
 - d. Students have a sense of belonging.
2. Encourage students to become responsible for the learnings of others as well as their own.
3. Avoid pullout programs.
 - a. Do not physically remove students to other classrooms or separate them within the classroom.
 - b. Keep Chapter 1 and migrant education teachers and instructional assistants in the regular classrooms along with Chapter 1 and migrant education students. Teachers and assistants should work with all students.
4. Arrange the classroom as a resource room and include materials about many topics, in a variety of genres, and at several levels of difficulty.
5. Provide students with opportunities to work together.
 - a. Pairings or groups should be flexible and change often.
 - b. Tracking and ability groups should be avoided.
 - c. Groups should be organized for a known and specific purpose.
 - d. Leadership roles should be rotated.
 - e. Students' roles are understood for each task.
 - f. Outcomes should be delineated.
6. Involve students in collaborative problem-solving and critical thinking activities in which outcomes depend on the collective efforts of the group.

Role of the Language Arts Teacher

In an effective language arts program, instructors, believing that all students can comprehend and communicate to others, provide for active participation, collaboration, guidance, modeling, feedback, and practice of language arts strategies to be learned. Teachers serve as facilitators, helping students apply the language arts in meaningful, thought-provoking, real-life situations. The classroom is learner-centered and is not governed by an individual education plan.

In an ineffective program, instructors foster dependency in a passive classroom by assigning work sheet tasks, kits, and other isolated activities which focus on deficient subskills identified by tests. Teachers are caretakers and provide feedback regarding the students' correctness of answers and form on assigned tasks. The classroom is teacher centered.

Effective Teaching of Language Arts

The role of the effective language arts teacher has changed. In the past, he or she was considered the source of all knowledge, determiner of all experiences, verifier of all interpretations, assigner of all tasks, and checker of the accurate employment of all conventions.

Today, we see the teacher more realistically as a facilitator of new learning; challenger of new thought; and manager of a classroom that encourages collaboration of thinking, cooperation in completing tasks, and the sharing of insights and expertise among students. We see such an educational leader as one who models the processes of comprehending and composing, a reader of literature who shares the joy of discovering new ideas, a writer who shares the struggles of communicating effectively, and a speaker who negotiates meanings in interactive sessions.

It is the teacher who teaches, guides, and facilitates new learnings, not the work sheets, the diagnostic tests, or the written narratives in a grammar book in which the parts of speech are explained. The teacher knows that few Chapter 1 and migrant education students have difficulty using language and that it is only in the analysis of language that they encounter difficulty. It is the teacher who focuses students' learning by creating activities which connect them to the experience or the literary text. It is the teacher who creates activities or questions which provide the connections between new and old learnings. It is the teacher who monitors each student and determines, out of all the possibilities,

which activities will focus and assist each student in achieving the outcome. It is the teacher who determines that learning will be active, collaborative, and meaningful.

Recommendations for Teaching Language Arts Effectively

Effective language arts teachers provide students with opportunities to participate actively in classroom activities and help them apply the language arts in real-life situations. Teachers can use the following recommendations to teach language arts effectively.

General Recommendations

1. Have students read quality literature.
2. Guarantee that lessons are meaningful and beneficial to students.
3. Provide assistance in helping students learn what to do, how to do it, and when to do it.

Specific Recommendations

1. Expose students to a variety of genres of literature.
 - a. Introduce meaningful topics through literature.
 - b. Allow students to generate their own interpretations and responses to literature.
 - c. Challenge students to deal with abstract ideas, concepts, and ideals encountered in nonfictional and fictional literature.
2. Provide a general and central focus to learning.
 - a. Identify and share the unifying concept or life experience with students.
 - b. Discuss students' background experiences and prior knowledge before each lesson.
 - c. Study relationships within the content in relation to this focus.
 - d. Help students change or reinterpret their world views independently or collectively as a group.
3. Clarify each task students are expected to complete.
 - a. Model how to do the task. Provide a clear model of the expected task; e.g., an autobiographical incident or a report of information.
 - b. Connect the new task with previous learning experiences.
 - c. Monitor the involvement of students in meaning-seeking and meaning-generating activities.

4. Provide guidance, modeling, feedback, and demonstrations of the language arts strategies that are to be learned by students.
 - a. Guide speaking, reading, and writing as tools in seeking and communicating meaning in each lesson.
 - b. Model the processes of comprehending and composing.
5. Help students experience actual speaking, reading, and writing events so that they learn to:
 - a. Make sense of messages received.
 - b. Make themselves understood as they attempt to communicate to identified audiences.
 - c. Apply knowledge of the processes of comprehension and composing and monitor and remedy any difficulties encountered.
 - d. Logically order new information.
6. Establish a positive climate in the classroom.
 - a. Provide for active learning in the classroom.
 - b. Communicate reasonable but high expectations to students, their parents, and other teachers.
 - c. Encourage risk taking, realizing that we can help students explore ideas and manipulate language in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect for individuals and their ideas.
- d. Validate students as readers with insightful interpretations, writers with important messages, and speakers with worthwhile ideas.
- e. Be concerned with meaningful communication first; later, with fluency; and lastly, with accuracy.
7. Become knowledgeable about literature and the reading and writing processes.
8. Encourage parents to help with the education of their children by:
 - a. Removing the mystery from reading
 - b. Reading to their children
 - c. Having their children read to them
 - d. Discussing the content of their children's current readings and writings with them
 - e. Discussing their children's understandings and interpretations of subject matter lessons
 - f. Encouraging their children to keep a journal of travels or a personal diary
 - g. Visiting their children's school and participating as a classroom volunteer
 - h. Taking their children to nearby libraries

A New Language Arts Program

Every lesson has a purpose, a coherent concept or topic to be explored, and is a language arts experience. The lesson is organized in three parts: (1) preparation; (2) enactment; and (3) extension. The following suggested formats may be useful in teaching narrative and expository lessons. Note that each format involves an oral discussion, a guided reading, and a writing experience.

Narrative Lessons

Teachers, in preparation for a new fiction lesson, read the story to determine the life experience portrayed. This life experience is introduced to the class, and it is discussed. Students share related anecdotal experiences. Students then are told how the new story is metaphorically related to their discussion.

Students read the first section of the narrative. The teacher helps students determine the location, main characters, and major conflict, problem, or dilemma the characters face in the story. Students anticipate and later determine how the main characters will react to this problem. Students read to find out how the main characters attempt to solve the problem. Students continue to read and discuss the unfolding aspects of the story. They predict what may occur next, read to verify, and discuss each new revelation.

Next, students read to learn how the problem was solved. Students then discuss the story and express their own interpretations of the occurrences in the story. They are encouraged to synthesize a "general learning" or thesis (moral) for the story. They are allowed to refer to parts of the story for support for their new understanding. (Students can also discuss how the characters added support to the theme and thesis of the story.) Students then discuss how their thesis applies to their own lives (world view).

Students extend their new understanding by writing a short story with the same theme as the story they just read. The intended audience is clarified. The thesis they derived from reading the story previously described is edified in the story they are writing. In preparation for their writing, students brainstorm, cluster, and map the main characters, setting, main problem, the main characters' reactions to the problem, and their attempts at a solution.

After determining how the problem will be resolved, students write first drafts and share them with peers

who provide feedback about the completeness of the assignment and clarity of content. Then students rewrite their essays and repeat earlier steps as needed. Once students are satisfied with the content and development of their stories, they share their revised essays with the teacher or peers for feedback. Final drafts are written and submitted to the teacher for evaluation. Finally, students' papers are published or shared with the intended audience.

Expository Lessons

In preparation for the reading, students are introduced to the topic. Students share information and understandings of that topic (what they already know), and their responses are written on the chalkboard. Students then are asked what information they want to find out from the reading. Their answers are written on the chalkboard (perhaps as questions). Students are introduced to the text by the teacher, who provides a general synoptic overview of the reading (thus providing a general preview of the content of the selection).

Students are asked to read the first section. The teacher then leads a discussion of the material in this section to see which of the students' questions were answered and to determine what new information was provided. Teacher and students clarify any misunderstandings or questions that arise. They review the text for any clarifications needed.

Students consider the outline and predict the information they expect next. The procedures of reading, checking comprehension, and predicting continue throughout the reading. On completion of the reading, the teacher guides the students to a clarification of the major concept as a learning for each student. Students are given opportunities to return to the text to provide support for their new understanding. Students are asked to explain how each new insight or major learning can be applied to their own lives/world.

Students then are asked to write essays on the same topic as that of the reading selection. They are asked to follow the general outline provided previously and to develop essays that clarify their new thinking about the topic. Students brainstorm, cluster, and map the content for their essays.

Students develop their first drafts, which they share with their peers. Their peers provide feedback regard-

ing the clarity of the content, soundness of the argument, and the coherence of the organization. Students then revise their writings. After several revisions, the students share their writings with peers who suggest editing. Students prepare final drafts and share them

with the intended audience. The drafts are evaluated by the instructor.³

³Material in this section was adapted from Donna Ogle, "K-W-L: A Teaching Model That Develops Active Reading of Expository Text," *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 39 (February, 1986), 564-70.

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