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TESOL
Journal

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Information for contributors to the *MinneTESOL/WITESOL Journal*

* **Editorial policy**

  The *MinneTESOL/WITESOL Journal* seeks to publish articles of importance to the profession of English as a Second Language in the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin. Articles in the following areas are considered for publication: instructional methods, techniques, and materials; research with implications for ESL; and issues in curriculum and program design. Book reviews and review articles are also welcome, as are short descriptions of work in progress on any aspect of theory or practice in our profession. Reports of work in the areas of curriculum and materials development, methodology, teaching, testing, teacher preparation and administration are encouraged, as are reports of research projects that focus on topics of special interest. Descriptions should summarize key concepts and results in a manner to make the information accessible to our readership. We also invite commentary on current trends and practices in the TESOL profession, and we encourage responses or rebuttals to any articles or remarks published in the *Journal*.

* **Manuscripts**

  Manuscripts should conform to the style book followed by TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. They should include a brief (e.g., 100-word) abstract.

  Submit three paper copies of the manuscript and abstract. Upon acceptance of your article for inclusion in the journal, you will be asked to send us a computer diskette of your article.

  Contributions to Volume 15 should be submitted to:

  > Suellen Rundquist
  > English Dept., 106 Riverview
  > St. Cloud State University
  > St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498
  >   or
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  > Dept. of Foreign Languages
  > University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire
  > Eau Claire, WI 54701.

* **Advertising**

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INTRODUCTION

This is the second volume of the *MinneTESOL/WITESOL Journal* as well as volume 14 of the *MinneTESOL Journal*, so it is both new and continuing in the tradition of publishing articles of interest to ESL professionals in our two states. We feel this collaboration between the MinneTESOL and WITESOL affiliates has strengthened our ability to provide both affiliate memberships opportunities for professional growth and development. We welcome your contributions in the way of articles, book reviews, student art, poetry, and discussions of on-going issues in the field. Your contributions are what make the journal happen.

This volume begins with two articles that offer curricular approaches to the pressing need for helping students gain content knowledge at the same time that they are working on English skills. This is particularly critical for recent arrivals and for refugee/immigrant students who have faced disrupted education.

Jeff DuFresne and Sandra Hall describe an alternative high school for newcomers in St. Paul, Minnesota – the LEAP Academy, which they direct. This school was established in response to research which was showing that ESL newcomers benefit from an academic environment that is more tailored to meet their specific needs, an environment that regular mainstream high schools are less able to provide.

Elizabeth Hoadley takes this issue of content-based instruction to the junior high school in her description of an ESL social studies course she developed that both followed the social studies curriculum and offered coherent, sequenced language instruction to her ESL students. The evolution of this approach raises important questions about the various models of ESL instruction in the public schools.

The third article, by Joannah L. O'Hatnick at the University of Minnesota, provides an accessible overview of two technologies at the forefront today: e-mail and the World Wide Web. Her survey of web sites and comments about the use of the web and e-mail in ESL classrooms is both current and practical.

The final article in this volume is a hands-on "Starter Kit" to develop a reading lab based on a model used at Minnesota State University - Akita and at the Minnesota English Center (U. of MN, Minneapolis). Last year's Journal included a study showing the benefits of this extensive reading program, so we felt it particularly fitting to include a practical description of the reading lab in this volume. Readers are encouraged to use the

handouts and ideas in this article to set up their own reading lab sites.

There are four book reviews in this volume. The first is a 1996 collection of "Voices from the Language Classroom," edited by Kathleen M. Bailey and David Nunamn. This is a compilation of articles by language teachers and researchers, all of which explore issues in language teaching and learning from a wide variety of perspectives and which use data from language classrooms as their common starting point.

The three other books reviewed take a more personal approach to examining issues faced by students in the refugee communities of our states. "My Trouble Is My English" offers an ethnographic view of four Laotian children in a U.S. secondary school, providing important perspectives on language learning, literacy, and acculturation. Two books by JoAn Criddle: "To Kill You Is No Loss" and "Bamboo and Butterflies" are both about a Cambodian family, first in Cambodia during the Pol Pot regime, and then in the U.S. as the family adjusts to life in a new country. While not directly related to language teaching, perhaps, these books offer important insights into the lives and voices of people who may be in our classrooms.

With this volume, Suellen Rundquist, who is a faculty member at St. Cloud State University and has been involved with ESL for many years, comes on board as the new Minnesota editor, and Robin Murie steps down after a rewarding three years. Thom Upton will continue as a co-editor, providing important continuity to the Journal.

We hope that you read this volume with pleasure and interest. We encourage your contributions to the Journal and look forward to continued "inter-affiliate" communication through this publication.

Robin Murie	*Thom Upton*	*Suellen Rundquist*
U. of Minnesota	U. of Wisconsin	St. Cloud State
Minneapolis	Eau Claire	St. Cloud, MN

CALL FOR PAPERS
MinneTESOL/WITESOL Journal
Volume XV

The *MinneTESOL/WITESOL Journal* is seeking contributions for vol. XV (Spring 1998). Contributions of the following type will be considered:

- **Manuscripts** about
  - --instructional methods, techniques, and materials
  - --research with implications for ESL
  - --issues in ESL curriculum and program design
  - --testing, assessment, and evaluation in ESL
  - --professional preparation
  - --sociopolitical issues in ESL
- **Book reviews**
- **Samples of ESL students' work** (poetry, essays, artwork)
- **Work in progress***
- **Responses to Volume XIV** of the *MinnTESOL/WITESOL Journal* for "The Forum" section*

*"Work in Progress" is a section of the *Journal* for short reports or updates on work that you are doing in any area of interest to our readership.
"The Forum" section includes responses or rebuttals to any articles or remarks published in the previous year's volume.

Manuscripts should follow the same style guidelines as*TESOL Quarterly* (the style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Assoc., 4th ed).

Each manuscript must be accompanied by a short bio statement and an abstract of not more than 200 words. <u>Submit two paper copies and disk to:</u>

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Deadline for submitting manuscripts for this volume:

August 1, 1997

LEAP English Academy: An Alternative High School for Newcomers to the United States

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The Limited English Achievement Program (LEAP), a.k.a. "LEAP English Academy," was started in the Fall of 1994 as a school completely dedicated to LEP newcomers aged 16 to 26, students whose needs often do not match the offerings provided in traditional high schools. LEAP provides ESL and adaptive content classes while offering a high school diploma, supported transition to the workplace and post-secondary training. LEAP incorporates tutoring and structured interaction with American high school students and other volunteers. This article provides the background of, rationale for, and description of St. Paul, Minnesota's LEAP English Academy and explores the possibilities offered by this model.

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1994, Saint Paul (MN) Schools initiated the Limited English Achievement Program, better known as "LEAP" or "LEAP English Academy." LEAP represents an attempt to improve the delivery of educational services for LEP students ages 16 and above.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The LEAP English Academy grew out of an initiative by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) based on concerns expressed by mainstream and ESL teachers. Though these concerns were rather wide-ranging, the central issues involved: 1) the extent to which St. Paul was meeting the needs of the very large number of children of refugees and immigrants who comprise 26% of St. Paul's student population, as well as 2) how present services, or lack of services, appeared to be affecting mainstream programming district-wide.

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The "Southeast Asian Study Committee" was formed in March of 1994 as a joint effort of St. Paul Public Schools and the AFT. Its charge, as determined by PIC, a joint labor-management committee, was to:

> Examine and assess educational issues in areas of early learning, TESOL, mainstreaming, parental-involvement, adult education, and hiring of South east Asian staff. . . and to submit recommendations for ways to address specific issues by June 10, 1994.

The study committee was co-chaired by an AFT- local vice-president and a deputy superintendent of St. Paul Schools. Several ESL/bilingual teachers and school principals were invited to an initial meeting to outline concerns the task force might want to address and to consider who else ought to be a part of the task force. Two weeks later, an expanded group including teachers, administrators, and community members met to study the educational concerns and seek solutions.

One of the major concerns identified was that of LEP students who enter the district after the age of 15. Experience has shown that a high percentage of these students fail to fulfill graduation requirements before age forces them out of school. St. Paul students must pass four minimum competency exams to be eligible for graduation. S.E. Asian LEP students fail these tests at a disproportionately higher rate than any other group in St. Paul. Many drop out.

Research indicates that these students require more time and attention than is available to them if they arrive in America after age 15. A study by Collier (1987) demonstrated that immigrant children in this age group took 6-8 years to become academically competitive with American peers. This finding was reinforced by a study in the St. Paul Schools which showed that Hmong students who entered after age 14 remained below the 5th percentile in SRA reading scores (Dufresne, 1993). Clearly these students are in great danger of neither graduating from high school nor gaining necessary skills that might allow them to pursue further academic training or seek worthwhile employment.

Committee members also pointed out that except for available ESL classes the standard curriculum in most high schools is simply not designed for the needs of LEP students, many of whom have not had much prior education in their home countries and therefore have little of the background necessary to understand high school level material regardless of the language it might be taught in. Many students are caught in the dilemma of being unable to enroll in academically challenging classes because of their limited English level or, if enrolled, being unable to glean much from the experience. Before their English improves enough to understand and compete in higher-level academic classes, they become too old to remain in a traditional high school or become discouraged by failure and resigned to the idea that graduation or further education is be-

yond their abilities.

Committee members felt that the hoped for benefits of inclusion of LEP students in "mainstream" classes in a "regular" high school setting, which ideally would facilitate cultural and social assimilation as well the forced use of English, were generally precluded by the enormous language gap between LEP students and native speakers, the lack of structured interaction, and the general unwillingness of adolescents to mix with others outside their "group." LEP students typically sat quietly in mainstream classes, understanding little but asking few questions. The teacher, having neither the background nor time to explain the material adequately for this "separate" group, did the best he/she could by creating easier worksheets and basing grades on homework rather than tests, which LEP students largely failed when graded on mainstream standards. Commonly, LEP students reported that they did not understand the material but got help on homework from family and friends. Most reported that they had no real American friends and generally socialized with others who spoke their native language. It was the view of experienced teachers and knowledgeable community members that unless interaction between Americans and LEP students was structured it seldom took place, whether the students happened to be in the same room or not, leaving the LEP students feeling isolated and inadequate.

Related concerns included: 1) The lack of a comprehensive approach to teaching cultural awareness to new arrivals as well as a lack of content classes adjusted to the needs of LEP students; 2) The difficulties involved in enrolling and programming LEP students who arrive mid-semester; and 3) The need to be able to retain students past the age of 21.

In addition to the issues outlined above, it was pointed out by members of the affected ethnic communities that, due to their age and culture, many of the students had strong family responsibilities. This suggested that many of these students needed to be receiving vocational training in addition to regular high school classes so they could become employable.

These concerns culminated in a basic idea for a solution: **Design an** *entire* **academic program or, perhaps, a separate school specifically to meet the needs of these LEP high school students.** The rationale for such a program was based directly on the concerns outlined above. Experience indicated that the needs of many older LEP students were not being adequately met. Attempts to alter existing curriculum and programming in the regular schools had simply not been successful; it appeared that the needs of LEP students would invariably be superseded by the overall needs and structure of the school. The idea then was to create a separate environment to allow total focus on LEP needs. A concentration of a larger number of students with these needs would also

mean a larger ESL/bilingual staff, increasing the school's ability to offer a greater variety of classes designed for LEP students.

ESL/bilingual teachers from the task force met with administrators from St. Paul's Area Learning Center (ALC) and Adult Diploma Program (ADP). ALC specializes in alternative programming for non-traditional students, and it was felt that this connection would provide needed flexibility and free the program from having to "fit in" with the program and schedule demands of an ordinary high school. The connection to ADP would facilitate retention of students who needed to remain in school beyond age 21 to complete their diploma. This committee wrote a program proposal including a line-item budget based on a projected enrollment of 110. In early June, 1994, the proposal was submitted to the task force, which recommended it to district administration. Eight weeks later, ALC was given permission to start-up the program and, in September, 1994, the "Limited English Achievement Program" (LEAP) opened for business.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

LEAP English Academy, as it has come to be called, operates as an independent, self-contained high school designed specifically for students learning English. LEAP's 16 classrooms and offices occupy the fourth floor of a former shoe factory, owned and refurbished by the city, located in downtown St. Paul. This building is also the home of the Center for Employment and Training (CET) as well as "Gateway," another ALC program for chemically dependent youth. It was envisioned that both of these programs would complement LEAP. This has proven to be correct, both in helping students find jobs and in setting up specific situations for structured interaction through a tutoring program. Funding for LEAP is provided by the St. Paul School District, based largely on per-pupil state aid. Funds are administered by the Area Learning Center (ALC) with additional funds provided by the Adult Diploma Program (ADP) to cover the costs of the "over-21" students at LEAP.

LEAP's program seeks to 1) improve students' English language proficiency, 2) provide a more suitable route to a high school diploma, and 3) provide assisted transition to vocational training, college, or the workplace.

LEAP's schedule is flexible. While LEAP generally follows the school district calendar, classes may vary in length and duration. Though most classes meet one hour per day for several months, some classes require intensive study several hours per day and last only a few weeks. This is done to make better use of scheduled staff time, facilitate the coordination of curriculum between classes, and accommodate students who reg-

ister for school after the start of the semester.

To elaborate, because LEAP is much smaller than a typical high school, it is often difficult to schedule a wide variety of classes concurrently. This is particularly true because it is often necessary to offer a particular subject at more than one language proficiency level or with appropriate bilingual assistance. However, needed classes can be offered consecutively. For example, it is not necessary to offer "health" for an entire semester if the necessary contact hours can be arranged over a fewer number of weeks. A six-week health class might be followed by an eight-week physical science class, each of which meets two or more hours per day. A social studies class might alternate days with a career exploration class. Currently, a literature class and a biology class share the same time slot, each meeting for two hours on an alternating schedule. Two teachers share this part-time position.

An additional benefit of this arrangement is the coordination of curriculum. For example, during the weeks that most LEAP students have "health," it is relatively easy for ESL classes to focus activities on health-related topics – perhaps writing stories or doing a role-play based on going to the doctor. Reading and vocabulary units can reinforce and complement what occurs in the health class.

When new arrivals enter a "regular" high school in the middle of a semester, counselors typically have difficulty placing them in appropriate classes and, not uncommonly, it is impossible for the students to earn credit. LEAP, however, accommodates these students by offering classes over a shorter period of time. In this way students are able to earn some credits even if they have been in school only the last few weeks of a semester.

Flexibility has proven necessary at LEAP in other ways also. Many LEAP students are parents themselves or have jobs. Some of these students simply cannot attend a regular high school because of the demands of child care or work. Some LEAP students elect to carry fewer credits, leaving school early or arriving late. LEAP staff members work with individual students to arrange independent study projects for credit as well. LEAP students can take advantage of ALC's policy of awarding credit through validation. Students complete study packets individually and work with a validator. When they have successfully completed the work, the validator awards credit. For example, one LEAP student worked on a validation packet in Consumer Skills.

Mature, highly-motivated students are able to earn more credits over a shorter period of time than they could in an ordinary high school due to independent study options, extended scheduling, and cooperative arrangements with the Adult Program at Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning, the St. Paul Technical College, and nearby community colleges. Ar-

rangements of this sort generally apply only to very well-educated students anxious to "validate" (earn credit for completing units of study) previous learning while at the same time expanding their English proficiency. These students are generally older and often college-bound. LEAP attempts to facilitate transition to higher education for these students as quickly as is appropriate.

More typically, students require about the same length of time to acquire a diploma at LEAP as might be needed in one of the other city high schools. However, LEAP attempts to make the high school experience more meaningful and appropriate for these students.

Averaged over the length of a semester, most LEAP students receive six hours of instruction per day featuring ESL, individualized and small-group tutoring, content classes, computer-assisted instruction, and career exploration.

ESL

In general, students receive three hours of direct English instruction per day depending on their levels and needs, though the amount of time given to ESL varies with the proficiency of the student. A few will have only one ESL class; others may require four hours of English a day. Those with greater English proficiency have more flexibility and choice among other course offerings. Students are tested and placed in ESL classes according to level. Students under 21 are initially evaluated with the Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey. Students 21 and above are given the BEST test. The use of two different tests is in keeping with the differences between the adult and K-12 programs already in place in St. Paul Schools. The decision to use both tests was made for administrative rather than qualitative reasons. In fact, either test provides more information than is necessary for placement purposes. After the students are initially enrolled, teacher recommendation is paramount in making changes in ESL level. Teachers meet and discuss appropriate placement, which is done by consensus with students' preferences taken into consideration. Students are occasionally allowed to try classes that the teachers think may be beyond them.

Generally, LEAP embraces "whole-language" as an instructional approach with teachers teaming to create thematic units to foster meaningful language experiences. Nevertheless, certain ESL classes stress particular skill areas. In general, students each have a class which focuses on oral language. For beginning-level students this class is likely to be highly organized and teacher-directed. Small-group work is facilitated by the use of native speaker volunteers as well as bilingual educational assistants. The beginning oral skills class seeks to teach students to ask

and respond to yes/no and simple information questions using reasonably correct structure.

More advanced students are placed in tutor classes to work on oral skills. In tutor classes, ESL students interact with volunteers, student teachers, and American peers. Volunteers have included retired teachers, students fulfilling tutoring requirements for local colleges or community service requirements for high school credit, people from nearby businesses, and friends of the staff. For example, students from the Gateway Program, an ALC program for students recovering from chemical dependency located in LEAP's building, earn credit as tutors in a daily tutoring class. Most tutors are native speakers, but some are bilingual. Currently, several of the college and high school tutors are bilingual in English and Hmong.

The objective of this structured interaction is to build cultural awareness and understanding while providing practice in English conversation skills. Students and tutors share and compare aspects of their respective cultures, with the tutors often gaining at least as much from the experience as the tutees. This two-way learning is a central objective of the class. The curriculum, known as *Conversations Across Cultures*, was designed by a LEAP teacher. In these classes, the teacher structures the interaction using pictures, videos, activities, and written material as stimuli. In addition to providing topics and materials, the teacher trains and prepares the tutors and circulates during class periods to direct and facilitate the activities.

LEAP students generally also carry an ESL class which focuses particularly on written language structure and composition. For beginning level students, this is usually provided by a bilingual teacher so the complicated aspects of English grammar can be discussed. LEAP staff members feel that a bilingual approach to teaching language structure to beginners often offers advantages over an English-only approach, which must rely heavily on imitation, repetition, and students' intuition. The focus of instruction for higher level students is the improvement of written communication skills with the goal of passing St. Paul's competency tests, which is a graduation requirement. The realities of the competency test requirement make proficiency in written English very important for students seeking a diploma. Proposed state-level graduation requirements are likely to make this component even more crucial. In addition to teaching basic writing skills, LEAP has added a word-processing component to its writing classes for students at intermediate and advanced levels. Using thirty Macintosh computers, students are taught to word-process their papers. Writing classes are in two-hour blocks to facilitate this component. Students use the lab on a daily basis or on a rotating six-day cycle, depending upon level. Writing teachers have discovered that

students are eager to learn word processing skills, producing more writing and doing more self-editing than in the past. Often students are waiting at the computer lab door in the morning in order to get in a few minutes on the computer before school starts. The lab is staffed by a full-time educational assistant with both technical and writing skills. Writing teachers also accompany their students to the lab.

COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION

Most LEAP students also have an instructional component focusing on reading and vocabulary. This was included in the curriculum because most academic work hinges on students' ability to read. In addition to classroom reading instruction and tutoring, computers are available for students to practice reading. Along with the word processing lab mentioned above, LEAP uses a fifteen computer Mac-lab running Computer Curriculum Corp. (CCC) software, which keeps track of student progress and places them in their program when they enter their password. In general, students are scheduled into the computer lab for 25 minutes daily or for an hour twice a week. The lab is staffed by either a bilingual educational assistant or teacher, who assists the students, monitors their progress, and places appropriate courses on the students' computer menu. Some students arrive at school early or stay late in order to do extra lessons on the computers.

The "CCC" computer lab allows for individualized instruction in several content areas. All students are expected to acquire basic keyboarding skills in their first semester. In addition to programmed typing and a variety of reading programs, students may work on math skills, including algebra and logic, social studies, science, career exploration, and GED prep courses. Some individuals put in many extra hours on the computer and are able to earn independent study credit based on hours and evaluation by the teacher. In general, however, the computer lab is intended to augment regular class instruction rather than replace it.

ADAPTED CONTENT CLASSES

LEAP students also register for content courses required for graduation as well as ESL and electives. However, unlike a regular high school, these courses are designed and adapted to the language-learning needs of the students. More than one section of a content class is available so students with similar needs can be placed together. Teachers do not "dummy-down" material, but may spend larger amounts of time explaining vocabulary and providing background information. Commonly, bi-

lingual educational assistants work with students to explain vocabulary and concepts and to help students with reading. The proficiency level of the student will affect the complexity of reading material selected by the teacher. In the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years, LEAP students had the following content classes available to them: several levels of math including algebra, world geography, American history, American government, citizenship skills, biology, physical science, health, typing, and art. LEAP plans to offer additional classes in the future, though in any given semester offerings will remain limited by the availability of staff.

CAREER EXPLORATION AND TRAINING

In addition to these required content classes, students also are offered classes in career exploration. Much of this is done through the "St. Paul Connections" program, whose office is also in the same building. Students participating in "Connections" go to the St. Paul Technical College for sampler classes or to worksites where they observe and receive instruction. A number of these students take sampler classes focusing on health careers at nearby Ramsey Hospital. About 40% of LEAP students participated in "Connections" during the first two years of the school's operation. Several students used this technical college experience to "transition" into full-time vocational training at the technical college. Some students whose English is proficient enough attend both the technical college and LEAP through the Post Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO). Others go to technical college upon graduation from LEAP.

"Connections" classes have proven to be most valuable for LEAP students whose language proficiencies are at the intermediate level or above. These students have taken the classes quite seriously, recognizing that they are being given the opportunity to see the actual type of training they would experience if they pursued a particular trade or profession and that they are being taught by people who really work in that field. Perhaps LEAP students feel a sense of urgency about career choices because of their ages and family responsibilities. "Connections" classes have not proven to be appropriate for beginning level students because their language ability precludes comprehension. However, LEAP staff feel that "Connections" and similar experiential or apprenticeship programs offer tremendous possibilities. LEAP will attempt to expand the number of its students participating in this program in the future by creating special sections of "Connections" classes and assigning bilingual educational assistants to accompany groups of students to the training sites.

EMPLOYMENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE

As just mentioned, employment is a high priority for many LEAP students. Job coordinators from various agencies have assisted LEAP students in locating employment or job-experience situations. These agencies have included the Center for Employment and Training and HIRED. Students who wish to work are able to alter their school studies to fit their work schedule to a certain extent; that is, students have the option of leaving school early every day for work or starting later in the day. This generally means carrying fewer credits unless students do independent study or take classes at an ADP evening site. It is hoped that in the future LEAP will be able to offer classes during early morning or evening hours to provide more options to working students. LEAP supports students' decisions to work, particularly if their jobs involve interaction which encourages (or even forces) them to use English and/or builds technical skills in a vocational area. Education and employment may be considered concurrent rather than consecutive activities.

TRANSITION COMPONENT

One of LEAP's goals has been to ease the transition of qualified students from high school into college or vocational training. The process of placing students, however, has proven to require a great deal of time and energy. Some form of concurrent registration is required, but this has proven difficult, particularly with the testing requirements most colleges place on second language learners. Several colleges have expressed interest in facilitating the process; however, the mechanisms necessary for smooth transition have yet to be worked out. Presently, only three realistic options appear to exist – concurrent classes, independent registration with payment of tuition, or PSEO. During 1994-95, LEAP staff worked with nearby Metro State University to place four students in advanced math and science classes. All four of these students have since graduated from LEAP and are continuing their education at Metro State or other colleges. Others have entered St. Paul Technical college or have gained Technical College experience through the "Connections" program previously mentioned. It is hoped that in the future LEAP staff will have more time to work with colleges and technical schools. During its first two years, LEAP had no guidance counselor to assist with these tasks and regular teachers clearly had difficulty finding the time to carry this role. In the fall of 1996, however, LEAP acquired four hours per week of part time counseling help through the Adult Diploma Program, an improvement but hardly enough help to give guidance about post-secondary edu-

cation options to more than 200 students. Transition to college and vocational training programs remains a high-priority goal at LEAP.

STUDENTS AND STAFF

At the end of the 1994-95 school year, LEAP was serving approximately 175 students, about half of whom were under 21 years of age. Most of the others were 21 or 22 years old. This number increased to about 200 for 1995-96. With the addition of a staff member in the fall of 1996, total enrollment climbed to about 240. Total enrollment has been capped at that figure due to lack of physical space in the building as well as a shortage of staff. Presently, new students older than 21 are encouraged to seek classes at the Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning, though some are still admitted to LEAP as space allows, with a maximum of 100 students in the over-21 category. LEAP staff feels the mix of younger and older learners has been very beneficial to the overall learning atmosphere of the school. However, few students over 24 are enrolled at LEAP because of the concern that students under 21 may view the program as a "senior citizens" program rather than a real high school. The realities are that LEAP has had to restrict enrollment of those over 21 because there simply is not the room, staff or money to include all who apply. There is a long waiting list of students over 21. A few are accepted on a "first-come-first-serve" basis, though preference is given to a spouse or sibling of a present LEAP student or to a student recently forced out of a regular high school due to age. LEAP's 1995 summer program served 200 students, 70% of whom were under 21.

The ethnic breakdown of LEAP students has on average been approximately 55% Hmong, 25% Vietnamese, 10% Hispanic, and 10% "other," which includes students from Bangladesh, Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Haiti, China, Taiwan, and Ethiopia. Generally the numbers of males and females has been equal, though the percentage of males has occasionally been as high as 55%. Approximately half of the students are married.

LEAP presently has five full-time teachers and two part-time teachers as well as five full-time and three part-time educational assistants. Staffed bilingual services are available in Hmong, Lao, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Spanish, French, Hindi, and Russian. In addition, the volunteers mentioned above have provided countless hours of time, assisting in classrooms and with small-groups, doing office work, and even supervising the lunchroom. This pairing of American students and other volunteers with LEAP students has been quite successful. LEAP made use of more than 70 tutors and other volunteers in 1994-95 and over 80 in 1995-96. Administrative duties are shared among the instructional team with the

assistance of a part-time secretary. There is no on-site principal, assistant principal, or counselor. The principal, assistant principal, and counselor for the Area Learning Center (ALC) supervise nineteen programs and have little time for micro-management of each individual site. They have, however, been extremely supportive of LEAP and have been quick to give assistance when it has been requested. This assistance has resulted in additional staff, materials, and advice about such things as keeping attendance records, maintaining student cumulative folders, and evaluating student credits, including those from schools in their home countries. This policy of giving help when needed and asked for has meant that LEAP staff have had the freedom to find creative solutions to problems, solutions which fit our particular population. It has also meant, of course, a heavier burden of tasks for instructional staff than might be encountered in a regular high school.

RECRUITMENT

Most of LEAP's under-21 population are new to the school district and are referred to LEAP by St. Paul's assessment and placement center. The majority of these students are 18, 19, or 20 years old. Few of these students would be able to graduate if they went to one of St. Paul's regular high schools because of their ages. These referrals are made continuously throughout the year. Students younger than 18 tend to be siblings or spouses of older students or have arrived in country mid-semester when it is difficult to enroll for credit at a regular high school. Some students in the "under-21" category come directly to LEAP though "word of mouth" and are sent to the placement center for testing and medical evaluation before starting classes.

Only six students under the age of 21 have transferred to LEAP from other St. Paul high schools, excluding students who enrolled for the special summer program only. LEAP has not encouraged schools to transfer students unless it is clear that they are not succeeding where they are.

Of the "21 and above" population at LEAP, about 30% have been students forced to leave their former St. Paul high school because they had reached the age of 21. A number of these had dropped out of high school more than a year previously due to age, work, or child-care.

The majority of LEAP students over the age of 21 are quite new to the country and have learned of the school from friends and relatives. This "word-of-mouth" advertising has brought the majority of students to LEAP. Workers from Lao Family Community, United Cambodian Association, and STRIDE have also brought in some students. At any given time, there are likely to be dozens of students on the waiting list to get in (over 100 as of this writing). The LEAP program has not been adver-

tised, so it is interesting that there are so many trying to get in. Clearly, the demand indicates there are a very large number of young adults in the community who need access to English and basic high school education. Hopefully it also implies that the program offered at LEAP is considered to be valuable by those making the referrals.

About thirty students graduated from LEAP in its first two years of operation. These were students who had completed a good portion of high school before entering LEAP.

Attrition was fairly light in the first two years of operation, perhaps five percent. Most students who dropped out during the year did so because of child care problems or work. Seven students indicated that the were moving to another state or returning to their home country.

About thirty students graduated from LEAP in its first two years of operation. These were students who had completed a good portion of high school before entering LEAP.

EVALUATION OF LEAP

There has been no formal evaluation of LEAP. Presently, statistics are being gathered to compare the progress of LEAP students with students from other St. Paul high schools who have been in the country a similar length of time. There appears to be some evidence that LEAP students are passing the minimum competency tests required for graduation sooner than students from other high schools relative to "time-in-country," though the picture is presently far from complete.

However, LEAP's program is in a continual state of evaluation as staff members, administrators, and interested community members meet to plan for the future, to consider what aspects of the program have gone as hoped, to determine what unplanned benefits have accrued, and to outline what concerns or problems require consideration. There has been general agreement that, as an alternative program, LEAP is on the right track; overall, the curriculum and program described above seems to be working as planned.

POSITIVES

LEAP is "user friendly." It is easy to enroll students and to alter their programs as needed. While classes meet at regular times, it is easy to alter a daily schedule to take groups to the public library, the science museum, or the state capitol, all a short walk away. Schedule flexibility has even allowed one teacher to take a class of students to Washington, DC, for a week without seriously disrupting either the students' or the school's schedules.

The school's small size has helped create an intimate, informal, perhaps "culturally appropriate," atmosphere. LEAP is simply a friendly

school. There is an *esprit de corps*. There have been virtually no instances of conflict between students, nor between staff and students. No disciplinary actions have been required in two years of operation.

While concerns are occasionally raised about increasing the interaction with Americans (discussed below), experienced teachers are quite appreciative of the absence of negative interaction with American students. Interactions and attitudes have been positive. In part, this may be due to the maturity of the students. The older students have contributed to the overall learning atmosphere.

The staff has worked as a team, sharing administrative responsibilities, making decisions and carrying the burdens as a group. There is a strong sense among the teachers that they themselves "call the shots" as they are responsible for creating schedules, assessing students, and determining the length of the school day. Very little has been imposed from above by the district administration. There has been very little "red tape." The staff is free to be creative. They feel creative!

Overall, the most positive factor has simply been that the school focuses completely on the concerns of LEP young adults. The instruction is appropriate to the needs of this group.

CONCERNS

LEAP often faces difficulties in providing classes in all the subjects needed or desired. For example, LEAP cannot hire a full-time science teacher or accounting teacher. Getting someone part-time during the appropriate hours remains a difficult hurdle to overcome.

In its first two years, LEAP encountered many problems related to a shortage of books, materials, and equipment. Some of these problems have been a function of the newness of the program and hopefully this will be less of an issue over time. LEAP's location, however, places constraints on certain types of programming. For example, no gym, art room, or library are easily available, making related activities difficult to schedule. Particularly in winter, students have been very unwilling to walk to locations where such activities might be provided. For a single special outing, this is no great issue; for consistent programming, however, it remains a genuine problem.

Staff members, though enjoying the opportunity to be completely in control of a program, have often found themselves overwhelmed with work. The regular instructional staff perform all the jobs a school might require, except that of janitor: the teachers assess and place students, arrange transportation, design curriculum, schedule students, hand out lunches, supervise lunchrooms, write job descriptions, create flyers, keep track of attendance, write curriculum, create report cards, advise students,

meet with college and technical school representatives, and work with job supervisors. They do this and teach full-time. Burn out is an issue that has been raised by all staff members. However, most staff feel that the first two years will probably prove to be the toughest and that many tasks will become routinized during ensuing years.

A major issue that had been discussed prior to the creation of the program was that of interaction with native English speakers. Not only has LEAP wanted to avoid the appearance of segregating non-native students from the mainstream American population, there is the greater issue of how to create or ensure interaction of LEAP students with native speakers, a necessary ingredient in quality language instruction. LEAP staff members feel that, in general, the volunteer and peer-tutoring components more than make up for the fact that LEAP students are not sharing halls and lunchrooms with American students, given that the realities in most high schools are that minimal positive interaction actually takes place. However, the issue remains an important one at LEAP. Teachers would like to see more interaction between students *in English* in non-structured situations. There might be advantages to housing a program such as LEAP in a high school or another setting where there would be more informal interaction with native speakers as well as increased availability of peer tutors. However, LEAP teachers remain concerned that inclusion of LEAP into a regular school could result in the loss of autonomy for the program, which in turn could mean the loss of focus on the special needs of LEAP students.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In the coming semesters, LEAP staff hope to refine procedures for validating education the students have previously had as well as developing systems for students to gain credit while working independently. Students who have had high school level classes in key content areas such as math, science, and social studies but who lack transcripts ought to be able to get credits, perhaps through testing in the native language. LEAP has been able to grant credits for some students using bilingual staff to determine the extent of prior learning; however, doing so has remained a cumbersome process. A formal, "streamlined" system has yet to be developed.

Similarly, LEAP hopes to create more possibilities for students to increase the pace of their own learning and reward them for doing so by granting "validations," credits earned for completing units of study. Most LEAP students are mature and concerned about learning the language and completing a diploma as quickly as possible. Many of them have the time, skills, and ambition to work independently. This has been evidenced

by the discovery that a number of LEAP students attend evening or week-end classes at other sites after completing their daily 6 1/2 hours of in-struction at LEAP. Clearly desire and interest of this sort should be en-couraged and rewarded. LEAP hopes that a validation system will facili-tate independent study.

LEAP hopes to strengthen its ties with the various colleges and uni-versities in the region. Because of its unique focus on English language learners, its autonomy, and flexibility, LEAP offers unusual possibilities for research, for introducing new methods and materials, and for train-ing teachers. A number of colleges and universities have already placed student teachers and interns at LEAP. At LEAP, they are able to observe and work with a number of experienced teachers in a wide variety of teaching situations – including both large and small group instruction, various skill areas and proficiency levels, and sheltered content classes. LEAP appears to be a unique instructional model and as such it invites research comparing it to other approaches.

CONCLUSIONS

LEAP English Academy represents a unique attempt to meet the needs of LEP students who enter the school systems after the age of 16. Though it is premature to draw conclusions based on its first two years of opera-tion, LEAP offers a model to larger school districts for alternative high school programming for older immigrant students. It may also offer pos-sibilities to the regular high schools about ways curriculum might be altered to meet the overall academic needs of students struggling to learn English, particularly in the area of content classes.

THE AUTHORS

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Defining the World: Content-Based Learning in an ESL Classroom

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This paper describes the development of a one-year ESL/So-
cial Studies course for a secondary school, based on the cur-
riculum for the mainstream class at the same grade level, to
be taught in step with the mainstream class. The particular
focus is on the construction of appropriate language-restricted
coursework. This enables the students to learn and practice
the language skills they need, while at the same time absorb-
ing the Social Studies knowledge and concepts that they also
need. The paper concludes by noting that the students
achieved competency, not only in vocabulary and language
structures, but also in Social Studies concepts appropriate to
their grade level.

INTRODUCTION

Recently a substitute teacher from Mexico asked me, "How do you plan to move your students into the mainstream? Do they go into lower classes?" When I asked him what areas of learning he was referring to, he said, "How do you make up for their academic studies in social studies, math and science? If they spend all their time in ESL, they will have missed the other work along the way."

My colleague's question articulated the problem of all secondary-level ESL teachers. Their mandate is not just to teach ESL. In addition to teaching language skills, they have to ensure that students have a working knowledge of secondary school science, math and social studies. Their skills in these subjects have to be brought up to the level of native English-speaking students. Without this, no student can be expected to achieve their potential in a mainstream classroom.

My immediate response to this question was, "Of course, the need for a content-based curriculum is self-evident." Citing classroom practice I noted, "High school and middle school ESL teachers in Madison follow a content-based curriculum." He inquired, "How is this done? Do you

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have to teach less English language if you teach more ESL Social Studies?" My response, contradictory as it seems, was "You teach more of both."

A valid ESL content-based curriculum must achieve this goal. It must teach language skills at the same time as it teaches content, *e.g.* Social Studies. Furthermore, language skills must be acquired by the students at the same level and speed as they would have been acquired in a "straight" ESL language course. Most teachers do not need convincing that a content-based curriculum is academically desirable, but course-descriptions are hard to find. This paper describes a year in which I constructed and taught a content-based curriculum, hoping to show that language ability improves faster in a content-based ESL class. At the end of the year, student gain in English language ability was measured by comparison of their test scores against scores from a class that had not studied in a content-based curriculum.

I begin with a brief description of the background in English for Specific Purposes which led to the development of this curriculum. I will then summarize the different attempts at assimilating ESL into mainstream secondary school studies. Finally, there is a description of the course which finally emerged as the best method to achieve this aim.

BACKGROUND

For the first seven years of my teaching career, my ESL experience consisted of developing and teaching courses in English for Specific Purposes. Each course was for college-level ESL, with each based on a different academic discipline. The work could not really be described as curriculum design, since no time was ever available for forward planning. It was teaching while glued to the drawing board in that lessons were mostly written the night before being taught in instant response to demands from content-area teachers. Classes depended on an all-out effort to teach the English most closely interwoven with the current coursework, *e.g.*, a university medical or engineering course. Each new course would mandate its specialized language. Since no two courses ever used the same specialized language, this type of teaching required much flexibility and rapid adaptation from the teacher. Writing the course while teaching it was always a lot of hard work, but it appeared to be the best way to achieve the desired result.

When I started high-school teaching, I faced a roomful of high-spirited students who wanted to enjoy life and thought I was the one to help them do it. I was not inclined to disagree, but I did need to be sure it was I who set the agenda, not the students at the back of the classroom. Language drills and comprehension exercises did not seem to be particularly

appropriate in this setting. I needed to find something to be more passionate about. I already had a sturdy background in English for Specific Purposes instruction, but I questioned whether a curriculum for a younger age group could be created using the same mold. Although the situation mandated content-based instruction, I was doubtful the techniques used in teaching English for Specific Purposes could be applied to create content-based instruction in the ESL secondary school classroom. This is an account of the different attempts I made to solve the problem.

Implementing content-based instruction implies, first of all, that the instruction be driven by the content that the students are required to know, as opposed to being driven by the language they must master to get at the content. The ESL teacher always faces a dilemma: should the content drive the language, or vice versa? Does language impose certain inflexible restraints? For example, can a student learn the past tense before the present tense, or learn the passive before learning the past tense? The conundrum for the teacher is therefore a paradox. You cannot muddle with content, it will only be distorted; however, if you do not target the language level, will any student grasp the content?

I did not immediately tackle the problem of content-based ESL studies. I spent the first semester in my secondary school ESL class teaching "straight" ESL. I happily created situational speech exercises, reading and discussion exercises, and comprehension and composition lessons. The class was sedate and learning took place. In my second semester, I moved into using more functional language skills. I planned to put far more emphasis on productive skills. One unit taught skills necessary for finding a job by means of searching the classified sections of newspapers, discussing what was found, and writing letters of application. Another unit taught composition and presentation skills based on research assigned to individual students. At the end, each student had produced two reports: one oral, using OHP, and one written, using maps and diagrams. This type of project was more of a challenge to the students and sometimes "scary," but it produced good work, and engaged their interest, especially when they were able to watch others presenting in front of the class.

Less satisfying were my sessions in a mainstream classroom, where I was trying to "enable" the students to keep up with the mainstream in their other academic studies. I found that the school timetable allowed me two choices. I could either join the mainstream class with my students and work at perpetually catching them up with the lessons, or I could pull students out and try to teach the same material to them separately.

Option one is the inclusion, or pull-in, model. I spent several semesters trying this method, which is currently favored by many educators.

The problem was that students with limited language ability needed one-to-one instruction. I would find myself repeatedly spending valuable class time just finding the place in the book for each student, one after another, then more class time explaining (always one-by-one) what the task of the moment was. I had to do it with one student after another because they were scattered about the classroom, and I could not call across the room without interrupting the classroom teacher. I could only provide a feasible one-to-one service for one student at a time, which meant that while I was explaining to one student, the others were inactive. Having found the place, having understood the task, they still did not know how to perform it. If they could not understand the classroom teacher, I could not constantly interrupt the lesson to explain. In the end, my time was spent translating the same vocabulary, word-by-word, to different students, explaining where to start, how many to do, what could be left out, what could be left in. It was a never-ending exercise in frustration because I could never teach anything. Instead, I existed to facilitate. The students likewise felt marginalized and set to one side. They were either on the periphery or completely outside of everything that went on in the classroom. No matter how hard they worked, they could rarely participate, never hope to catch up, never achieve a good grade. No matter what both teachers did to help, they were trailing a long way behind.

A year later, I turned to a second option, realizing the impossibility of teaching mainstream materials for social studies and science, or even math, because of the high language content of math books. I scheduled my class to take ESL Language, ESL Science, ESL Math and ESL Social Studies with me. I endeavored to construct parallel courses for ESL students, using a simplified content and preparing assignments at a much lower level. The students were a good deal happier. They immediately became far more vocal and started producing meaningful classwork and homework. However, subconsciously I knew that some features of the class were unsatisfactory. I worried about the gross oversimplification of the tasks required of the students. In addition, the level of academic achievement was too low. The students were happy, but my suspicion was confirmed when a special education student joined my class. He was just as happy as the others. He could do everything they could do. Obviously my classes were not challenging enough for the students who could have been high achievers. This perhaps also explains why I had difficulty in creating a discerning grade scheme for this class.

The conclusion was that neither of the above options was very satisfactory, either to me or to the students. I started making attempts to find another solution. I determined it was possible to modify the two options above. I first chose to work within the mainstream classroom by some-

times having the ESL students in a small group at one side of the room. Another strategy became available when one classroom teacher agreed to team with me, allowing me to step in and teach the whole class at structured intervals. Other arrangements allowed ESL students to be pulled out of the mainstream when they needed extra tuition in certain areas of study, feeding them back in later when appropriate. These moves were planned with the classroom teachers on a continuous basis to ensure that ESL students would be able to do at least part of their assignments. Extra class time was scheduled for students in the ESL classroom, which was used as study hall for particularly difficult assignments.

These strategies worked as well as piecemeal programs ever work. The students were disorganized. They never knew where they would be from one week to the next. Any coherent teaching plan to build gradually on the achievements of the year was impossible. The students perceived themselves to be "fill-ins." Using knowledge and skills based on earlier work during the year was not something they ever had a chance to do. Worst of all, none of my efforts prevented the worst problem: the arrival of a desperate student at lunch time, clutching an assignment for a report. "I not can do my ESL now, I must to finish my ancient civilization report for Ms. X." No matter that he or she cannot write a correct sentence. No matter that they do not understand the word "civilization." An assignment from their mainstream class teacher carries a grade. Who was I to say that they should not try to get it done?

The question remained: what is the most successful way to construct a content-based ESL curriculum, giving equal balance to second language learning and content-based learning? If the solutions above are unsatisfactory, how can a curriculum be designed to produce better results? I was considering these questions when I was transferred to a different school. My colleague at this school was in the process of implementing a self-contained ESL program. An important factor here was that we had the complete support of our principal, in implementing the timetable for the program. Classes, based on the combination of ESL with an academic subject, were to be taught within a two-period time-slot and would maintain the academic level as close to that of mainstream as possible. My part of the program was the ESL/Social Studies curriculum.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT ACHIEVE

The guidelines for this particular program were set up by Project Achieve.[1] This is a federally funded program which exists to give advice

[1] Project Achieve: Urbana School District, 1108 West Fairview Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801. 375-7764.

and support to the ESL teacher who teaches "content-based ESL" in any school in the United States. It defines "content-based ESL" as a custom-designed course, taught continuously for one year, in a self-contained setting, merging ESL with one other academic discipline AT THE LEVEL REQUIRED BY MAINSTREAM FOR THAT CLASS. My Project Achieve advisor had worked extensively with ESL science, but less extensively with ESL social studies. In my context I needed to focus on an ESL social studies combination. Fortunately, I had the benefit of having worked for several years with secondary school social studies content. I found my advisor's approach and examples of her coursework to be a great inspiration. I was asking, "Can I really get away with doing this?" Project Achieve was answering, "This is the right way to go."

The immediate problem with teaching content-based ESL is that the ESL can be swamped by the content-area material. There is so much to teach in a middle school social studies curriculum. One is faced with the need to teach an enormous amount of specialized vocabulary as well as an abundance of abstract concepts. For example, I could not assume that students would have the concepts of monarchy, republicanism, civil war, democracy, autocracy or universal ballot. Fortunately, ancient civilizations provide a context of real stories to explain these concepts of human development, and that was the curriculum for grade six. My task was to set these stories into accessible learning units for ESL students.

Over the summer I planned a social studies course that used the ESL structures I needed to teach to low level, intermediate ESL students. I immediately realized I was going to break the ESL rule of presenting graduated language items to the students. Of course I wanted a finite set of structures and a finite set of grammatical structures. Of course I had a list of grammatical items that I felt they could not do without. On the other hand, I knew that it was unrealistic to expect that students work only within a restricted grammar.

I decided it might be realistic to expect the students to read and listen to unrestricted language forms while placing particular emphasis on the items on my restricted list. As always in ESL, I had to guess at the language ability of the incoming sixth grade. Later I found them to be very much in the range between False Beginners and Low Intermediate students. I did not want students to arrive at a new school and be faced with an intimidating array of difficult language added to all the other difficulties they would face. They needed to taste achievement right from the start. There is a large gap between fifth grade and sixth grade schoolwork, the "hump" of abstract conceptualization. I did not want a course overloaded with challenges in the first weeks of the semester.

I started by writing some pre-course review units. The overall plan for the year, and these preliminary units, took up most of my summer

planning time. However, once the pattern was established, it was not too difficult to write the remaining coursework during the teaching year.

These first three (preliminary) units included "The Solar System," "The Ancient World" and "The Sumerians." I used a variety of materials: some from picture encyclopedias, some ESL, some from grade-levels one to six. I also included documentaries, movies and videos to expand the subject areas. All were tried-and-true materials from previous years. At this point I did not plan on teaching language so much as focusing the students' attention on the skills they needed: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Most importantly, they would learn that from the first day they had to study for a test on this (and all) material. With all this in mind, I constructed lessons that would steer a student toward acquiring sentences rather than isolated vocabulary. Naturally these sentences would have to be correct; at the same time, they would acquaint the student with the concepts necessary to the field of study, rather than just words. Once they were focused on the task, I had to make sure that the students acquired a thorough grasp of the verb system in English.

The question about language was, "Where should I start?" I had heard of courses where absolute beginners of ESL were taught the past tense before learning anything else in the language. In fact, this is how Arabic as a second language is taught in Arabic Universities. I was not quite ready to do that. I started by teaching the solar system and basic world geography. This mandated the use of the simple present tense. I hoped it would give me a lot of material to put into sentence grammar exercises before I had to move on to more complicated structures. I hoped to be able to control student responses within a very simple language range. I restricted vocabulary and grammar while teaching the constructions for sentences, questions and answers. I supplemented by using vocabulary-building exercises and/or question and answer games and dialogs. Then, as soon as the students started studying history (the Ancient World and the Sumerians), I started working on the simple past tense. I wrote out a continuum of structural acquisition and monitored correct forms as far as possible when requiring productive skills (speaking and writing). I found no context for teaching the progressive tenses, so did not teach them. Later we suddenly found ourselves using them all the time while planning and discussing field trips. Modals, on the other hand, made their appearance rather early in the course: "Would you rather be a nomad or a city dweller?" This demonstrates the different mental processes required of the students: concrete transformations for language ability vs. abstract concepts for social studies.

Appendix 1 matches the titles of the units with the grammatical skills I hoped to generate from the students. It started very basically with the present tense of the verb "to be." My main concern at the outset was that

I would not be able to provide enough repetitive practice for the students to internalize the language forms. As a fall-back, I planned a daily study hall to teach "straight ESL" if and when that turned out to be necessary. It did! Over the year, the students worked continuously in this study hall on back-up "straight ESL" exercises.

I knew from past experience that nothing would work without restricted grammar and vocabulary, but I also knew that nothing would succeed without free writing exercises and classroom activities. I knew exactly what to do for the former, but did not have many plans for the latter. As the course progressed, however, it became clear that the subject matter itself would help to dictate classroom activities; abstract concepts of social studies, writing skills and many different classroom games and activities emerged in the lessons of their own volition.

We spent more time than I had anticipated on the preliminary section of the curriculum, but this was truly a low-level ESL class. They needed the practice. I found I was able to pace the work easily, keeping it within the ability of all. The subject matter of the stars and their spheres really held their interest. I had a sense this was because they felt they were doing "real" studying. The concepts proved to be well within the capacity of a low intermediate group. The language skills, however, developed extremely slowly. I had trouble focusing their attention on the need for language accuracy. This problem was partially solved when I insisted on recognizing the difference between an answer that was correct but had incorrect English and an answer that was correct with correct English. At this point, the beauty of my new approach revealed itself. Always before I had been faced with the problem of thinking up relevant sentences to use as examples illustrating the need for a particular structure. Now suddenly I had a host of correct examples included in the subject matter they had to learn. Even better, the students were expected to use them in the context of a whole area of supporting text. Examples of some of the writing tasks can be found in Appendix 2.

I chose a series of short reading books to serve as textbooks.[2] They incorporated the concepts that have to be mastered in grade six social studies. They were not written for ESL students, but they did have a limited amount of reading text on each page. More than half of each page had colorful, graphic illustrations which proved essential for much of the new vocabulary. Each booklet had a generous number of suggestions for hands-on projects in each unit. In all I planned to use six of these booklets over the year. I wanted them to be just above the reading level of my class. Grammar-restricted books do not exist for this pur-

[2] "Journey to Civilization" Series by Robert Nicholson. Published by Chelsea House Publishers. Copyright by Two-Can Publishing Ltd.

pose. I wrote ESL language exercises to accompany the books, again devising them so as to keep control of the grammar in student responses. The first sections were written before I started the teaching year, but most were written as I taught. The students needed far more practice than I had anticipated, mostly with verbs: *e.g.* questions, negatives, different forms of the verb "to be," "there is" and "there was," and the simple present tense with "do" and "does." I included more coursework to give them more practice in the affirmative, negative and interrogative forms for each structure. There were exercises for classroom activities eliciting individual dynamics, paired dynamics, group dynamics and team dynamics. When classroom discipline became a little ragged, I established a change of activity approximately every twenty minutes. In addition, I made sure I had a hands-on, creative project to accompany each stage in learning, aiming to introduce these before any signs of boredom appeared in the classroom. This part was easy, as I was already familiar with what students in middle school enjoy doing and with the artistic ability of ESL students in particular. Classroom projects are listed in Appendix 3.

There were some unanticipated difficulties that arose as well as some gaps and inconsistencies that will need to be addressed before the course is taught a second time. But this is always the case. More satisfying were the unexpected bonuses, the "aha" moments: unanticipated events and student contributions that arose spontaneously, demonstrating not only how much the students had learned, but also how much they were thinking about the subject matter and relating it to the context of their own knowledge, even to knowledge acquired at an earlier stage in the course. For example, months after we had finished the Solar System Unit and been to the planetarium, a student told me he had been out to see the sky at night and "saw Vega." While doing a unit on space travel, a student asked, "Is this true or fake?" When we studied the Sumerians, a student asked, "How did they make people obey laws?" Each time this happened, I was able to make it the basis of an extension to that area of study. For example, when they studied China, we had the following conversation:

"Why did Emperor Pu Yi lose China?"
"Because there was a revolution."
"Who won?"
"There was Civil War after the revolution......"
"Oh, just like in Rome."
So I went home and wrote out a lesson on the life of Mao-Tse Tung!

TESTING

I gave the students a "before" and "after" test as a measure of lan-

guage achievement. I used the same test given to all secondary school students in the district. In previous years I had normed this test to our student population, administering it in a mainstream + ESL class of 90 students for three consecutive years.[3] My normed data had demonstrated that ESL students who achieved a raw score of over 90 points on the test would be able to function in their mainstream classroom. The same data had showed me that in a conventional ESL classroom, students generally increase their raw score by approximately 10 points per year. My data for the Project Achieve year show that the average class score at the be-ginning of the year for 17 students was 50 points. The average score at the end of the year was 74. The greatest gain was made by a student who started at 39 points and finished at 96. These test scores do not include the "borderline ability"students. These students had beginning scores of between 80 and 90 points. They were transferred from my class to main-stream classes early in the year because their language ability was higher. I was asked to exit them because the ESL class was "too large" and the mainstream class "too small." According to their test scores, these stu-dents too would have benefited from staying in the class for a year. I tested them after they had spent the year in a mainstream class and their average gain was 5 points.

REFLECTING ON THE YEAR

During this year, my students showed their conceptual capacity and development in a number of ways. They asked pertinent questions, un-prompted, throughout the course: "What happened after the revolution?" "Why did they worship the Sun?" "Why did they steal wives?" "How did they live without money?" "How did they find their way by sea?" "Why did they hate the Spartans?" They brought in their own pictures of different civilizations--completely unsolicited. They also contributed oral and written stories and pictures of their own cultures. Some requested time to study specific civilizations I had not originally planned to include in the curriculum. We did add a unit on the Maya.

Inevitably, not everything was perfect. My profusion of different ac-tivities resulted in the class becoming rather noisy and excited some of the time. This unsettled attitude was prevalent until the end of the first quarter. In retrospect, just after this they started to share work vol-untarily with each other. At the time, I decided they needed more con-ventional ESL practice, so I set up a remedial ESL language class outside their ESL/Social Studies time. It was then something of a shock to find

[3] Language Assessment Battery III, 1982. Copyright by Board of Education, City of New York, Department of Testing, Curriculum Division.)

out that while they were able to read and understand "nomads, pastoralists, agriculture, irrigation, government, and rulers," they did not have the same confidence when dealing with "basement, backyard, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and chicken." The ESL Social Studies class, by then, was on a roll. They continued to learn and to finish all work on time with zest. This maintenance of high student interest has been the most rewarding aspect of the content-based teaching. Equally gratifying has been the ease with which the curriculum has led students to assimilate social studies concepts and a sense of history.

During another session with my Project Achieve advisor later on in the year, she suggested I try to include some report-writing skills. As I had four weeks of the semester left, I had time to do this. I treated the seventh textbook, "The Maya," in a slightly different way. Instead of assigning comprehension questions and writing tasks, I asked the students to take notes from the book and also to take notes from a PBS movie. Then I asked them to write a report from their notes. Again the value of this content-area approach shows its usefulness. The students had already worked on six textbooks about different civilizations. They knew exactly what headings to put in their notebooks when researching for this information. They wrote their seventh report on the computer, so they now have the computer skills to do it again. An eighth assignment was to choose their own civilization, research the information themselves from resources they could find in the school media center and write it up themselves on the computer. It was not really within their capabilities, but they knew what information to look for and handed in some very credible written work.

CONCLUSION

This teaching approach, I have no doubt, is much the best way to succeed in secondary school ESL. I am sure there are still areas, both in content and language, that could have been covered. Some of the language practice exercises can be expanded and refined. More time could be given to report writing and oral presentation. Extra time might be gained at the outset by more ice-breaking activities, by more obvious structured expectations, and by pacing activities more carefully. With the main structure of the course in place, and satisfactory results, I hope to be able to teach it and refine it for next year. There is no doubt, however, that over the course of the first year, students developed a certain maturity in discussing social studies concepts. This is one of the chief aims of secondary school social studies. The most interesting part of a second year will be discovering what else can be included and how existing activities can be expanded to make the course even more effective.

THE AUTHOR

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APPENDIX 1:
GRAMMATICAL SKILLS TAUGHT BY UNIT

Grammatical Skills	Solar System	Cavemen	Sumerians	Tutankhamen	The Egyptians	The Greeks	The Romans	The Chinese	The Mongols	The Maya	The Aztecs	The Hmong
"to be"	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Prepositions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Present Simple	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Singular/Plural Agreement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
There is/There are	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Questions/Negatives	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sentences	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Some/Any		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Past Tense (regular)		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Past Tense (irregular)		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Infinitives			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
If					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Modals/Necessity						x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Present Perfect							x	x	x	x	x	x
Passive								x	x	x	x	x
Conjunctions									x	x	x	x
Complex Sentences										x	x	x
Clauses											x	x

APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE WRITING TASKS

Writing Skills	Solar System	Cavemen	Sumerians	Tutankhamen	The Egyptians	The Greeks	The Romans	The Chinese	The Mongols	The Maya	The Aztecs	The Hmong
Sentence Punctuation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spelling and Dictation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Verbs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nouns	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Subject+Verb+Object		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Paragraph Indent		x	x	x	x	x						
Paragraph Spacing		x	x	x	x	x						
Paragraph Types:		x	x	x	x	x						
Nomad or farmer?		x			x							
Egyptian school?					x							
Favorite God(dess)					x							
Best of Greece						x						
Make up sentences							x	x	x	x	x	x
Make up a paragraph							x	x	x	x	x	x
Topic Sentence								x	x	x	x	x
Conclusion Sentence								x	x	x	x	x
Subject/Predicate Analysis								x	x	x	x	x
Pronouns								x	x	x	x	x
Adjectives										x	x	x
Adverbs											x	x
Note-taking										x	x	x
Report Writing:												
Take notes from video										x	x	x
Take notes from text										x	x	x
Research in IMC for notes												x

APPENDIX 3: CLASSROOM PROJECTS

Units	Classroom Projects
The Solar System	Group work: wall chart, glitter planets Individual projects: planet mobile
The Cavemen	Group work: interactive reading and listening Pairs: questioning
The Sumerians	Group work: time-line of ancient civilizations Group work: model of Sumerian temple
Tutankhamen	Individual projects: 2-dimensional decorated mummy case Individual projects: hieroglyph crossword
The Egyptians	Grade 6 project: Egyptian guest speaker, slide show Egyptian banquet
The Greeks	Individual projects: Greek masks Pairs: role-play prejudice (Greeks vs. Spartans) African-American and Indonesian guest speakers Class court: use pottery sherds to vote on criminal's guilt
The Romans	Individual projects: plan of Roman camp Pairs: role-play Emperor's Laws vs. Republican Laws
The Chinese	Group work: simulation of Marco Polo's travels Individual projects: Chinese lantern Individual projects: write 5 sentences in Chinese (with English translations) Visiting speaker: Chinese culture and artifacts
The Mongols	Individual projects: Mongol hat Individual projects: illustrate your own haiku
The Maya	Individual projects: weaving Cooking Mayan food
The Aztecs	Using a compass Finding points of the compass Making a map Finding your way

Lillie Lindsay is an Outstanding Educator...

...before that, she was a Peace Corps Volunteer.

For 35 years, Peace Corps Volunteers have been changing America and changing the world. In fact, over 2,500 Volunteers in 71 countries are currently teaching TEFL (our largest program), math, primary and special education, physics, chemistry, and other subjects.

In the Peace Corps, Lillie Lindsay helped young Jamaicans improve their lives through education and employment. Today, thanks to her Peace Corps service, Lillie brings a global perspective to her Virginia Beach elementary school classroom.

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I worked at School of Hope in Kingston, the capital, instructing young people. I not only taught these students basic living skills, but arranged job internships at the University of West Indies.

The World Wide Web and Electronic Mail: Applications for ESL

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While the World Wide Web and electronic mail will probably never replace traditional textbooks in the classroom, their many resources enable ESL educators to bring new teaching methods and new sources of information into the classroom. Since the Web provides reading materials as varied as novels, resumes, government reports, and syllabi, students can read many different forms of written English and, even more importantly, find reading material of personal interest. In addition to reading, ESL students can also use the World Wide Web and e-mail to practice their writing skills as well as their grammar, listening, and research skills.

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid expansion of the World Wide Web over a few short years, it is no wonder that many ESL educators have begun to look to the Web for opportunities for enhancing ESL instruction. Hundreds of thousands of web pages, simply by virtue of being written in English, present a wealth of real-world material for students to read. The many ESL-specific web pages not only offer additional reading material, but also encourage student communication with native and non-native speakers of English, publish ESL students' writing, suggest web-based lesson plans for teachers, answer students' grammar questions, and exercise students' listening skills. And, unlike the authors of standard ESL print texts and computer software, web-site authors can constantly change, update, and rework their sites to adjust to their users' needs. The World Wide Web has thus become a new kind of ever-changing, all-encompassing textbook for English language learners of all levels.

Electronic mail, another aspect of the Internet which has blossomed over the past few years, is also expanding the English language classroom beyond its traditional boundaries. By letting subscribers send text-based communication through the computer to others with e-mail accounts, e-mail gives students with computers a low-cost way to send

questions to an instructor, correspond with a student from another region or country, gain information about a particular topic, and, most importantly, practice communicating in written English with an audience of peers. Instructors, too, find that e-mail widens their capabilities for communication both in and out of the classroom by allowing them to conduct out-of-class discussions with students, locate educational materials, communicate with colleagues, and arrange cross-cultural student writing exchanges. While e-mail does not provide the same opportunities for grammar practice and listening activities that the Web does, its ability to encourage students' written communication in English makes it an extremely valuable tool for the English-language classroom.

Described below are web sites and e-mail applications suitable for adult, pre-college, and/or college-level ESL students interested in improving their English language skills. Much of the information, gathered for an Annenberg/CPB-funded research project, "Curricular Transformation and Technology in Developmental Education," conducted at the General College of the University of Minnesota, was collected from Internet-based research, print-based research, and surveys sent to leaders in the field of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and instructors in community and technical college ESL programs. Rather than a compilation of "the best of the Internet" for ESL students, the discussion below of web sites and e-mail applications is designed as a starting point for exploring the Web and incorporating some of this technology into the ESL curriculum.

READING

The World Wide Web may prove most invaluable for ESL teaching in the area of reading since web users can easily access millions of English-language texts of all different styles with just a few clicks of the mouse. Web surfers can read materials as diverse as the *New York Times On the Web*,[1] movie reviews by a seventeen-year-old on the web page *Teen Movie Critic*, Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, a soap opera-like serial called *The Spot*, and the *Declaration of Independence*. Since such variety makes it difficult to present a comprehensive discussion of reading materials appropriate for ESL students, discussed here are but a few of the on-line reading sources which can address student and teacher interests. Those interested in finding more information about different reading materials

[1] Please note that the URLs (or addresses) of each web site mentioned are listed at the end of this paper. Although all URLs are current as of November 1996, the changing nature of the Web does not permit a guarantee of accuracy after that time.

need only use one of the many search engines on the Web to find the desired information. (See the Research section below for more discussion of search engines.)

For ESL teachers who would like to use readings from web sites designed for ESL students, the Comenius Group's *Virtual English Language Center* features short fables which incorporate reading comprehension, vocabulary building, and writing exercises for non-native English speakers. At a more advanced level, Leslie Opp-Beckman's *OPPtical Illusion... Theme-Based Pages* provides extensive lists of web pages (some created for ESL students, but many not) on topics as varied as immigration, the death penalty, and Pre-Columbian history. Some of the topics she lists are linked to just one web site, but many have links to several online texts and resources which provide students the opportunity to read different kinds of text. The theme of gender issues, for instance, can lead readers to a photo documentary on teenage pregnancy, a report on women's opportunities in the military, or a history of the Stonewall Rebellion.

To find literature-based and classic English-language texts, John Mark Ockerbloom's *The On-line Books Page* has links to more than two thousand texts, both fiction and nonfiction, which are accessible through the World Wide Web. Students and teachers can search for books by subject, author, or title, and link to the web site where the texts are published. For teachers looking for short works of fiction from a smaller web site, Richard Darsie's *Tales of Wonder: Folk and Fairy Tales from Around the World* introduces readers to international folk tales from such regions and countries as Siberia, China, India, the Middle East, and England. Usually much shorter and more simply written than the texts located through *The On-line Books Page*, these stories might hold particular interest for mid-level students involved in writing folk tales about their native countries.

If students do not have access to networked computers in the classroom, some texts from the Web may be printed and distributed as paper copies to a class. Teachers considering such use of Web texts must receive permission from the web site's author or webmaster (an e-mail address for the author is usually located on the main page of each web site) before any text is copied, in accordance with copyright laws.

COMMUNICATING THROUGH WRITING

In the field of ESL, the Web's use as a source of reading material is probably closely seconded, if not superseded, by its use as a provider of authentic audiences for students' writing. Many web sites incorporate or promote the use of e-mail to encourage students to communicate through writing. E-mail exchange projects, a popular use of the Web and e-mail in the field of computer-assisted ESL writing, ask students to con-

verse through e-mail messages with students in different regions of the world. The culminating event of these exchanges is frequently the completion of a joint project, often posted on a World Wide Web site for all involved classes and the public to see. Ruth Vilmi's *HUT Internet Writing Project* web site both describes one of the better-known exchange projects involving a college EFL class and provides information about joining HUT e-mail exchange projects. Another source of information on e-mail exchanges is Kenji and S. Kathleen Kitao's *Keypal Opportunities for Students*, with links to web pages which arrange keypal exchanges, give information on current exchanges, and publish student projects from past exchanges. In these keypal projects, students must often complete an assignment which requires them to correspond with a student in a class in another area of the country or in another part of the world. Students might discuss a "Question of the week" (Tillyer, 1993) with their partner, respond to an open-ended question related to the topics studied in all exchange classes (Davis & Chang, 1994/95), or create "Culture Pages" on the World Wide Web (Vilmi, 1996).

Although the several months of advance preparation needed for a successful exchange project may sound prohibitive to many teachers (Corio, 1996), many ESL and EFL instructors who have incorporated exchange projects into their classes report a number of successful student outcomes. In response to our survey about ESL teachers' use of technology in the classroom, several instructors noted that students involved in exchange projects write more, edit their writing more carefully, pay closer attention to their audience's response to the project, and use critical thinking skills more often than do students whose writings are only read by the teacher. Since the exchange projects ask students to write to audiences who, unlike teachers, do not get paid to read the students' writing, students find themselves writing in English not just for fulfillment of the teacher's assignments, but for its intended purpose — communication.

Even without a specific audience inherent in most e-mail exchange projects, publication of student writing on the World Wide Web motivates many students to improve their writing skills (Mills, 1996). While some instructors publish students' writing on a class home page, ESL instructors without a home page, and even without access to the World Wide Web, can help students publish their work through one of the World Wide Web's many electronic magazines or ESL sites. *EXCHANGE* and *The Email Project* are two well-known web sites that publish adult ESL and EFL students' writing. *EXCHANGE*, run by Volker Hegelheimer and others at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, publishes nonnative English speakers' short essays, stories, and poetry. *The Email Project*, maintained by Susan Gaer, is a series of writing projects for adult ESL students in literacy programs and non-credit community college classes.

One activity, *The Cookbook Project*, asks students for favorite recipes and short written descriptions explaining the recipes' importance. Certain recipes and descriptions are selected each year for publication at the web site. Another project, *The Annotated Booklist*, invites adult learners to submit their own written descriptions of books read for pleasure or to children. Selected submissions for *The Annotated Booklist* are then published at the web site.

Promoting informal written English for both communication and information collection can be done through mailing lists, commonly known as listservs, which allow students to read and post messages via e-mail to large groups of people who share an interest in a particular subject. The *International Students Lists* are a group of mailing lists for ESL and EFL students to discuss shared topics of interest. Currently, the ten International Students Lists include one of general interest for mid-level ESL/EFL speakers, one of general interest for advanced speakers, and seven which focus on topics such as music, current events, and business. The web site *SL-Lists: International EFL/ESL E-mail Student Discussion Lists* has more information on joining these mailing lists. Students can, of course, also join mailing lists not specifically for non-native English speakers. To find a list which fits their own interests, students can consult the *Liszt Directory of E-Mail Discussion Groups*, which lets users search through thousands of mailing lists by subject, word, or phrase. Students and teachers can also request a list of listservs by sending an e-mail message addressed to listserv@cunyvm.cuny.edu and putting "list global" in the text of the message.

ESL teachers interested in joining colleagues across the world in discussion may be particularly interested in two mailing lists, NETEACH-L and TESL-L (The Electronic Forum for Teachers of English as a Second Language). Both NETEACH-L and TESLCA-L, a branch of TESL-L, are for teachers interested in Computer Assisted Language Learning, although NETEACH-L primarily focuses on the Internet while TESLCA-L covers all areas of CALL in its discussions. To join NETEACH-L, instructors need only send an e-mail message to listserv@thecity.sfsu.edu. In the body of the e-mail, type "subscribe NETEACH-L your-first-name your-last-name" should be typed, as in "subscribe Jane Doe." To join TESL-L, the e-mail message "SUB TESL-L your-first-name your-last-name" should be sent to listserv@cunyvm.cuny.edu. The welcome greeting from TESL-L gives directions for joining TESLCA-L and other branches. Besides giving teachers the chance to talk with colleagues, NETEACH-L and TESL-L have archives which contain information related to teaching ESL and EFL. The NETEACH-L archives are located at the NETEACH-L web site, and the vast and widely used TESL-L archives are accessible through e-mail after subscription to TESL-L has been confirmed.

As in the Reading section above, the Writing activities discussed here are but a few of students' many opportunities to practice writing through the World Wide Web and e-mail. In addition to the primarily ESL and EFL web sites and mailing lists discussed here are many web sites which publish native English speakers' writing and mailing lists focusing on issues unrelated to ESL teaching and learning. An ESL teacher or student need only explore the Web, talk to colleagues, or read some of the many printed texts on pedagogical uses of the Internet to discover even more ways to combine writing, the World Wide Web, and e-mail.

GRAMMAR

Teachers and students interested in writing mechanics may also be interested in the large number of web sites which include some kind of grammar component. A good starting point to grammar exploration on the Web is Karen M. Hartman's *English Grammar Links for ESL Students*, a web site which describes several grammar-related World Wide Web pages. One of the site's links leads to Dave Sperling's *Dave's ESL Quiz Center*, part of the large and popular *Dave's ESL Cafe on the Web*. At the home page of the *Quiz Center*, ESL students can select quizzes on grammar or other subjects, such as news, history, world culture, and science. The grammar quizzes focus on modals, prepositions, verb tenses, and other grammar issues typically taught to ESL students. The questions for each quiz appear on a web page which lets students select their answers by highlighting the circles next to their chosen answers. After students have finished, they simply click the mouse arrow on the "Submit for evaluation" button, wait a few moments, and see on the computer screen their original answers and the correct answers. Since the *Quiz Center* does not provide instruction in grammar, these quizzes are perhaps best suited for students who want extra practice on specific grammar points. Teachers interested in using this site on an on-going basis may be interested to know that they can submit their own quizzes to be posted to this web site. *Dave's ESL Help Center*, another web site within *Dave's ESL Cafe*, enables students to send grammar questions via electronic mail to an ESL or EFL instructor. The question, response, and any subsequent related e-mails are posted at the Help Center web site so students can read other questions and answers from the past month. Students may find this web site particularly useful when they would like another perspective or an additional explanation of a grammar rule or English idiom.

Students who would like further explanations of grammar points may also want to look at Purdue University's *On-line Writing Lab* (OWL). Purdue's OWL has many helpful resources for both native and non-native English-speaking college writers. Purdue's "handouts" for ESL stu-

dents review articles, count and non-count nouns, verb tenses, and other parts of grammar relevant to many non-native English speakers. Purdue's other web pages include "handouts" on sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, dangling modifiers, and other writing subjects of interest to both native and non-native students. Students pursuing global writing questions may want to search through Purdue's numerous links to on-line writing references, from dictionaries and thesauruses to tips on writing research papers.

One particularly innovative grammar web site is *Grammar Safari*, by Ann Salzmann and Doug Mills of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The *Grammar Safari* web site explains how students can search for particular grammar constructions, such as prepositions or verb tenses, on any publicly-available web page. By using search engines such as *Alta Vista* and *Web Crawler*, or by using the "Find" key in Netscape, students locate sentences in web pages which contain the searched-for word or phrase. Salzmann recommends incorporating a "safari" into classroom grammar instruction by having students make charts to compare different word usages, analyze the placement of words in sentences, or compete in a game by gaining points for finding different grammar constructions. Since students must deal with "real-life English" texts and grammar, advanced grammar students will probably benefit most from participating in these grammar exercises.

LISTENING

Compared to Web-based reading, writing, and grammar resources for ESL students, listening resources are still in their infancy. As more computers include sophisticated sound components, however, the selection of web-based listening exercises will no doubt increase. There are currently many web sites which include a listening component; *RealAudio: Sites and Sounds: NPR*, for instance, contains clips of current news broadcasts from National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," "All Things Considered," "Talk of the Nation," and "Science Friday." While this web site and others like it offer a great deal of potential for L2 learners, the sound quality of most computers may not be able to reproduce native English speakers' voices clearly and distinctly enough to meet many ESL students' needs.

Web sites designed for ESL students may offer the most useful possibilities for teachers interested in incorporating listening-based web resources into their curricula. One such site is *Learning Oral English Online*, edited by Rong-Chang Li of the University of Illinois. Intermediate-level students are introduced to new vocabulary and American English expressions through a series of typical conversations, such as those involv-

ing shopping, asking directions, and meeting new people. Students can listen to an entire conversation or to selected parts by clicking on specific sentences or groups of sentences. The highlighted sentences, heard slowly through SoundWave, an audio component for the World Wide Web, can be read and listened to as many times as necessary by the student. Follow-up activities provide ideas for checking students' comprehension and the use of new words and phrases, but many of these exercises may be best used in a classroom setting where students can ask questions and practice using new vocabulary with partners. Another listening-based web site, Jim Duber's *Cutting Edge CALL Resources*, has listening quizzes which prompt students to copy down a complex sentence as they hear it. Students answer several comprehension questions related to the sentence and receive feedback on their answers immediately after finishing the quiz. Due to the quick feedback on students' responses and the limited number of listening quizzes (three as of October 1996), this site may be most useful to students practicing their listening skills on an individual basis. Both Li's and Duber's web sites do, however, represent the growing number of web sites which incorporate listening with other English-language skills. As the sound capabilities of computers improve, we can expect to see an even greater number of web sites which use Internet technology for listening practice.

RESEARCH

Although ESL students and teachers can certainly benefit from the many reading, writing, grammar, and listening activities on the World Wide Web, "the most compelling [Web-based] activity for students is the one that leads them to personally relevant material" (Bowers, 1996). As students come to realize that the Web and e-mail can help them as much outside of class as in, using search engines to navigate the Web becomes a skill as important to learn for work and home as it is for class (Mills, 1996). This skill, perhaps more than any other, will keep them coming back to the World Wide Web even after the class has ended. Good research skills also mean that students will continue to use their English reading and writing skills since the World Wide Web's most common language is English.

Web-based research begins with knowledge of the many search engines which can find web pages on a particular person, sentence, title, phrase, or subject. While students can use all search engines to conduct web-based research, some engines are better designed for specific kinds of research than others. Two of the most popular and most different search engines are *Yahoo!* and *Alta Vista*. Organized by the content matter of web sites, *Yahoo!* easily leads readers to lists of related web pages on a

topic. *Alta Vista*, on the other hand, searches quickly through vast numbers of web pages and Usenet groups for a specific word or group of words.

Two examples of searches may best illustrate the differences in these search engines. Teachers interested in getting more information on ESL web sites can easily find a list of such sites through *Yahoo!*. On *Yahoo!*'s home page, readers click on the *Education* subheading to go to the *Education* page, which lists a series of subheadings related to education. A click on the subheading *Languages* leads to a page of the same name, where *English as a Second Language* is among the many language topics listed. The *English as a Second Language* page has a list of ESL- and EFL-related sites, as varied as *PIZZAZ!*, a web site of ESL teaching resources, and *Sounds English*, a review of Macintosh software for ESL learners. *Yahoo!* also allows searches on specific topics, such as "grammar" or "Japan," within the ESL area. A search for "ESL" on *Alta Vista* is not nearly as useful; it yields over 20,000 web pages. An *Alta Vista* search for "English as a Second Language" misses important web pages which only use the abbreviation "ESL."

While *Alta Vista* clearly is not as well suited to general searches as *Yahoo!*, it works well in searches for a specific name or topic. Research on Laotian refugees in the Mekong River delta, for instance, begins on *Alta Vista* by typing "+Mekong +refugee* +Lao*" in *Alta Vista*'s Simple Query mode. After a few moments, *Alta Vista* indicates that 134 web pages with the three words (or extensions of the latter two words, such as "refugees" or "Laotian") have been found. A brief look through the web pages reveals potentially useful documents, such as ones entitled *Refugees from Laos: Historical Background and Causes*, and *Laos Human Rights Practices, 1993*. Since the *Alta Vista* search of the three words also yields inappropriate web pages, such as one which lists Japanese-sponsored aid projects, students need to learn to differentiate "junk" web pages from reliable sources as they learn to use the different search engines effectively. Similar to using a walk-in library successfully, locating useful documents on the Web requires instructors' and students' time, attention, and skill. As the Web continues to expand rapidly, students may find that knowledge of several different search engines and well-developed research skills will not only help them with research for ESL classes, but also contribute to their ability to use the Web (and, most likely, their English skills) outside the ESL classroom.

CONCLUSION

While the World Wide Web cannot replace classroom learning, the Web's vast resources can certainly augment any ESL teacher's curricu-

lum. The sheer variety of reading material on the Web makes it vastly different — and much more personalized — than any printed textbook. And, since the language of so much of the Web is English, students find themselves reading and writing in English, not because of the teacher's direct instructions but because they must use English to make their way through this vast resource. Perhaps most importantly, the World Wide Web and e-mail often change the very nature of the classroom and the curriculum. When students have the freedom to read materials of personal relevance, to chat with a keypal across the room or in another country, or to look away from the teacher for answers or information, the classroom becomes "decentered." The focus shifts from the instructor to the students as the instructor spends less time lecturing and as the students spend more time actively engaged in using their English skills (Sutherland & Black, 1993).

The web site and e-mail applications discussed here are but a few of the many Internet-related activities for ESL students. For more information on World Wide Web sites, the *TESOL Matters* newsletter's column, "Wandering the Web," describes web sites recommended by ESL teachers (Meloni, 1996). For broader information on the integration of the World Wide Web, e-mail, and other Internet features into ESL instruction, the books *E-Mail for English Teaching* (Warschauer, 1995a) and *Virtual Connections* (Warschauer, 1995b) contain helpful, how-to information on using the Internet in the classroom. In *E-Mail for English Teaching*, Mark Warschauer provides basic, easy-to-read information about the Internet to ESL/EFL instructors. The book contains advice ranging from how to get an e-mail account to how to begin a keypal exchange. *Virtual Connections*, edited by Warschauer, contains 125 short chapters in which instructors explain how they have used the Internet to augment their teaching. In each chapter, the author includes detailed information on the set-up, application, and evaluation of the Internet activity. Teachers can easily replicate or modify these 125 activities to suit their own classroom needs. These many activities, however, are just the tip of the iceberg; with increasing world-wide computer and Internet access in schools, colleges, and universities over the next few years, the educational applications of the World Wide Web and e-mail will expand even more.

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APPENDIX: WORLD WIDE WEB SITES

Alta Vista	http://altavista.digital.com/
Alta Vista	http://altavista.digital.com/
Cutting Edge CALL Resources	http://www.chorus.cycor.ca/Duber/m004d.html
Dave's ESL Cafe on the Web	http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/eslcafe.html
Dave's ESL Help Center	http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/wwwboard2/wwwboard.html
Dave's ESL Quiz Center	http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/quiz
Declaration of Independence	http://www.legislate.com/d/dddecind.htm
English as a Second Language	http://www.yahoo.com/Education/Languages/English_as_a_Second_Language/
English Grammar Links for ESL Students	http://www.gl.umbc.edu/~kpokoy1/grammar1.htm
EXCHANGE	http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/exchange/
Grammar Safari	http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/web.pages/grammarsafari.html
Huckleberry Finn	http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/twain/huckfinn.html
HUT Internet Writing Project	http://www.hut.fi/~rvilmi/Project/
Keypal Opportunities for Students	http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/staff/visitors/kenji/keypal.htm
Laos Human Rights Practices, 1993	http://www.monash.edu.au/ftp/pub/bane_lao/legal/human_rights_report
Learning Oral English Online	http://www.lang.uiuc.edu/r-li5/book/
Liszt Directory of E-Mail Discussion Groups	http://www.liszt.com/
NETEACH-L	http://thecity.sfsu.edu/~funweb/neteach.htm
OPPtical Illusion... Theme-Based Pages	http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~leslieob/themes.html

PIZZAZ!	http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~leslieob/pizzaz.html
Purdue University's Online Writing Lab	http://owl.english.purdue.edu
RealAudio: Sites and Sounds: NPR	http://www.realaudio.com/contentp/npr.text.html
Refugees from Laos: Historical Background and Causes	http://www.stolaf.edu/people/cdr/hmong/hmongau/refugee.htm
SL-Lists: International EFL/ESL E-mail Student Discussion Lists	http://www.latrobe.edu.au/www/education/sl/sl.html
Sounds English	http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/parade/aag10
Tales of Wonder: Folk and Fairy Tales from Around the World	http://www.ece.ucdavis.edu/~darsie/tales.html
Teen Movie Critic	http://www.dreamagic.com/roger/teencritic.html
The Email Project	http://www.otan.dni.us/webfarm/emailproject/email.htm
The New York Times on the Web	http://www.nytimes.com/
The On-line Books Page	http://128.2.209.79/Web/books.html
The Spot	http://ww1.thespot.com/
Virtual English Language Center	http://www.comenius.com
Web Crawler	http://webcrawler.com/
Yahoo!	http://www.yahoo.com/

Reading Lab: A Comprehensive Starter Kit

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One way to individualize EFL or ESL reading instruction and promote extensive reading at each student's own independent reading level is to offer reading lab (RL). Based on the experiences of establishing RLs in university International English Programs (IEPs) in both Japan and the U.S., this how-to paper presents a rationale and highly-detailed, step-by-step guidance for proposing, organizing, implementing, managing and evaluating an effective RL. This "starter kit" can save valuable time and resources, both in setting up a RL and in its daily operation. Essential handouts and forms are included, ready for duplication or adaptation.

Are your ESL or EFL students reading in English for pleasure? Are they reading at their "independent" reading levels? Are they developing a positive attitude toward reading in English? Are they developing the habit of reading for pleasure on a regular basis? If you answered no to any of these questions, you may want to consider incorporating a structured, extensive reading component into your ESL or EFL reading curriculum.

What is meant by "extensive reading?" *A Dictionary of Reading* defines it as "a program in which students read widely without restraints, with emphasis on broadening the scope of materials read" (Harris and Hodges, 1981, p. 112). Somewhat differently, Grellet defines extensive reading as "reading longer texts, usually *for one's own pleasure* [emphasis added]...a fluency activity, mainly involving global understanding" (1981, p. 4). For the purposes of this paper, both definitions apply.

Numerous researchers and practitioners—among them, Nuttall (1982), Bamford (1984), Stoller (1986), Eskey and Grabe (1988), Hafiz and Tudor (1989), Fiedler Vierma (1991), Gradman and Hanania (1991), Nash and Yuan (1992), Krashen (1989, 1993a, 1993b), Constantino (1994) and Dupuy, Tse and Cook (1996)—have pointed out the value of extensive reading for L2 learners. Among the benefits often mentioned are improved reading skills and overall language acquisition as well as the development of reading confidence and a more positive attitude toward L2 reading.

In a recent study at the University of Minnesota, high-intermediate-level English-language students doing extensive reading in reading lab, described in the "starter kit" which follows, demonstrated significant mean gains in TOEFL Reading Test scores compared to those students who did not (French, 1995-96). This study also showed significant correlations among students' self-rating of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) reading ability, pleasure in EAP reading, general English-reading ability, and performance in reading lab. French encourages program administrators to consider establishing an extensive reading system such as reading lab to facilitate reading for enjoyment. Indeed, our own experiences in becoming proficient readers ought to suggest the numerous advantages associated with reading large quantities of material, especially for pleasure.

For various reasons, however, it is all too common in EFL or ESL programs to give extensive reading short shrift. One result of this is that far too many students do little – if any – reading for pleasure and, therefore, read very little, getting stuck in what Nuttall (1982) calls "the *vicious* circle of the weak reader." The reader doesn't read much and, therefore, doesn't understand much. This leads to slow reading, resulting in less enjoyment of reading, and the cycle, unfortunately, continues unbroken.

If Nutall's slogan "we learn to read by reading" is valid, then it seems that as language educators we ought to enable our students to engage in something other than the typically slow grind of intensive reading. That is, we should make it easier for students to travel along Nutall's "*virtuous* circle of the good reader" (1982). The reader reads more and, therefore, understands better. This leads to faster reading, resulting in more enjoyment of reading, and the cycle, desirably, comes full circle.

Overt efforts to make it possible for students to travel along the "virtuous circle" are well documented. Nash and Yuan (1992) describe one example of an effective extensive reading course developed for advanced-level EFL university students. This course is a response to the realization that their English department was concentrating on the improvement of "reading competence, but neglecting to help students develop a real interest in and enjoyment of reading in English" (1992, p. 27).

Essentially the same concern was addressed at a new branch campus of an American university in Japan (Minnesota State University-Akita), where most of the students were elementary and intermediate-level EFL students. Low EFL reading proficiencies and lackluster reading achievement caused instructors to question both what and how much students were actually reading. Following the discovery that most students responded positively to a few carefully chosen illustrated, graded readers read as a class in selected (intensive) reading courses and because such a high number of students seemed stuck in the "*vicious* circle of the weak

reader," a reading lab – serving more than 250 students and based largely on Nuttall's work (1982) – was proposed, organized and implemented. With an actual reading lab room designated for use as a reading lab only, the English program attempted to demonstrate its commitment to extensive reading. The MSU-Akita reading lab format was subsequently adapted and refined further by the English Program for International Students at the Minnesota English Center (University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Campus).

As evidenced by the student evaluations, most students in both the intensive EFL and intensive ESL programs responded positively to the extensive reading format described in this paper. While there were always a few students in every class who seemed not to value or benefit from this unfamiliar kind of L2 reading opportunity or experience, most indicated and/or demonstated that they did. Interestingly, most students indicated that they did not work "very hard" in reading lab. This is probably good news, however, in that *working hard* is not what extensive reading is all about. What is important is that most students read numerous books throughout the term, engaged in independent reading for pleasure that in most cases would not occur otherwise. Perhaps most heartening was the strong tendency among the ESL students to take books home with them to more quickly complete what they had started during reading lab class.

The reading lab described here can serve as a practical and effective format for individualizing reading instruction. Moreover, it provides a refreshing, "non-school-like" dimension to the (reading) curriculum, one very likely to improve most students' attitudes toward reading in English.

The message reading lab attempts to send to students is this: When it comes to improving reading and overall English-language skills, extensive reading is important, and probably even essential, for rapid progress. A well-designed reading lab format encourages L2 students to t*ake reading for pleasure seriously*.

In order to establish an effective reading lab, a considerable amount of preparatory work obviously needs to be done. The "starter kit" that follows provides virtually everything needed, with the exception of books and a few supplies, to have a reading lab (RL) up and running in under eight weeks: from gaining administrative approval, to getting instructors to buy into the concept and format; from selecting and organizing books, to managing a reading lab and evaluating student performance.

THE STARTER KIT

Steps in Setting Up a Reading Lab

The following tasks need to be completed before *students are introduced to RL.*

1. Gain approval to implement a RL. See **Appendix One** for a copy of "Reading Lab: An Overview for Administrators and Instructors." This can be copied or adapted for use in discussing the rationale and format of a RL.

2. Determine how RL will fit into the curriculum. This, of course, is closely linked to step 1. The RL described in this article is designed for elementary and intermediate-level EFL or ESL students, although this format could certainly work with advanced-level students (many of the books at the highest stage of the collection are, in fact, unadapted). I recommend that students attend RL twice each week and that all students be required to attend RL for two or three terms.

Important: While RL can stand on its own as an independent (free-standing) course, it is important for the "regular" reading class instructors to staff RL when their own students are scheduled to be there. This way instructors get to know more about their students' reading skills, problems, attitudes, and goals. Further, students take RL more seriously when their regular reading class instructor is closely monitoring their behavior and progress.

3. Select and order books—mainly illustrated, graded readers (the core RL materials). See **Appendix Two**, "Favorite Books," for some recommendations. As a rule, order *as many different titles as your budget will allow.* US $500 could buy roughly 100 books in 1996. Multiple copies (2-3) of *some* of the most popular books does make sense though, especially if cost is not a major constraint. Remember this, however: *Students always want MORE CHOICE!* Also keep in mind that easier books will probably be appropriate for most students, particularly during their first term in RL. While there are many publishers producing appropriate texts for a reading lab, perhaps the three best publishers of graded readers for EFL/ESL students are Heinemann, Oxford University, and Addison-Wesley/Longman. See **Appendix Three**.

4. **Appendix Four** describes one possible coding system. At the Minnesota English Center we use different colored dots affixed to the lower

right-hand corner on the back cover of every book. The important thing is to have a unified system which can override any confusion arising from the different color schemes used by the various publishers.

5. Prepare to keep track of the books. We found using old-fashioned book pockets with cards worked well for checking books out to take home. Sign-out sheets suffice with small numbers of students. If possible, try to secure the book collection under lock and key to minimize the number of AWOL books, which can be a minor problem. Students need to understand from the outset that the books are for *everyone's* reading pleasure and are not cheap or convenient to replace.

6. Decide on and organize RL space, which should be relatively comfortable and quiet. If possible, try to designate a room specifically for RL. Books should be displayed in an attractive way by stage (level)—with as many covers showing as possible.

7. Construct a placement test. Although not without its critics, cloze tests can quite satisfactorily be used as a technique for placing students into their *independent* reading level. See **Appendix Five** for a sample. Select an appropriate passage from each of the first three stages (levels) in your book collection so that students will test at *three different* levels of difficulty. The reason for doing this is to accommodate the range of reading-proficiency levels in any group of students. For the sake of simplicity, students completing a cloze test with better than 50% accuracy on a given passage (with *exact* word accuracy, *not* synonyms or other possible words), are reading at an independent level. Each student should be placed conservatively (low) and at *two* stages. For example, a weaker reader may be given a YELLOW/ORANGE placement, whereas a much stronger reader may place at GREEN/WHITE. You may find that your cloze test separates your students into just two distinct groups: the stronger readers and everybody else. Further, the 50% cut score may be too high or too low for your test, so you may have to adjust it accordingly. Stronger readers placed (too) low can always move up through the stages quickly and they will, but do avoid placing stronger readers too low. Keep in mind, however, that placing a student too high inhibits extensive reading and defeats the purpose of RL. Use good judgment and be flexible when placing students.

8. Orient instructors: distribute RL documents to be read and hold one or two informational meetings before the beginning of the term. Copy necessary materials for students: the placement tests (practice and actual), "An Introduction to Reading Lab" (**Appendix Six**), "Reading Lab

Rules" (**Appendix Seven**), and "Reading Lab Book Report" (**Appendix Eight**).

The following tasks need to be completed after the term begins (during the first weeks of the term):

9. Refer to "RL schedule for beginning of term." See Appendix One. Also, set up binders or folders for keeping record of completed book reports to document student performance. I don't recommend that you return completed book reports to students, primarily because this makes cheating (or game-playing) too easy. Also, on a bulletin board or wall, display information such as updated lists of "Favorite Books" and even lists of who has read which books (a very effective motivator).

The following tasks need to be completed at the end of the term:

10. Retrieve all books and determine what to do about missing books. Without book security and strict rules, it is possible to lose up to 15% of the books in one term. Make copies of and ask students to complete "Student Evaluation of Reading Lab." See **Appendix Nine**. Evaluate student performance. For workable guidelines, see "Student accountability/evaluation" in the RL overview in Appendix One.

The following tasks need to be completed during term break:

11. Assess RL: make adjustments as needed and consider bolstering the book collection, which probably should be done at least once each year.

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APPENDIX ONE:
READING LAB: AN OVERVIEW FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND INSTRUCTORS

What is reading lab?

The reading lab (RL) described below can perhaps best be defined as a *setting* and a *course within a course* (usually reading or reading/composition), designed to both complement and supplement regular (intensive) reading courses.

In RL, students practice "extensive" reading, i.e., reading longer selections (compared to the relatively short passages in most ESL reading textbooks) and large quantities of reading materials mainly for pleasure. As Julian Bamford puts it:

"Extensive reading [is] an approach which aims to build students' ability to grasp overall, whole story meanings through reading as much and as rapidly as possible. Reading in quantity, at a level of difficulty easily within their ability, develops students' confidence, and, more importantly, their pleasure in reading" (1984, p. 220).

Whereas in "intensive" reading classes the emphasis is usually on exact understanding of short selections, extensive reading emphasizes quantity and fluency.

In RL, students read without teacher assistance, exercises or dictionaries—and at their own speed—according to individual interests and at their own *independent* reading level. *A Dictionary of Reading* summarizes three basic levels of reading difficulty as:

FRUSTRATION: Reader knows fewer than 92% of the words in a given passage, with less than 50% comprehension of the passage – slow and difficult reading, blocking reading progress.

INSTRUCTIONAL: Reader knows 92-97% of the words in a given passage with better than 75% comprehension – challenging, but not frustrating, stimulating reading progress.

INDEPENDENT: Reader knows more than 97% of the words in a given

passage, with better than 90% comprehension—relatively easy reading, facilitating extensive reading.

While most students are *presumably* reading at their *instructional* level in the regular reading courses, it is undoubtedly the case that many students are spending a considerable amount of time reading at their *frustration* level and rarely, if ever, reading at their *independent* level. This can make it difficult for students to feel a sense of accomplishment and to develop or maintain a positive attitude toward reading in English. The reason for this should be obvious: there are insufficient background knowledge and language skills which are necessary to read appreciable quantities of text comfortably (without counterproductive pain and suffering).

Purpose/goals of reading lab

To help students do the following:

1. To read extensively in English, perhaps for the first time!
2. To experience reading relatively long selections in English, with a high level of comprehension and absence of pain and frustration.
3. To develop a more positive attitude toward reading in English, through enjoyable reading experiences with relatively easy reading materials.
4. To experience success reading in English.
5. To build confidence and increase comfort level in reading in English w/o using a dictionary.
6. To benefit from individualized, independent learning opportunities or instruction.
7. To build reading skills, especially top-down skills.
8. To read for gist (a.k.a. skimming).
9. To acquire vocabulary (w/o direct study or learning).
10. To practice inferring word meaning from context.
11. To practice making other kinds of inferences from context.
12. To learn to tolerate vagueness (accepting not understanding every thing completely).
13. To increase reading speed and fluency.
14. To feel a sense of accomplishment as they read books of increasing levels of difficulty—an important factor in motivation.
15. To want to keep reading and voluntarily read more in English—crucial steps toward developing the all-important "reading habit".

Activities/responsibilities

Students engage in sustained silent reading (SSR) at their own *independent* reading level. Students come to RL, select a book from the collection, and read quietly on their own. (See also "Reading Lab Rules" – **Appendix Seven** – given to students.)

Instructors mainly:

> 1) take attendance – important for RL.
> 2) encourage students to select books, settle down, and begin and keep reading.
> 3) monitor students. On occasion it may be necessary to remind some students about the necessity to follow the RL rules. Keep in mind that not all students will understand or accept the purpose of RL (this is *not* unique to RL, of course). Importantly, though, all students should be expected to give RL an honest try and not distract or disturb their classmates in any way.
> 4) read books quietly, modeling SSR for pleasure (extensive reading).
> 5) distribute (one at a time) and collect completed "Book Report" forms (**Appendix Eight**) as students complete books.
> 6) monitor and check books in and out, using a card catalog.

Instructors also: help students select an appropriate book (if necessary); answer questions; forward completed "Book Report" forms to the RL coordinator, who will return them to instructors within a couple of days; assist in maintaining the collection of reading materials; encourage students to check out the book they're reading at the end of class; advise and encourage students, possibly holding conferences with students – during office hours? – about their reading progress; (attempt to) solve problems; assist with placing students (administering the initial placement tests); perhaps *occasionally* playing audio-tape recordings (e.g., white noise from an environments tape or New Age music played at *low* volume); and inform the RL coordinator of any unresolved issues or concerns.

In-class activities other than quiet reading that instructors could conduct might include: book talks, small-group discussions, oral presentations (reading aloud), and listening to books on tape. *But most of the time, students and instructors read quietly. Importantly, RL should* **not** *increase the workload of RL instructors.*
The **Coordinator** is responsible for: the book/materials collection; ori-

enting instructors to RL; placing each student at his/her own "independent" reading level at the beginning of the term; maintaining records; solving problems; communicating with the instructors; reporting to administration; and generally overseeing RL.

Reading materials

RL materials are mostly "illustrated, graded readers (books)", both fiction and non-fiction, written or re-written and graded according to level of difficulty, especially in terms of vocabulary and sentence length or structure.* For practical purposes, RL books are organized *mainly* by word level. For example, 1st stage (level) books are presumably the easiest to read, written at a 300-500 basic word range and coded with a YELLOW dot in the lower right-hand corner of the back cover of each book. Accordingly, the 4th stage should be much more difficult, consisting mainly of books within a 1300-1500 word range and coded with a WHITE dot. Generally, higher word levels indicate longer and more complex sentences, as well as denser, more sophisticated or more abstract concepts/content.

Six stages (levels) of RL books:

300-600 word-level	YELLOW
500-750**	ORANGE
900-1250	GREEN
1300-1500	WHITE
1600-1800	RED
2000+	BLUE

"RL Book Collection" (Appendix Four) is a complete list of the RL books, which are kept on display. Caution: Some books will become lost, will be stolen or will not be returned for various reasons. Instructors should make an effort to see that book losses are minimized. Unfortunately, keeping the lab secure will, in itself, not solve this problem completely.

At the high-intermediate level or above, some students might be interested in spending RL class time, or even time at home, reading newspapers, magazines (Warning: Some students will just look at the pictures), books or other materials outside of the RL collection, or possibly even selections from textbooks. Students can certainly read materials other than those found in the RL collection during or for RL. Keep in mind, however, that the graded readers provide a solid core of reading materials and a very manageable format, especially for elementary- and inter-

als and a very manageable format, especially for elementary- and inter-mediate-level students.

Two additional RL rules for high-intermediate level or above students might be:
>   1. Read "other materials" in addition to, NOT instead of, the RL books
>   2. Continue to complete and hand in "Book Reports" for all materials read during or for RL

Initial placement into appropriate reading stages (levels)

This involves placing each student at his/her own *independent* reading level, at which materials can be read easily without support (teacher or dictionary). A special RL placement test, which consists of a series of graded cloze passages based on selections from the graded readers in the book collection, can be used to place students into two (2) stages of the graded readers (see Appendix Five for examples). The cloze test may not be as valid a measure of each student's independent reading level as would be desired. Therefore, placing each student into *two* stages, rather than just one, makes it possible for the student to self-adjust his/her "true" independent reading level. This also provides students with a greater selection of books from which to choose.

Student accountability/evaluation

For a satisfactory grade, students need to:
>   1. be in attendance at least 80% of the time
>   2. read in class (rather than chat or sleep)
>   3. not disturb others in class
>   4. read as much as they can throughout the quarter
>   5. complete and turn in—in a timely fashion—brief "Book Report" forms for all books (or other materials) read
>   6. generally follow "Reading Lab Rules."

See "An Introduction to Reading Lab" (Appendix Six) and "Reading Lab Rules" (Appendix Seven)—both given to students—for more specific guidelines for evaluating student performance. More explicit guidelines, such as "You must read X number of books for a 4 (on the 1-5 grading scale) and Y number of books for a 5", would be counterproductive because of the emphasis on reading for pleasure. Students do

not need to be pressured to perform well in RL (RL is LOW pressure), nor is it necessary to make a game out of RL – one which clever, but inert students can easily win. Instructors will see satisfactory performance in the majority of the students if students understand that reading extensively is essential to language and reading-skills development.

Some instructors might be interested in other possibilities for evaluation. These include self-evaluations (perhaps a part of journal writing), commentary cards (where students write their thoughts about books read on note cards, which are kept on file for classmates to consult before selecting a book), book talks (short oral book reports), or even book advertisements (which can be posted on RL walls). Instructors should use their own discretion regarding such "alternative" methods of evaluation, remembering that RL should be as pleasurable and "non-school like" as possible, so long as students make good use of RL time.

Reading lab schedule for beginning of term: Information given to instructors by RL coordinator at U of MN.

Class 1
• "Introduction to RL" (handout): read, discuss.
• Practice Placement Test: Introduce, do in whole group and /or in
   pairs, and discuss answers and strategies for taking a cloze test.
• "Tour" of RL (or Book Room)—time permitting.
Instructors: Please <u>return</u> Practice Placement Test materials to Coordinator.

Class 2
• Placement Test: introduce, complete.
• "RL Rules" (handout): introduce, students read outside of class.
Instructors: Please *return* Placement Test materials to Coordinator, who will score tests and provide teachers with results—including recommended independent reading stages for each student.

Class 3
• "RL Rules:" review, discuss.
• Initial placement; each student given small strip of paper
   indicating the stages (colors) in which they must begin reading
   first.
• Each student selects a book and begins reading.
Instructors: Encourage students to check out books (one per student).

Class 4
- "RL Book Report" (handout): introduce, discuss.
- Begin establishing RL routine.

Some suggested notes from the Coordinator to instructors for first two weeks of reading lab:

      1. Materials for duplication for your class/students are forthcoming (in your mailboxes).

      2. Do you want to learn about scoring the Placement Tests and placing students? Are you interested in helping with scoring and placement? The Coordinator is responsible for this, but let me know if you want to participate.

      3. Also, please let me know if you have questions, concerns, comments or suggestions. Thanks!

Additional comments

Instructors need to encourage students to take seriously this opportunity to read extensively in English for pleasure. By doing so, students can improve their reading skills, enjoy reading more, and even get into the habit of reading for pleasure on a regular basis.

Despite all of the above, *RL is truly a simple concept* and is easy to conduct once it is set up. Essentially, RL is about matching individual students with the right books and turning them loose, requiring only that they make the most of the opportunity to read a lot for pleasure.

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*Most of the books in the collection are published specifically for ESL students. Others are meant for native-English speakers and usually don't have basic word counts, which makes integrating them into the six-stage RL sequence tricky. Good judgment and trial and error are required to accurately integrate non-ESL specific materials into the RL book collection. Remember that 'readability' (usually described in terms of school-grade level of native speakers) and 'comprehensibility' are not one in the same. For instance, a text written (or re-written) at a 1000 word-level may not be very comprehensible to an intermediate-level ESL student if, for example, the writing isn't especially clear, or if the topic isn't relevant to his/her experiences, interests or goals.

**The 500-750 word range of the second stage is correct. This is to adjust for apparent differences in difficulty at the initial stages of a number of different series of graded readers.

APPENDIX TWO: FAVORITE BOOKS

English Program for International Students
University of Minnesota, 1992-1995

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (LC)
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (LC)
Alice in Wonderland (LC)
American Customs and Traditions (L)
American Homes (L)
American Music (L)
Americans at School (L)
Anna and the Fighter (HGR)
California Style (RR)
The Case of the Lonely Lady (HGR)
Chemical Street (OXB)
City Lights (OXS)
Dear Jan ... Love, Ruth (HGR)
Don't Tell Me What to Do (HGR)
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (RIC)
The Elephant Man (OXB)
Elvis and Me (LVN)
The Escape and Other Stories (HGR)
Five Famous Fairy Tales (LC)
Heidi (LC)
Helen Keller Crusader (DY)
The House on the Hill (HGR)
Meet Jacqueline K. Onassis (RH)
The Promise (HGR)
The Return of Sherlock Holmes (LC)
Room 13 and Other Ghost Stories (HGR)
Round the World in Eighty Days (LC)
Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes (DY)
Stories from William Shakespeare (LC)
The Stranger (HGR)
Tales from Hans Christian Andersen (LC)
Tales of Goha (HGR)
A Taste of Murder (OXS)
This is New York (HGR)
Voodoo Island (OXB)
White Death (OXB)
The Woman in Black (HGR)
Women's Work, Man's Work (NRP)

APPENDIX THREE:
PUBLISHERS/SERIES OF BOOKS SUITABLE
FOR READING LAB

AP	Alemany Press
BS	Bantam Skylark Changing World Series
CME	Collier-MacMillan English Readers
DY	Dell Yearling
ER	Easy Readers
FAA	Fearon's Amazing Adventures
GFF	Globe Fearon Fastbacks
HCP	HarperCollins Publishers
HGR	Heinemann Guided Readers
L	Longman
LBS	Longman Bridge Series
LC	Longman Classics
LF	Longman Fiction Series
LASR	Longman American Structured Readers
LVN	Literacy Volunteers of NYC Writer's Voices
MAR	Macmillan Advanced Reader Series
MMI	Maxwell Macmillan International
NH	Newport House
NHR	Newbury House Readers
NRP	New Readers Press
OXB	Oxford Bookworms
OXP	Oxford Progressive Readers
OXS	Oxford Streamline Graded Readers
PB	Puffin Books
PKB	Pocket Books
RH	Random House
RIC	Regents Illustrated Classics
RR	Regents Readers

APPENDIX FOUR:
SAMPLE LEVEL CODING

The books in the RL at U of MN have six reading stages (levels), color-coded as follows:

yellow:	*300-600 word-level**
orange:	*500-750*
green:	*900-1250*
white	*1300-1500*
red:	*1600-1800*
blue:	*2000+*

Note: Many of the non-ESL readers have unspecified word levels and, therefore, can be "slotted" into the six reading stages based on perceived level of difficulty. Probably numerous books could be moved up or down on the scale of reading stages.

SAMPLE PARTIAL BOOK COLLECTION

Qty.	Title and Publisher Code	Genre

Yellow (Stage 1)

4	Anna and the Fighter (HGR)	humor/travel/ mystery **cassette**
2	The Coldest Place on Earth (OXB)	adventure/travel/ history
2	Dangerous Journey (HGR)	adventure
3	Dear Jan...Love, Ruth (HGR)	romance
4	The Elephant Man (OXB)	famous people/ biography human interest
2	The Garden (HGR)	romance/human interest
4	The House on the Hill (HGR)	romance **cassette**
1	Meet Thomas Jefferson (RH)	biography/American history

1	Money for a Motorbike (HGR)	crime/adventure/ human interest
3	Natural Wonders (RR)	science/technology
2	One-Way Ticket (OXB)	adventure/travel
2	Samuel Clemens & Mark Twain (RR)	biography/famous people
2	Sara Says No! (HGR)	human interest
2	A Song for Ben (OXS)	adventure/crime/ suspense
1	Stop That Woman! (NRP)	crime/human interest
2	Sugar and Candy (HGR)	human interest
1	Team Player (NRP)	human interest
2	This is New York (HGR)	American culture/ travel
2	This is San Francisco (HGR)	American culture/ travel
2	The Truth Machine (HGR)	fantasy/humor/ science fiction human interest
2	Under the Moon (OXB)	science fiction
2	The Watchers (OXS)	mystery
1	What Are Friends For? (NRP)	human interest
4	White Death (OXB)	mystery/detective

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Orange (Stage 2)

2	Adventures of Sindbad the Sailor (LC)	classic/adventure
1	Alice in Wonderland (LC)	classic/fairytales
4	American Customs and Traditions (L)	American culture/ society/background
2	American Homes (L)	American culture/ society/background
3	American Music (L)	American culture/ society/background popular music/ culture
2	Americans at School (L)	American culture/ society/background

2	Americans on the Move (L)	American culture/society/background
1	As Long as the Rivers Shall Run (RR)	culture/civilization
2	California Style (RR)	American culture/society/background
2	Dead Man's Island (OXB)	mystery
2	Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde (RIC)	classic/mystery
2	Engineering Triumphs (RR)	science/technology
1	Everything Men Know about Women (NH)	human interest/humor/mystery
1	The Extra (RR)	American culture
1	Fighting Back (NRP)	human interest **cassette**
2	Five Famous Fairy Tales (LC)	classic/fairy tales
1	Five Folk Tales (RR)	folk tales
1	Happy Hour (NRP)	human interest
3	Heidi (LC)	classic/folk stories
1	The Kite Flyer and Other Stories (NRP)	folk stories/short stories **cassette**
2	Legends (NRP)	legends/folk tales **cassette**
2	A Man Without a Country (RR)	classic/human interest/historical novel
1	Miss Doyle's Life Savings (MMI)	suspense/mystery/human interest
2	New York! (NHR)	American culture/society background/travel
1	Robin Hood (LC)	classic/folk stories
2	Tales from Hans Chr. Anderson (LC)	classic/fairytales/society/background
2	Voodoo Island (OXB)	horror

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APPENDIX FIVE:
SAMPLE READING LAB PLACEMENT TEST

Directions: The following reading passages have missing words. For each blank, write *one* word which makes sense according to the passage and the sentence. *Write the words in the blanks on your answer sheet.* DO NOT write on this paper, please. Figuring out the missing words is generally difficult, and nobody can get them all right. So just do your best.

California Style

California has more of everything than other states in the U.S. It has more money, people, sunshine, beaches, schools, natural beauty, fruits and vegetables, churches, movie stars, beautiful houses, parks, libraries, and things to do. In the city of __1__ Angeles, you can go __2__ at the supermarket at __3__ a.m. Next to you, __4__ may be a movie __5__ or famous rock singer. __6__ buys vegetables together. Everyone __7__ very casual. You can __8__ everything in Los Angeles. __9__ every hour of the __10__ or day, you can __11__ to a restaurant, buy __12__ car, send flowers to __13__ friend, or go to __14__ movie.

On Sunday mornings __15__ Garden Grove, you can __16__ to the Crystal Cathedral, __17__ answer to the great __18__ of Europe. People park __19__ cars outside the $18 __20__ church of mirrors, plastic, __21__ glass. They can hear __22__ services over loudspeakers. The __23__ Cathedral is bigger than __24__ Dame Cathedral in Paris. __25__ glass walls of the church open like the Red Sea opened before Moses in the Old Testament, and out comes the Reverend Robert Schuller. Mr. Schuller started his church, the Garden Grove Community Church, in a drive-in movie theater. There, he asked the people to pray and sing inside their cars. "Do you feel God?" asked Mr. Schuller. "Then turn on your windshield wipers."

In California, not only churches are strange; parties are too...

APPENDIX SIX:
AN INTRODUCTION TO READING LAB

Welcome to Reading Lab. What is it?

Reading Lab is a different kind of reading experience. In fact, it is *very* different from the other kinds of reading you usually do in most ESL reading courses. How is it different?

In Reading Lab, you will:
1. choose your own reading materials according to your interests and your own indepedendent reading level
2. read mostly short books from the Reading Lab book collection
3. read independently (by yourself)
4. read relatively easy materials, so you can relax and read faster
5. hopefully enjoy reading in English and, therefore, read more so that your vocabulary and reading skills improve more quickly

The purpose of Reading Lab (RL) is to help you get into the habit of *reading in English for pleasure, reading faster* and *reading more*. ESL students who do this usually understand what they are reading better and improve their reading skills faster.

RL will be held twice each week in (location). You are expected to attend at least 80% of the RL classes and spend class time reading quietly. During the first few weeks, your teacher(s) will tell you more about what is expected, including how much you should try to read. You will then know more about how to get a satisfactory grade for RL. *Important*: Please read "Reading Lab Rules" for more information about RL.

Before choosing your own reading materials and beginning to read, you will take a placement test. This test will help you choose materials that are not too difficult for you to understand and enjoy. This test, however, is not part of your grade for RL, so don't worry about how you do. Just try to do your best.

We hope you enjoy Reading Lab! If you have any questions, please ask.

APPENDIX SEVEN: READING LAB RULES

1. Come to class on time. If you are late, you will probably disturb other students and you may not get credit for attending class.

2. Read while you are in class. If you sleep, talk or just sit looking out the window, you may be asked to leave class and will not receive credit for attending.

3. Read only materials provided in Reading Lab: no textbooks, workbooks, worksheets or dictionaries (see Rule 9 below).

4. If you want to, bring a drink to class, but be sure to dispose of it properly when you leave, or take it with you. If students often spill or make a mess, your teacher will not allow drinks in class. Food is not allowed in the classroom.

5. Respect the other students in class. Try to be as quiet as possible so that you don't disturb your classmates. This means *no talking* in class *during reading time*.

6. Respect and take care of the books. Do not write in them or damage them so they can be enjoyed by other students.

7. If you want to – and we hope you will do this – you may *check out a book to take home with you at the end of class*. Inside the back cover of each book, you will find a card. On the card, sign your name and the date, and give this card to your teacher *before* you leave Reading Lab. When you finish the book, return it to your teacher so that s/he knows you have finished the book and you want to return it. Your teacher can then cross off your name and put the card back in the book. If you have any questions about checking out a book to take with you, just talk to your teacher.

8. Every time you finish reading a book, complete a "Reading Lab Book Report" and hand it in to your teacher. This short report will show the teachers how you are doing in Reading Lab. The Book Reports may also help other students choose books to read. *Complete all Book Reports OUTSIDE of class, not during RL.*

9. Do not use a dictionary in Reading Lab. You don't need a dictionary if you are reading at your correct independent-reading level.

10. Read at least three (3) books at your correct reading level before reading books at a higher level of difficulty. For example, if your starting reading level is "yellow/orange," you must read at least three (3) yellow or orange books before reading any "green" books, which are more difficult. This will make it easier for you to read quickly and enjoy reading more. If you feel you need a dictionary to understand a book you are reading, you should choose an easier book.

These rules will make it possible for everyone to enjoy reading and improve their reading skills. If you have any questions or problems, please let one of the teachers know. We hope you enjoy Reading Lab!!

APPENDIX EIGHT:

READING LAB BOOK REPORT

Your name _____

Name of the book _____

Publisher or author of the book _____

Reading level (color) of the book _____

Date you finished reading this book _____

1. Please circle *one* only: A. I liked this book very much.

                                          B. I thought this book was OK.

                                          C. I didn't like this book.

2. Please explain *why* you circled A, B, or C above. Write at least 40 words.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do you have any comments or questions?

APPENDIX NINE:
STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF TWO READING LABS

In the spring of 1991, at Minnesota State University-Akita, Japan, 216 elementary and intermediate-level **EFL** students were required to take RL *in addition to* their regular reading courses. During the initial four quarters of RL (1992-93) in the English Program for International Students (EPIS) at the Minnesota English Center at University of Minnesota, 139 **ESL** students (79 low-intermediate and 60 high-intermediate) were required to take RL *as part of* their regular reading courses.

Below are end-of-term RL evaluation questions and the percentages of respondents who chose each possible answer. Percentages for the EPIS **ESL** students are presented as follows: low-intermediate level students/ high-intermediate level students.

Note: Not all of the questions asked of both the EFL and ESL students are the same. Also, due to rounding, some percentages do not total exactly 100%. The last question is open ended with representative verbatim responses from the **ESL** students only.

1. How much do you enjoy reading extensively in English?

(EFL)	a lot	31%
	some	60%
	not very much	8%

2. How much do you enjoy reading in English?

(ESL)	a lot	53% / 52%
	some	38% / 43%
	not very much	9% / 3%
	NR	0% / 2%

3. Do you now enjoy reading extensively in English more *because of RL*?

(EFL)	yes	86%
	no	11%
	NR	3%

4. Is reading in English now more enjoyable *because of RL*?

    (ESL)   yes   68% / 65%

                  no   9% / 7%

                  I'm not sure   23% / 29%

                  NR   1% / 0%

5. How much have your reading skills improved this quarter?

    (ESL)   a lot   42% / 30%

                  some   55% / 62%

                  not very much   3% / 9%

6. Is it now easier for you to read in English *because of RL*?

    (ESL)   yes   63% / 57%

                  no   9% / 13%

                  I'm not sure   28% / 28%

7. How much did your reading skills improve (get better) *because of RL*?

    (EFL)   a lot   26%

                  some   67%

                  not very much   7%

    (ESL)   a lot   33% / 27%

                  some   55% / 65%

                  not very much   12% / 7%

                  NR   0% / 1%

8. How hard did you work in [RL]?

    (EFL)   very hard   10%

                  fairly hard   55%

                  not very hard   34%

    (ESL)   very hard   19% / 18%

                  fairly hard   34% / 52%

                  not very hard   47% / 30%

9. How much did you like RL?

(EFL)	a lot	29%	
	some	60%	
	not very much	11%	
(ESL)	a lot	47% /	42%
	some	33% /	50%
	not very much	21% /	6%
	NR	0% /	2%

10. Do you have any comments about RL? Please tell us what you liked and/or didn't like about it.

— *I like my RL because I can choose better books that is fitting my English level from many kinds of books. (Japanese)*

— *I fairly like RL, but sometimes it was very sleepy [after lunch]. (Korean)*

— *Should have more different books. I think now have many books but not many different kind of book. (Thai)*

— *I like it very much. I can read English book in my free time. I don't just borrow one book every time because I read very fast. (Chinese)*

— *I liked RL, but sometimes it was too bored and I didn't concetrated because it was too noisy. (Indonesian)*

— *Well, first of all, the RL is a good idea, but I think that it's preferable to read laught [aloud?], I mean not in silence, because we need hear the pronunciation of all the words. I think that the students can read in her/him house, not spend time in the school reading in silence. If you can change the objectives of RL, I think that will be better, try that the RL will to read laught. (Spanish)*

— *I liked it because is good practice to improve the reading skill. (Spanish)*

— *Please put on more interesting books. (Japanese)*

— *If I could. I'd like to bring to the class which is my favorite want to read. (Japanese)*

— *Perfect. (Japanese)*

— *I was so afraid when I read my first book but after that I felt great because I understood it. The RL helps me very mush to improve my reading and I enjoyed it a lot. (Spanish)*

— *I liked it a lot because we were free to read what we want. (French)*

— *I liked the degraded levels of reading, that you can improve your reading after you read 3 books in every level. (Arabic)*

— *I think I cannot find these books at another place. (Turkish)*

— *I don't need to reading lab. (Japanese)*

— *It was pretty good, but sometimes, I felt very bored. (Korean)*

— *(From the unsolicited report "The Effect of Reading Lab.") I think the RL has some effects; 1. Everyone can understand very much, because those books are easy to read. 2. After reading everyone will get satisfaction from it had understand many things. 3. Everyone will get some confidence by satisfaction. 4. It is easy to read in a sense by the satisfaction and the confidence. I hope to continue the RL next [quarter]. I had a very good tiome in RL. (Japanese)*

Reading Lab Books Read

Av. number of books read per RL student per quarter:

ESL program	5.3/5.3	(2 hrs. of RL/wk.)
EFL program	7.4	(3 hrs. of RL/wk.)

Fewest books read by any one student: 1

Most books read by any one student: 19

Student Evaluation of Reading Lab

Directions: Please answer the following questions to let us know what you think about Reading Lab (RL) and to help us make it better. Circle your answers.

1. How much do you enjoy reading in English?

        a lot   some   not very much

2. Is reading in English now more enjoyable *because of RL?*

        yes   no   I'm not sure

3. Is it now easier for you to read in English *because of RL?*

        yes   no   I'm not sure

4. How much have your reading skills improved this quarter?

        a lot   some   not very much

5. How much did your reading skills improve *because of RL?*

        a lot   some   not very much

6. How hard did you work in RL?

        very hard   fairly hard   not very hard

7. How much did you like RL?

        a lot   some   not very much

8. Do you have any comments about RL? Please tell us what you *liked* and/or *didn't* like about it.

Thank you.

APPENDIX TEN:

READING SURVEY

Part I *Please complete the following.*

1. Reading course number/level: _____

2. Native language: _____

3. Gender (circle one): Male Female

4. Age group (circle one): a. <21 b. 21-25 c. >25

Part II *Please give your opinion about each type of book, story or reading material listed below. Circle <u>one</u> number for each.*

5 =	**like very much**
4 =	**like**
3 =	**don't know/no opinion**
2 =	**don't like**
1 =	**hate**

Adventure/Thriller/Spy	5 4 3 2 1
American Culture/Society	5 4 3 2 1
Biography/Famous People	5 4 3 2 1
Books (generally)	5 4 3 2 1
Comic Books	5 4 3 2 1
Classics (Great/Famous Literature)	5 4 3 2 1
Crime/Detective	5 4 3 2 1
Folk Tales	5 4 3 2 1
History	5 4 3 2 1
Horror/Ghost	5 4 3 2 1
Human Interest	5 4 3 2 1
Humor (Funny Stories)	5 4 3 2 1
Magazines	5 4 3 2 1
Mystery	5 4 3 2 1
Nature/Wildlife	5 4 3 2 1
Newspapers	5 4 3 2 1
Non-Fiction	5 4 3 2 1
Novels	5 4 3 2 1

Plays/Drama	5 4 3 2 1
Poetry	5 4 3 2 1
Popular Music/Culture	5 4 3 2 1
Romance (Love Stories)	5 4 3 2 1
Self-Improvement	5 4 3 2 1
Science Fiction/Fantasy	5 4 3 2 1
Science/Technology	5 4 3 2 1
Short Stories	5 4 3 2 1
Sports	5 4 3 2 1
Strange/Weird Stories	5 4 3 2 1
Textbooks (Academic Books)	5 4 3 2 1
Travel/Background	5 4 3 2 1
Westerns (Cowboys & Indians)	5 4 3 2 1
World Problems/Issues	5 4 3 2 1

Part III *Please answer the following questions.*

How much do you enjoy reading *in English*?   5 4 3 2 1

How much do enjoy reading *in your native language*?   5 4 3 2 1

How well do you read *in your native language*?   a. very well
                                                   b. OK
                                                   c. not very well

What is the *main* reason you are now studying English? (circle *one* only)
        a. Just for pleasure or personal interest.
        b. So I can spend time in the U.S. and learn about American
           culture.
        c. To improve my English for my job or career.
        d. So I can take academic courses at an American college/
           university.
        e. Other (   )

Are you planning on taking regular academic courses at an American
college or university? (circle one)   Yes No Maybe

Thank you *for taking this survey. Your answers will help us choose more
interesting/relevant reading materials.*

Results of Reading Survey conducted at the English Program for International Students, Minnesota English Center, University of Minnesota, Fall Quarter 1992

Number of respondents: 107

Number of respondents by reading-course level: high beginning: 21

      low-intermediate: 21   high-intermediate: 42
      low-advanced: 23

Age groups: <21 yrs. = 38%   21-25 yrs. = 33%   >25 yrs. = 29%
Gender: Male 52% Female 48%

Native languages:

Native languages		
Japanese	31%
Arabic	14
Spanish	14
Chinese	7
Thai	5
Other	17

Average score and percent of respondents (5 -pt. scale) **choosing "like very much" or "like"**

	Avg.	%
1. Humor (Funny Stories)	4.19	76%
2. Mystery	3.98	62
3. Short Stories	3.98	62
4. Comic Books	3.80	58
5. Romance (Love Stories)	3.79	58
6. Adventure/Thriller/Spy	3.75	56
7. Novels	3.73	59
8. Human Interest	3.66	55
9. Self-Improvement	3.64	48
10. Non-Fiction	3.63	51
11. Strange/Weird Stories	3.63	56
12. Travel/Background	3.63	54
13. Crime/Detective	3.59	50
14. Newspapers/Magazines	3.59	56
15. Science Fiction/Fantasy	3.59	53

16. Plays/Drama	3.58	53
17. Books (generally)	3.56	48
18. Popular Music/Culture	3.56	51
19. Classic (Great/Famous Literature)	3.54	48
20. American Culture/Society	3.53	54
21. Horror/Ghost	3.53	48
22. Nature/Wildlife	3.49	45
23. Biography/Famous People	3.41	46
24. Science/Technology	3.40	45
25. Sports	3.40	45
26. History	3.36	45
27. Textbooks (Academic Books)	3.26	30
28. Poetry	3.00	28
29. Westerns (Cowboys & Indians)	2.97	30

How much do you enjoy reading in English?   3.75 (5-point scale)

How much do enjoy reading in your native language?   4.42

How well do you read in your native language?

        a. very well   69%
        b. OK   29%
        c. not very well   2%

What is the main *reason you are now studying English? Circle* one *only.*

a. Just for pleasure or personal interest.   3%
b. So I can spend time in the U.S. and learn about American
    culture.   9%
c. To improve my English for my job or career.   27%
d. So I can take academic courses at an American college/
    university.   60%
e. Other ("For my big dream")   1%

Are you planning on taking regular academic courses at an American college or university? Circle one.

            Yes   69%
            No   13%
            Maybe   18%

Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding the reading materials or reading courses in EPIS?

high-beginning level
—more practical for reading (Chinese)
—It needs more skillful practices for TOEFL Test. and needs more listening for homework. (Chinese)
—We need more skillful practices for TOEFL Test. (Chinese)
—I think that EPIS must give a list of resources that there are in U.MN. such as Library Walter. I don't know others. (Spanish)
—I don't have comments. (Spanish)
—No (3)
—No comments (Indonesian)
—No, Thank you. (Arabic)
—I want various courses. (Korean)
—I need more. [Don't we all!] (Korean)

low-intermediate level
—No (2)
—We need books in the same level with our ages!! (Arabic)
—I feel good...You bet! (Korean)
—I want more academic books. I want to read physics book in English. (Japanese)
—Reading Lab need more discussions between students. (Spanish)
—Not thing. (Chinese)
—N/A (Japanese)
—N/C (Arabic)
—to play games (bord games) (monopori etc.) (Japanese)

high-intermediate level
—I should read more academic books in order to follow the lecture at American UN. Sometimes, I get confused with long pages, and diffi-cult vocab in English. (Japanese)
—I want to use "Readers Choice" at next quarter. (Japanese)
—Yes. How to read fast and understand. (Thai)
—I prefer to read stories from different books. I don't like a lot of the testbooks. (Spanish)
—I don't have comments. (Italian)
—give us a lot of short story. (Chinese)
—Nothing. (Korean)
—Read more other books, not just textbook. (Japanese)
—give more outside reading (Chinese)

—Maybe can divide students to different section by their purpose of studying English. (Chinese)
—No (3)
—The textbook's articl is so boring, so I couldn't feel plesure readind. (Japanese)
—More TOEFL reading; more intensive reading at the class (Russian)
—It's not bad. (Thai)

low-advanced level
—Some are very busy, some are not. I recommend that ESL courses have a system that provides different amount of works depends on students. (Japanese)
—O-O-O (unknown)
—Sometimes, the material is boring (Spanish)
—Bring new material will not be baoring. (Arabic)
—It would be nice if you have lots of books about cultural difference. (Japanese)

Reviews

The *MinneTESOL/WITESOL Journal* welcomes evaluative reviews of pub-
lications relevant to TESOL professions. In addition to textbooks and
reference materials, these include computer and video software, testing
instruments, and other forms of nonprint materials.

Voices From the Language Classroom, Kathleen M. Bailey and David Nunan, eds. Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Voices from the Language Classroom, edited by Kathleen M. Bailey and
David Nunan, provides ample evidence of the value of classroom research.
A collection of nineteen original papers written by teachers and language
researchers, the text is based on the premise that discussions about lan-
guage teaching and learning should include at least two perspectives.
The authors thus include a variety of source material taken from the lan-
guage classroom: teacher and student journals, observer's field-notes,
lesson plans, recall protocols and oral interviews. These "voices" give
readers a chance to explore some important issues of interest to second
language educators.

It is the editors' intent that the text "serve as a 'sampler' for people
interested in learning more about qualitative research in the naturalistic
inquiry tradition" (p.1). Yet this is a text which should be "sampled" by
a wide audience; indeed, anyone connected with the language teaching
field can find much of value within its pages. The titles of some of the
chapters indicate the breadth of information found in the text: "Teaching
style: a way to understand instruction in language classrooms;" "Reti-
cence and anxiety in second language learning;" "I want to talk with them,
but I don't want them to hear;" and "U.S. minority students: voices from
the junior high classroom" are just a few examples. It seems clear that
the different voices in the text convey stimulating information for us all.

The text is divided into five thematic parts, and each major section is
followed by a set of Questions and Tasks which can be used in a teacher
in-service, a teacher training situation, or simply as a means for intro-
spection.

In the first section of the text, "Teaching as doing, thinking and inter-
preting," I was especially interested to read teachers' voices discussing
why and how they departed from lesson plans to create learning oppor-
tunities in their classrooms. Another chapter in this section compares

observation notes with teacher recall to illuminate the instructional process. Throughout this section, the various authors offer evidence of the importance of listening to all participants' voices as a key to learning more about language pedagogy.

The second section of the text, "Classroom Dynamics and interaction," introduces a series of voices from EFL situations. It was fascinating to learn that the physical location of students in a classroom had an influence on the quality of the learner's experiences. I read with interest some suggestions for alleviating the anxiety of more reticent learners. A third article informed me of the efforts students make to make sense out of classroom instruction. Thus the suggestion to make classroom activities "seem [as] sensible or coherent" (p. 192) as possible seems particularly level-headed. It is clear that these voices from other lands can bring us important information which can help us as we plan and reflect on our own lessons.

The third section, "The Classroom and Beyond," explores issues related to the greater environment in which learning takes place. A chapter which caught my eye focused on one teacher's experiences with multiple repeaters in a community college ESL composition class. The author uses student writing samples and her own rich voice to tell the story of the pressures inherent in an urban adult education setting. Other chapters include excerpts from student diaries offering reminders of the frustrations and anxieties connected to the language learning process. These compelling voices speak to the affective side of language learning and make clear the importance of considering forces both outside the classroom and within the learners when thinking about language education.

"Curricular issues," the fourth section, brings voices which speak to the effects of administrative and curricular changes on language learning. Educational administrators, teachers and students in Oman reflect on the value of new educational materials which were introduced to encourage more communicative classroom activities. Mexican American junior high students comment on curriculum changes made at their schools and rate learner-centered activities highly. Japanese students comment about registration and placement procedures at their private school. Their remarks illustrate the importance of establishing strong interpersonal relationships during these procedures. The voices we hear provide insights which can help us as we make school or program-wide decisions.

The final section, "Sociopolitical perspectives," resounds with the voices of a diverse population of language learners, both here and abroad. The challenges of teaching in a bilingual project in Peru, a South African boarding school, in dual language school classrooms in Hungary, and in the California public school system are recorded. The chapter ends on a

positive note, with author (and past TESOL President) Denise E. Murray's advice to capitalize on the diversity of our classrooms, empowering students and teachers to learn from each other.

Such advice goes to the heart of this text. By reading and reflecting on these "Voices" from the language classroom, we are better able to interpret our own practices. Bailey and Nunan's book should be an important addition to the library of any teacher, teacher educator or teacher in training.

THE REVIEWER

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To Destroy You is No Loss: The Odyssey of a Cambodian Family, JoAn D. Criddle. East/West BRIDGE Publishing House. Dixon, California, 1987,1996.

To Destroy You is No Loss: The Odyssey of a Cambodian Family by JoAn D. Criddle is the story of one family's efforts to live through the intense brutality of the Pol Pot Regime in Cambodia. JoAn Criddle chooses to write in first person narrative, as if through the voice of Teeda Butt Mam, a friend of the author: "With Teeda's permission, I've taken the liberty to speak in her voice because it allows the story to be told with greater force and in fewer words." This has the occasional effect of leaving a skeptical reader wondering whether some of the insights and commentary are American, not Cambodian. It also creates a certain distance from the underlying emotions, since the writer did not live through this herself, but is telling the story as if she had. These are minor observations of style, however, which should not overshadow the importance of the story itself.

This is a story of survival under a regime which told its people repeatedly that "To keep you is no benefit, to destroy you is no loss." From the initial forced exodus from Phnom Penh to the near-starvation in work camps and ultimately the two escapes into Thailand, the family tells a story of desperation and survival. Early on, the father is taken off and, while proof is never offered, it is clear that he is destroyed for the crime of having been educated. To hide their identities as educated city-dwellers, the family improvises a number of survival strategies: never do anything first; never complain; hide gold and diamonds (cash quickly becomes worthless); avoid relocation moves. Through a combination of

strategy and luck, the family manages to avoid fatal starvation, the killing fields, and to salvage some sense of life through the devastation of this regime. It is not easy.

The toll on human endurance is a heavy one. As Teeda Butt Mam describes, "I tried to will my mind to shut down, so that I could go about my work like a dim ox." Crimes which elicited public confessions or even death included such evils as hoarding rice and thinking about the past. Worse was the uncertainty, never knowing if a truckload of fellow-villagers was being relocated or being sent to a deserted mine or plantation in the jungle to be killed. "Fear for my life was so constant that I had to force myself to block it from my mind. More and more I felt I would welcome death."

The book ends with the question: "Does the rest of the world even care?" This story goes a long way toward ensuring that its readers will care and understand. It reads quickly and vividly. This is a story that needs to be told. To those who have lived through the Pol Pot regime, or who have been fortunate enough to hear from the survivors, this version will sound hauntingly familiar. To those of us who teach students whose families have lived through this, *To Kill You Is No Loss* will offer a more complete picture of the stories we have perhaps heard. To anyone who "cares," this book is a must.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE REVIEWER

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Bamboo & Butterflies: From Refugee To Citizen, JoAn D. Criddle East/West BRIDGE Publishing House. Dixon, CA, 1992.

Bamboo & Butterflies: From Refugee To Citizen by JoAn D. Criddle describes the refugee experience of a Cambodian-American family over an eleven year period between 1979-1990. The book picks up the story of three Cambodian sisters (Teeda, Ramsei, and Mearadey) and their ex-

tended family where Criddle's first book, *To Destroy You Is No Loss: The Odyssey of a Cambodian Family*, finishes. Unlike the first book, which tells of the family's endurance under and escape from the Khmer Rouge, this book focuses on the family's assimilation to the U.S.A. Criddle divides the book into four parts: First Family Members Arrive, Other Family Members Arrive, Bicultural Adjustment, and Citizens Look Back On A Decade. In each part, various members of the family and their acquaintances discuss the challenges of rebuilding their lives as they adjust to a new country. The book offers insights into our students' private struggles with language, culture, and life.

Criddle uses a mosaic of voices in telling the story, sometimes writing as herself, sometimes in first person voice of one of the family members, and sometimes through the actual unedited writing of one of the family members. She also includes narration from teachers, social workers, and friends who know the family. Although this form provides several cultural perspectives on each event in the family's assimilation to American culture, at times it is hard to distinguish the voices. The problem is not in the use of several voices to tell the story but in how these voices are put together. In places Criddle's voice adds valuable information to the story of the family, but the flow of the story is affected by the frequent interruptions. For instance, because this story is truly intriguing, I wanted to read it like a novel, but it was hard to make the switch from the viewpoint of a Cambodian-American refugee to the viewpoint of a lifelong U.S. citizen, and when there was a switch between the author and the Cambodian-American family, I found myself reading several paragraphs before realizing that I was reading a different author. This constant switching of voices makes the story nonlinear, repetitious, and harder to follow.

There are, however, some positive aspects to the repetition: reading about the same event several times provides cultural insights. For instance, when a former teacher describes Vitou Man's motivation to learn English, we assume Vitou's diligence comes solely from his need to assimilate into the U.S. culture. When Vitou tells his own story, we learn that he is younger, less educated, and from a lower class than the two other son-in-laws. Because Vitou feels like the least accepted of the son-in-laws, he faces additional problems within his native culture, which motivate him to work harder. Vitou writes, "There was little privacy, and decisions were made by the group, especially by the older members of the family. I often felt odd man out" (p.129). We learn about Vitou's performance in the classroom and the true motivation for his intense study habits by hearing his story told from two viewpoints.

As language teachers, we might find some of Criddle's observations about learning English somewhat obvious. For instance, Criddle writes, "We (Americans) must learn to mentally edit what we say if we hope to

communicate with people from other backgrounds, even other native born Americans" (p. 176). Her comments do give insight into the feelings of the refugees and the refugees' observations about learning English, however, and as such are valuable and interesting. Teeda says that "after the first few level of ESL, straight ESL didn't do much good. We'd found the classes boring and not relevant...we needed language oriented to interesting subject matter that challenged us" (p. 151).

Although the style and form of *Bamboo & Butterflies: From Refugee To Citizen* is hard to follow, the observations in the book offer valuable insights. The mosaic juxtaposition of stories from the extended family ties together if you are patient and pay attention to the switching of voices. Perhaps Criddle should have allowed the family to tell more of its own story without interrupting the natural flow of the story's tone, perspective, and voice. If Criddle had positioned herself more as the editor than the author, allowing the family members to tell the stories and keeping her and the other authors' commentary to the end of each chapter, reading the story would have been easier, less confusing, and more enjoyable. Nevertheless, the content of these stories is potent and insightful. After reading this book, I looked at the faces in my ESL classes differently; I knew each of my students could tell a similar story.

THE REVIEWER

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Copies of Criddle's books can be ordered from East/West BRIDGE Publishing House. 1375 Estates Dr. Ste 96, Dixon, CA 95620-3236.

"My trouble is my English": Asian students and the American dream, Danling Fu. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995.

In the book *My Trouble Is My English*, Danling Fu has joined her own personal experience along with an intriguing year long research project, to draw conclusions that relate to the teaching of reading and writing in high schools. In essence an anthropological case study, Fu's project was to observe four Laotian adolescents, siblings in the Savang family, as they adjust to a new culture and a new language in the United States. Fu's particular focus is on their reading and writing instruction, both in limited English proficiency (LEP) and mainstream classes. Filled with vi-

gnettes of her own experiences and those of the young people, Fu pep-
pers her book with quotes from the students and their teachers and tu-
tors. As the author puts it,

> "The children's own stories and words tell us not only
> their dreams and wishes, their memories and past expe-
> riences, their worries and frustrations, but also their val-
> ues, their personalities, and their sense of self in the new
> culture. Their stories are seldom heard by others. People
> know them only as quiet and shy refugee children who
> speak broken English. They have few chances to express
> themselves at school" (p. 30 - 31).

   Fu begins each chapter with a clear layout of its purpose, and draws
conclusions at the end of each chapter, as well as at the end of the book.
The result of this structure, along with the vignettes and quotes and Fu's
direct, clear writing style, is a work that is highly readable. I picked up
My Trouble Is My English early one afternoon, and was so captivated that
I was unable to put it down until I finished it several hours later. While it
is a fast read, it leaves the reader both inspired and equipped for thoughtful
consideration of reading and writing classroom instruction.

   My Trouble Is My English begins with an introductory chapter in which
the author relates to us something of her own personal experiences with
learning English. Chapters one and two then give us the broad view of
the Savang family history and relationships, while the next four chapters
zoom in for a close up look, one at a time, at the four adolescent siblings
and their lives. The final chapter of the book is a conclusion, in which
the author reiterates the problems and successes she observed in the in-
struction of the four, and draws a wide stroke for general application of
her insights.

   In the fascinating introduction to the text, Danling Fu shares with us
something of her own experience, and thus, her reasons for writing the
book. The author describes herself as a "democratic educator," but states
that this was born out of her journey and was not always true. After
teaching English in China for seven years, Fu began an MA program in
the United States in English Literature. The program turned out to be
very constrictive in terms of what writing styles and what opinions about
texts were rewarded (or even tolerated), stripping the graduate student
of personal thought and voice. While the author did not enjoy her expe-
rience, she did endure it, and continued on to a Ph.D. program in Educa-
tion, focusing on Reading and Writing Instruction. In contrast to the MA
program, the Ph.D. program allowed Fu space and encouragement to
develop her own thoughts and style. Fu seems to have felt freed and
empowered by her experience in the Ph.D. program, and one result is
that she has become a strong advocate for reading/writing programs that

give the learner voice.

In the main chapters of the text, the researcher summarizes the Savang family's history, beginning with their situation in Laos, through the refugee camps, and into their situation as new arrivals in the United States. Each child is then described in detail, along with in-depth observation of their experience with a variety of reading/writing instruction methods and techniques. The author paints the picture of frenetically busy classrooms, with teachers who have too much to do, and students with endless fill-in-the-blank handouts to complete. Mechanical drills are common, vocabulary words are memorized without context, work is done with tremendous pressure for good grades, rather than to learn, the readings required are without any relevance to real life and without any schema having been built up, and "ESL tutors" are put in the position of having to simply help the students in their pressured rush to get their homework (decontextualized exercises) done. The students, very busy, but rarely using English for real purposes such as learning about themselves as adolescents, or those around them as members of the new culture, end up being isolated and depressed.

In the midst of this sobering scenario, the author also observes and relates more positive examples of classroom instruction in the siblings' academic year. Sometimes pulling together serendipitously, sometimes by design, these projects and assignments allow the young people to be engaged as learners, to use creative thinking, and to express themselves and their histories. Such things as free writing, journal writing, or drawing and writing descriptions of the pictures, give the students their own voice, and the results are beneficial to students, teachers and tutors alike.

In her conclusion, Danling Fu reviews what she observed, draws on research about the importance of "talk," and urges for teaching techniques that reach out to a variety of learning styles and cultural backgrounds. She has specific recommendations for teachers, including methods to give students more individual freedom in trying out different ways to learn and express themselves. Moreover, the author reminds us that this type of English language teaching is significant, not only for new arrival refugee and immigrant students, but for minority students in general. Fu reminds us that, "Demographers estimate that by the year 2000 one of every three children in the United States will be from minority groups" (p. 211), and then emphasizes that her book has global repercussions with her ideas being of critical importance to the teaching of academic literacy in any multicultural setting. In *My Trouble Is My English*, Fu has left us with a valuable series of observations, a perspective on what seems to work well in teaching reading and writing and what does not, and a prophet's call to put our knowledge into action.

THE REVIEWER

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