

CHAPTER

REALIA STRATEGIES

Connecting Language Acquisition to the Real World

This strategy addresses the following TESOL Standards:

Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas

Standard 2: Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject-matter information in spoken and written form.

Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

Realia is a term for real things—concrete objects—that are used in the classroom to build background knowledge and vocabulary. Realia is used to provide experiences on which to build and to provide students with opportunities to use all the senses in learning. While using realia in the classroom is not always possible, it is usually the best choice if the student is to learn all they can about a topic. Realia allows the student to see, feel, hear, and even smell the object being explored. If the real thing is not available, the teacher must move down the continuum from the concrete (real thing), to a replica such as a model, to a semiconcrete object such as a photograph or illustration. However, each move down the continuum causes the loss of some sensory information that could be helpful in comprehension. See Figure 3.1 for suggestions of classroom realia that are helpful in the presentation of powerful learning experiences.

STEP BY STEP

The steps in implementing the use of realia are the following:

- **Identify opportunities to use realia**—Be aware of opportunities to include realia in lessons as you plan. Preread any stories to be read aloud or used for reading instruction to identify vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to the students and locate realia that will be helpful to their understanding.

- **Collect realia**—Begin to collect items that can be stored in the classroom and organize them so that they can be easily accessed for instruction. Plastic tubs or large, clear plastic bags are often used for this purpose. Some items will be used with only one theme or book and should be stored

classroom teaching and may even make part of your trip tax deductible. Parents can often contribute photographs that you can copy or scan for your growing file. Send out a request for photos of hard-to-find items to give the parents an opportunity to lend support.

Line drawings, photographs, maps, and realia are not the only visuals that can be used in scaffolding. Video is another visual support that is useful. It is often possible to film brief video clips in advance of a lesson so that students get a moving, real-life scaffold as a topic is discussed. Again, vacation video is a rich source of support.



STRATEGIES ON VIDEO

Visual Scaffolding

Methods for creating color transparencies using visuals from the Internet are demonstrated on Segment 3 of the DVD that accompanies this text. After you view this segment, ask yourself these questions:

- How can I use this technique to improve the quality of one of my lessons?
- How does using visual scaffolding add to vocabulary instruction?
- Why does Dr. Jordan suggest a method for storing visuals?
- What are some of the barriers to using visual scaffolding? How can I overcome these barriers?



EXAMPLES OF APPROXIMATION BEHAVIORS RELATED TO THE TESOL STANDARDS

Pre-K–3 students will:

- retell interesting events.
- ask questions to satisfy personal needs.

4–8 students will:

- work in cooperative groups and follow task roles.

- paraphrase directions given orally or in writing.

9–12 students will:

- use verbal communication to identify expectations for class assignments.
- assist in oral presentations as appropriate.

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Category	Realia	Uses
Household items	Eating utensils, kitchen appliances (from different cultures), miniatures such as household furniture, old-fashioned items no longer commonly seen	Active experiences, vocabulary development, role-playing, story reenactment, prereading activities, oral language practice, story problems in math
Food	Fruit, vegetables, unusual items unfamiliar to children; many plastic food items are available for classroom use	Sensory experiences, vocabulary development, acting out stories, grammar activities (singular, plural)
Clothing	Different kinds of hats, gloves, sweaters, jackets, boots, any examples of ethnic clothing to support understanding	Vocabulary development, story reenactment, writing support, oral language practice
Literacy materials	Books, magazines, newspapers, encyclopedia, reference books, checkbooks, bank books	Role-play, vocabulary development, easy access for research, exposure
Farm or occupational items	Rakes, plows, harnesses, tools, baskets, hay, nails, models of barns, silos, scarecrows, wagons, farm carts	Prereading activities, role-playing, vocabulary development, knowledge of size and weight
Flowers and plants	Examples of flowers and plants being studied or read about; unusual plants such as large sunflowers, pumpkins	Vocabulary development, sensory experiences, size comparisons
Animals	Classroom pets, house pets, farm and zoo animals, birds	Sensory experiences, vocabulary development
Crafts	Knitting, crocheting, tatting, sculpting clay, potter's wheel, spinning wheel, loom	Vocabulary development, role-playing, sensory experiences, prereading activities
Ethnic items	Piñatas, chopsticks, wok, tortilla press, tea sets, clothing	Vocabulary development, cross-cultural experiences

Figure 3.1 Realia for Powerful Learning

with the theme materials or book. Yard sales and end-of-season sales at craft stores are good sources of realia for classroom use. Parents can often be helpful in locating and supplying useful items.

- **Build a library of realia**—Collaborate with other teachers at your school or grade level to build a library of realia that can be shared for major theme studies. Locate local merchants, farmers, and other resources for the loan of large items such as farm equipment or animals.

- **Use field trips as realia**—If it's too large to move and your students' learning would benefit by experiencing it, take a field trip. Give your students the opportunity to really understand what they are studying.

APPLICATIONS AND EXAMPLES

Ms. Castaño has found a beautiful little bilingual book, which she wants to use with her third graders. Many of her Hispanic students speak English very well now, but their parents are concerned that they are losing their fluency in Spanish. Ms. Castaño is always looking for ways to encourage the use of their primary language. The book she has found, *My Mexico—México Mio* (Johnson, 1996) is a collection of poetry in English and Spanish. Many of her third graders will be able to read both the English and Spanish versions of the poems and there are many opportunities for active lessons and vocabulary development in both languages.

As Ms. Castaño prepares her lessons for the next week, she also gathers realia to support the students' understanding. Her school is near a little park where she will be able to take the students on a walk to see an adobe wall like the one described in the poem "Adobe Brick." Maybe she can even talk her father into coming to school and demonstrating how to make adobe bricks.

Ms. Castaño has a broom in the classroom and she finds a huge plastic cockroach given to

her as a joke years ago that she will use with the broom for the students to reenact the poem "I am Cucaracha." She's smiling to herself now as her preparations for the use of this lovely little poetry book begin to get exciting. Ms. Castaño knows of a market where she can buy some gourds to use in making maracas as described in the poem "Gourds." She knows that her friend Marcella will be glad to bring her loom to school so the children can practice weaving as they read "I Saw a Woman Weaving."

After that experience she can teach the children to weave paper place mats and maybe one of the mothers will come to school to make tortillas as a culminating activity on Friday. She picks up two ears of corn to take to school so the children will understand how the tortilla flour is made.

Ms. Castaño makes a list of new vocabulary words that will be learned this week and is pleased to see many new Spanish and English words on the list. Her native English speakers will be learning a lot from this week's poetry unit, too.

Mr. Millar's sixth graders are exploring survival skills through a combined literature and science study based on several survival stories, *My Side of the Mountain* (George, 1959), *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (O'Dell, 1960), *River Rats, Inc.*, (George, 1979), and *Hatchet* (Paulsen, 1987). The students are working in groups to explore the realia they have found or had relatives send to them from the areas in which the stories took place. In some cases, they have been able to actually taste the berries and boiled twigs

that the characters in the books had to eat to survive.

Mr. Millar has contributed some of the realia used in the study, like some of the more primitive tools that are no longer readily available. In other cases the students have used some of the raw materials described in the books to actually construct the tools and cooking utensils made by the characters in the stories. Now that the students have all read one of the survival stories, they are comparing the survival strategies used in each of the books.

Theory to Practice Connection

Multiple opportunities to explore new vocabulary in different contexts deepens vocabulary knowledge (Nation, 2005).



"Most of the tools they made in the stories depended a lot on the wood and stone and other materials that were available in the area," Johan observes.

"That is very true," Mr. Millar agrees. "What else was affected by the location of the story?"

"The problems they had," Susana replies. "Survival in the Canadian wilderness is very different from survival on a Pacific island."

"I thought it was interesting that they had different plants that they used for medicine," Teresa adds.

"The botany books we looked at listed a lot of plants that were edible or used for medicinal purposes," Jacob says. "I never knew that you could eat boiled twigs, either."

"They sure don't taste too great," Teresa says with a grin.

"What could you eat if you were stranded around this area?" Mr. Millar asks.

"Twinkies from the Minute Market," Susana jokes.

"No, seriously," Mr. Millar says. "Are there any local plants you could eat?"

"My grandmother says they used to eat dandelion salad," Johan says. "We could try that. We have a lot of dandelions growing in our yard."

"See whether you can get her recipe," Mr. Millar says with a smile. "We're going to take a survival hike in a few weeks so we need to research the plants that we may have to eat. Mr. Smithson, the botanist at the college, is coming along just to make sure we don't poison ourselves. We will also have to gather indigenous materials from the woods to use as tools and cooking utensils. We have some research to do before we go, though. All we will carry along is a supply of water and some very basic tools like the stone and wood hatchets and a first-aid kit. But first, let's go to the Internet and see if we can find out what kinds of plants are indigenous to our local area and decide if they can be safely eaten or not. Then we will be off to gather our survival feast!"

The students looked at Mr. Millar with a wide assortment of expressions, from excitement to apprehension.



CONCLUSION

The use of realia in the classroom supports English learners in a wide variety of ways. Introducing real objects that can be seen, felt, and manipulated is a powerful way to connect vocabulary to real life. The use of realia is motivating to students because they can actually use the real objects in the way in which they are intended to be used. Realia introduces an authentic hands-on nature to many lessons. The use of real objects conveys meaning in a way that no photograph or illustration can. There is no confusion over the size, weight, texture, or smell of an object, fruit, vegetable, or tool when the real thing is present. In some cases it becomes important to provide several objects in order to see the range of possibilities, such as several different kinds of apples or tiny sunflowers to be compared with the huge examples seen in certain parts of the world. The teacher can be extremely innovative in the use of realia as demonstrated in the applications and examples found in Chapters 22 and 39 in this text.

STRATEGIES ON VIDEO

Realia Strategies

Segment 4 of the DVD that accompanies this text shows realia being used to build vocabulary in a first grade classroom. After you watch this segment, ask yourself these questions:

- How did the teacher connect the objects to the written labels?
- How could she extend the lesson with a writing activity?
- How could you include realia into a lesson you are planning?
- What are some of the barriers you see in implementing the use of realia in the classroom?

EXAMPLES OF APPROXIMATION BEHAVIORS RELATED TO THE TESOL STANDARDS

Pre-K-3 students will:

- associate written symbols and realia,
- represent story sequence with realia.

4-8 students will:

- compare and contrast real objects.
- represent information through the use of realia.

9-12 students will:

- describe change and growth in real things.

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CHAPTER 4

INTERACTIVE READ-ALoud

Reading Designed to Support Understanding

This strategy addresses the following TESOL Standards:

Goal 1: To use English to communicate in social settings

Standard 2: Students will interact in, through, and with spoken and written English for personal expression and enjoyment.

Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas

Standard 1: Students will use English to interact in the classroom.

Standard 2: Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject-matter information in spoken and written form.

Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

Goal 3: To use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways

Standard 1: Students will use the appropriate language variety, register, and genre according to audience, purpose, and setting.

Standard 2: Students will use nonverbal communication appropriate to audience, purpose, and setting.

Interactive read-aloud (Barrentine, 1996) is the reading of books out loud with the use of expression, different voices for different characters, gestures, and the active participation of the listener through predicting, discussion, and checking for understanding. It also involves the exploration of the structure of text and think-aloud strategies that demonstrate how the reader gains meaning from text. This form of read-aloud is a powerful teaching tool for use with English language learners because it produces a strong English language model and it reduces anxiety in the students since they can listen and comprehend due to the use of voices, illustrations, and gestures (Smallwood, 1992). Students see their teachers as role models and in interactive read-aloud the teachers demonstrate what good readers do (Tompkins, 1998).

Although read-aloud has traditionally been used extensively with young children, its effectiveness with older students has been documented many times (Krashen, 1993; Trelease, 1995). This research has led some administrators of high schools with low test scores in reading and comprehension

to mandate the use of read-aloud schoolwide on a daily basis—with very positive results (Trelease, 1995).

Interactive read-aloud is motivational. When students observe a teacher reading fluently and with enthusiasm they often choose to read the same book, or another book by the same author for leisure reading (Wood, 1994). The discussion of characters, setting, and description that is involved in interactive read-aloud provides shared understanding and vocabulary that helps English language learners stretch their linguistic abilities (Swain, 1993). It's been documented that students who frequently hear books read aloud have a more extensive vocabulary than those who do not (Trelease, 1995).

STEP BY STEP

The steps in implementing interactive read-aloud are the following:

- **Choose an appropriate book**—Choose a book that is above the instructional reading level of the students that will give you an opportunity to provide a rich read-aloud experience through the use of different voices, excitement, and drama. Set aside a time each day when you will read aloud interactively with your students.

- **Preread and plan interactions**—Before beginning the read-aloud sessions, read the book you have chosen thoroughly. Use sticky notes to mark places for discussion, predicting, and connections to other books the students have read or personal experiences they can relate to the story.

- **Stop for interactions**—Select a 10–15 minute section of the text to read each time, stopping at logical places between readings. Read with enthusiasm, using gestures and voices, and review the events of each day's reading at the end of the session. Discuss predictions for the next day's reading and involve the students in relating the events of the day to their own experiences or similar literary experiences. Use graphic devices like story mapping or daily illustrations of the events to keep the students interested. See Figure 4.1 for an example of a story map.

- **Assess student progress and understanding**—Students' abilities to paraphrase or retell events in a story are indicative of their understanding of the story. While English learners may

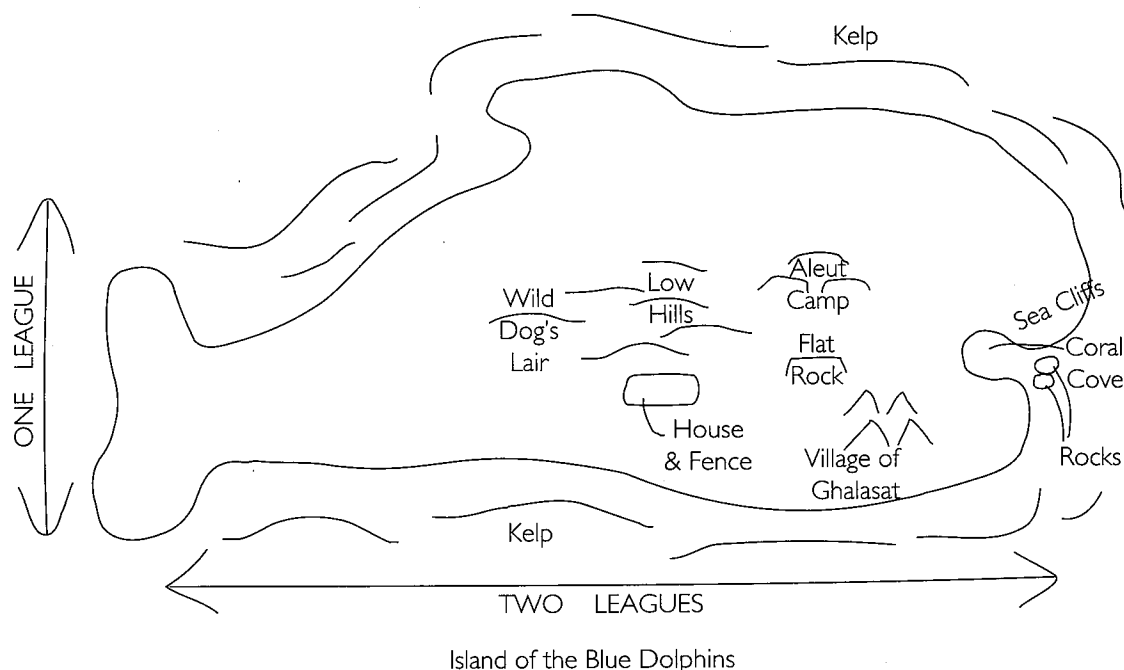


Figure 4.1 A Story Map for *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

understand the story and not have the vocabulary or confidence to retell or paraphrase, they can often draw illustrations or act out scenes to indicate their comprehension. To determine whether the strategy of interactive read-aloud is effective, pause occasionally to allow students to demonstrate their understanding by paraphrasing, illustrating, or acting scenes. Anecdotal records of these types of informal assessments can be kept in individual student portfolios.

APPLICATIONS AND EXAMPLES

In Mr. Castro's school district, each grade level has been assigned five core books to be studied. Scott O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins* is one of the core books designated for fourth grade. Because many of his students are English learners, Mr. Castro knows that they will not be able to read and understand the book if they are required to read it independently. He decides to explore the book with his students using interactive read-aloud.

Mr. Castro reads the book to prepare for his lessons and identifies places where the students will need support in understanding the vocabulary and situations. He prepares the teaching points, vocabulary, and modeling that he wants to do as he reads and plans a half an hour a day for the read-aloud and follow-up discussion.

Since the book has 29 chapters, Mr. Castro plans to read two chapters a day so he can complete the book in a three-week period. He marks the points in the book where he will stop for discussion, think-alouds, and vocabulary checks. He places sticky notes in the book to remind him of his plans to interact with the students and provide modeling of important comprehension processes. See Figure 4.2 for a sample of Mr. Castro's interactive read-aloud plan for *Island of the Blue Dolphins*.

After Mr. Castro reads each chapter, he asks the students to tell him what happened in the chapter. The students dictate a sentence or two for each chapter and Mr. Castro writes the sentences on a large chart tablet. Later in the day the students may copy the sentences and

Chapter One

Preparing to Read

1. Look at the map and locate the Pacific Ocean and the Aleutian Islands.
2. Encourage discussion of times when the students have seen the ocean, sailboats, and tropical flora and fauna.
3. Look at the cover picture and predict what the story might be about.

During Reading

- pg. 9 — Relate "Aleut Ship" to the Aleutian Islands on the map. Discuss the meaning of "it looked like a small shell afloat on the sea" and "it grew larger and was a gull with folded wings."
- pg. 10 — Discuss the fact that neither of the children had ever seen a ship before. Think-aloud the possibilities and arrive at the inference that the island didn't have many visitors.
- pg. 11 — Discuss the meaning of the first paragraph.
Prediction Point—bottom of page 11.
- pg. 12 — Discuss the meaning of *concealed*, *crouched*, and *ravine*.
- pg. 13 — Discuss the meaning of the quote, "I come in peace and wish to parley."
Discuss the explanation of the secret name and the belief that it has power.
- pg. 14 — Show a picture of an otter. Discuss why the Aleuts were hunting them.
- pg. 15 — Estimate the distance of 20 leagues and then look it up.

After Reading

1. Ask the students to tell what happened in this chapter and write their words on large chart paper.
2. Ask for predictions about what will happen in Chapter two.
3. Review the meaning of *concealed*, *crouched*, *ravine*, and *mesa*.

Figure 4.2 Interactive Read-Aloud Plan for *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

illustrate them in their *Island of the Blue Dolphins* journal or write a different summary and illustrate it. Their



Theory to Practice Connection

Careful planning for student involvement provides opportunities for verbal interaction (Canagarajah, 2006).

journal also has a section reserved for the writing of

new vocabulary learned each day. The students are given a challenge to find ways to use the new vocabulary in their writing and speaking each day so that they will “own the new words.”

Mr. Castro has multiple copies of the book being studied because some of the students like

to follow along while he reads aloud. There are also several copies in the listening center so the students can listen to a tape of the story if they want to hear the chapters read again. The students often use the listening center to review past chapters or to catch up with the story after an absence. Although there is no reason they can't listen ahead to coming chapters, they keep a strict code of silence about future chapters because “they don't want to spoil the story for the rest of the class.”



Ms. Busic is preparing her ninth-grade students to attend a performance of Hal Holbrook as Mark Twain. The students have read several short selections written by Mark Twain and want to hear *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Ms. Busic knows that the students will benefit more from the theater excursion if they understand the stories they will hear and decides to expose the students to Huck Finn through an interactive read-aloud.

After rereading the first few chapters of the book, Ms. Busic decides to read the story in dialect and to use a few props. She finds an old flannel shirt and decrepit straw hat and uses sticky notes to mark stopping points in the story. Because Ms. Busic is interested in teaching the use of comprehension processes to her students, she plans to model the processes as a part of her read-aloud. See Figure 4.3 for an explanation of the comprehension processes.

Ms. Busic introduces the reading of Huck Finn by showing the video of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. She asks the students what they think might happen next with Huckleberry.

“I think he's going to run away,” Ramon says. “He's never going to be able to live with the Widow Douglas.”

“You may be right, Ramon,” Ms. Busic says with a smile. “We get to see in the next book, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.”

Ms. Busic opens the book and says, “Mark Twain begins this book with a warning and an explanation. Do you know what a warning is?”

“Do you mean a warning like, ‘Be careful?’” Kelly asks.

“Yes, Kelly. It's something you say or read that tells you to be careful or that something is dangerous. Mark Twain starts this book with these words:”

Notice

Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot.

By order of the author, per G. G., Chief of Ordinance. (de Voto, 1984)

“What do you think Mark Twain is warning us about?” Ms. Busic asks.

The students seemed very puzzled by the quote so Ms. Busic decides to explore the word meanings. “Let's take the warnings one at a time. He says ‘persons attempting to find a motive will be prosecuted.’ What is a motive?”

Ms. Busic leads the students through a discussion by asking them to relate the unfamiliar vocabulary to experiences they've had in the past. They relate the word *motive* to murder mysteries on TV, the word *prosecuted* to shoplifting warnings they see in stores, and the word *moral* to Aesop's Fables they've read in the past. At the end of the discussion, Ms. Busic commends the students for making connections. She reminds them that other stories and television shows and movies that they have seen may help them understand stories that they read. She explains that it is these kinds of connections that good readers use to help them understand tough text.

Process	Definition	Teaching Strategies
Microprocesses	Sentence-level connections Making sense of elements within a sentence	Read-aloud, rereading for fluency, phrasing practice
Integrative processes	Connections between adjacent sentences within a selection	Finding cohesion links, referents, visualizing the connections between ideas
Elaborative processes	Making connections between personal experiences or other texts related to the text being read	Think-aloud referring to personal experiences or other texts that were similar to the one being read
Macroprocesses	Getting the main idea, the overarching meaning of a whole selection	Summarizing the text, stating the main idea, finding the topic sentences
Metacognitive	Monitoring your own understanding of what is being read	Stopping and taking stock and having strategies to use to support understanding Rereading, paraphrasing, looking up words, self-correcting, and monitoring

Figure 4.3 Teaching Comprehension Processes

Adapted from Irwin, J. (1991). *Teaching the comprehension processes*, and Tompkins, G. E. (1997). *Literacy for the 21st Century*.

Because Ms. Bosis reads the story with the dialect of the characters, she manages to set a tone that helps the students to relax and enjoy the story. She stops periodically to model comprehension processes like thinking aloud when something may be confusing or talking about something in the book that reminds her of the Tom Sawyer video. She stops every now and then and pretends to be confused by a pronoun, asking the students who is meant by the word *he* in that sentence or rereading a sentence to help the students make connections. She doesn't demonstrate these strategies constantly because she doesn't want to interrupt the flow of the story, but she gives the students a lot of ideas about how she is making meaning of the text by her short explanations and demonstrations.

At the end of each day's reading, Ms. Bosis reviews some of the more difficult vocabulary and encourages the students to discuss the main events in the part of the story read that day. She asks questions that require the students to infer and she encourages them to predict what might happen next. She is modeling fluent reading, obviously enjoying the story and using the storytelling mode with the addition of the simple costume and dialect.

CONCLUSION

Interactive read-aloud, while traditionally associated with primary classrooms, is also highly effective in supporting comprehension and vocabulary development in older students, especially those who are English learners. Even high school students benefit from hearing fluent, expressive reading of English text. By hearing literature read with the use of different voices, inflection, gestures, and body language, English language learners are supported in refining their reading and speaking skills.

EXAMPLES OF APPROXIMATION BEHAVIORS RELATED TO THE TESOL STANDARDS

Pre-K–3 students will:

- orally describe favorite storybook characters.
- orally describe personal experiences related to a text.

4–8 students will:

- describe a personal hero, orally or in writing.

- use words from books read in oral and/or written communications.

9–12 students will:

- respond to literature orally or in writing.
- participate in the performance of a scene from literature.

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CHAPTER 27

MODELED TALK Showing While You Talk

This strategy addresses the following TESOL Standards:

Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas

Standard 1: Students will use English to interact in the classroom.

Standard 2: Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide

subject-matter information in spoken and written form.

Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

Modeled talk (Herrell, 1999), the concurrent verbal explanation and physical demonstration of directions or concepts, is one of the simplest and most powerful strategies for use with English language learners. It takes some planning and practice but can soon become a habit for effective teachers. Modeled talk is the use of gestures, visuals, and demonstrations as explanations are made. Gestures and modeling provide examples for learners to follow and lower their anxiety since they know exactly what to do because they have seen the directions or content modeled.

STEP BY STEP

The steps in implementing modeled talk are the following:

- **Identify the lesson and gather materials**—Identify the lesson to be taught and the materials to be used. Think about what you plan to say to explain the lesson and the directions to the students. Prepare the materials the students will use so that you have an example to show and, if necessary, examples in various stages of completion. Design gestures that will help the students understand exactly what will be expected of them without having to rely solely on English vocabulary for understanding.

- **Practice your modeled talk**—Practice your talk in front of a mirror to determine if your instructions, modeling, and gestures convey the message you want the students to understand.

Props	Visuals
<p>Any textbooks to be used</p> <p>Scissors, tape, rulers, pencils, notebooks that will be needed</p> <p>Realia whenever vocabulary will be new</p> <p>Word cards for any new vocabulary to be written</p> <p>Maps, globes, manipulatives, examples of products to be made</p>	<p>Numbered charts showing sequence to be followed</p> <p>Diagrams showing a recap of directions given</p> <p>Standard illustrations for scissors (for directions to cut), crayon (for directions to color), pencil (for directions to write), computer (when it is to be used), ruler (for directions to measure), paintbrush (for directions to paint)</p>

Figure 27.1 Props and Visuals to Support Modeled Talk



• **Design a visual of directions**—Design a standard visual that will be used regularly if the lesson or directions require that the students follow a sequence of instructions. This will help the students become accustomed to looking for this visual for support in remembering the sequence. Simple numbered drawings work well for this. A set of standard drawings created and saved on the computer, printed, laminated, placed in sequence on the chalkboard, can be used again and again for different activities. A picture of a pair of scissors, for example, always reminds the students that the next step is to cut, while a picture of a crayon reminds them to color.

• **Review the steps to be taken**—Review the steps the students are to take after you have delivered your modeled talk. Use the visuals you have created to reinforce the students' reference to them for support in remembering what to do. When the students are performing the activities you have explained, refer to the visuals whenever there is a question about what to do next so that the students practice the use of them. See Figure 27.1 for suggestions of props and visuals that support modeled talks.

APPLICATIONS AND EXAMPLES

Ms. Milsovic is using modeled talk to explain the day's learning centers to her kindergarten class of English language learners. She begins by sitting in a small chair with the students sitting on the floor in front of her.

"When I play the music," Ms. Milsovic says as she points to herself and then touches the play button on the tape player so the children hear a short section of the music they use as a signal to change activities, "you (indicates the children) will go to the centers (she motions toward the centers)."

Theory to Practice Connection

Modeled talk is a powerful application of context-embedded academic language that serves to support English learners in successful classroom participation (Peregoy & Boyle, 2001).



"First (she holds up one finger), you will go to the planning

board." As she says this she signals for them to follow her to the planning board. The planning board is made of a large automotive drip pan. It has photographs of each of the centers attached by magnetic tape across the top of it and room for children's names on magnets under each of the center pictures.

"You will look for your name," Ms. Milsovic continues as she shows the children the name cards, which are not yet attached to the board. She reads a few of the names so the children understand what is written on the name cards.

"If Cher's name is under this center," she points to the picture of the Art Center, "she will go to the art center first." She motions for the children to follow Cher to the Art Center.

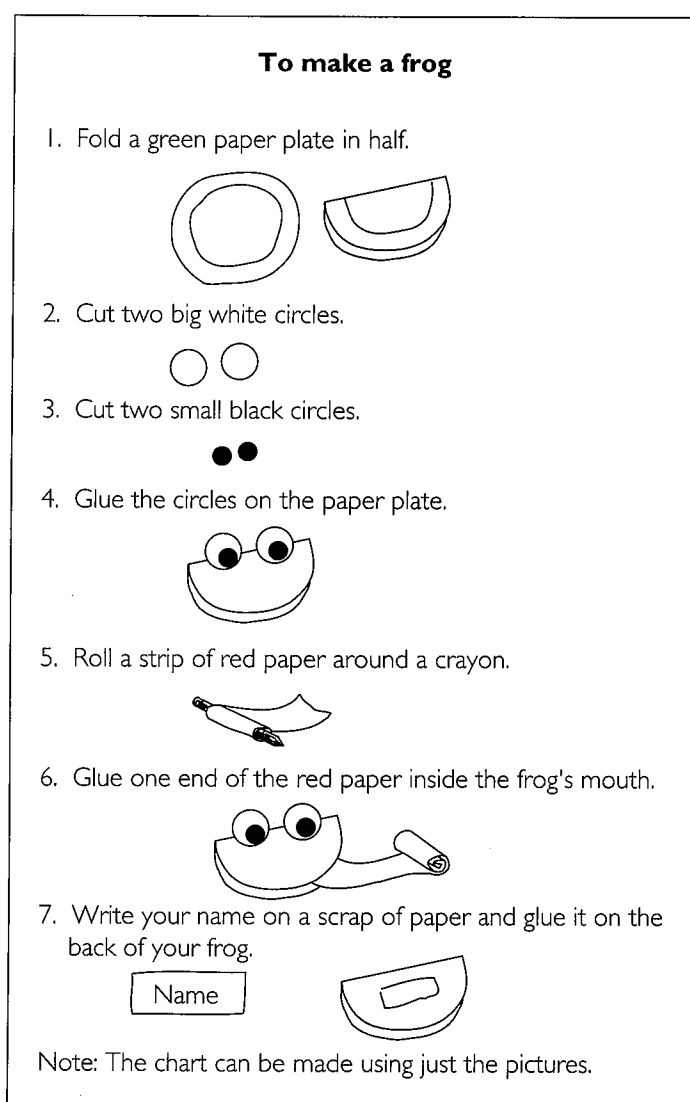


Figure 27.2 Ms. Milsovic's Directions for the Art Center

At the Art Center Ms. Milsovic shows the children exactly what they will do there. She demonstrates each step as she talks about it. On this particular day the children are studying frogs and toads and they are using green paper plates to make frogs with long curled tongues. Ms. Milsovic shows them how to make the frog and posts a visual with drawings that demonstrate what to do first, second, and third. After she demonstrates, she refers to the visual and asks one of the children to tell her what to do at each step. See Figure 27.2 for an example of the visual Ms. Milsovic used.

Each center is carefully modeled and key English vocabulary is taught and practiced.

When all the centers have been explained, the children and Ms. Milsovic return to the planning board and the names of the children are placed on the board so they know where to go first. Once this is done, Ms. Milsovic plays the music on the tape recorder, signaling that it's time to move to the centers. Since the children know what to do at each center and there are visuals available at each center to remind them in case they forget, Ms. Milsovic is able to work with small groups of students at the Writing Center using interactive writing to teach them how to write words describing frogs. The children are secure in their understanding of what is expected of them.

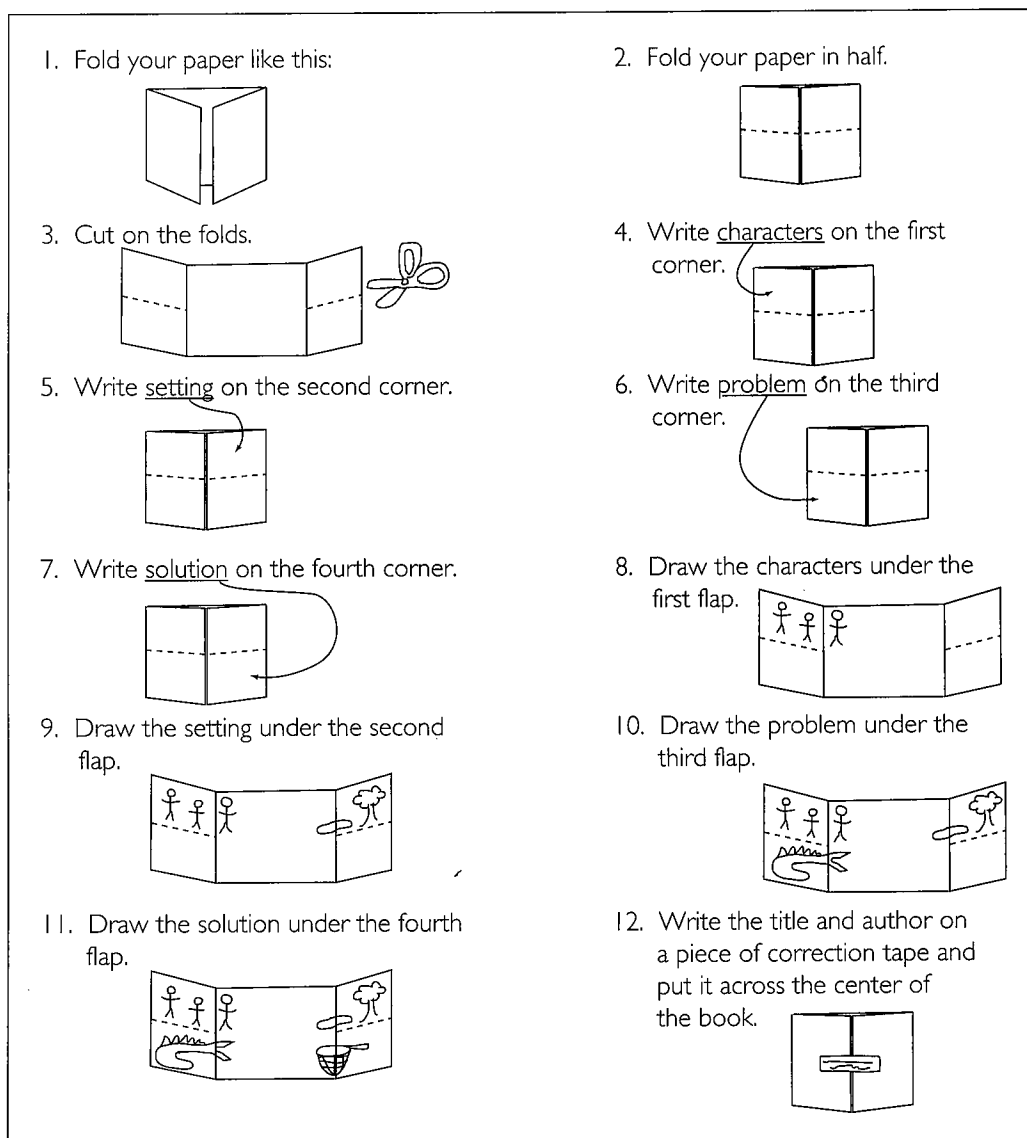


Figure 27.3 How to Make a Four-Corner Book

Ms. Delgado is demonstrating how to make four-corner books for her fifth graders, who are always looking for new ways to celebrate the books they have read. Since the students will be making their books while Ms. Delgado is holding literature discussions, she wants to make sure that they know exactly what to do. She displays a poster that shows each of the steps in their assignment and then she gives a modeled talk demonstrating the steps in the process. Figure 27.3 shows the poster Ms. Delgado displays. She's always careful to use clear instructional illustrations, so that her English learners can easily access the information.

As Ms. Delgado demonstrates the making of a four-corner book, she refers to the steps listed on the poster. "First," she says as she points to the number "1" on the poster, "you fold a piece of paper like this." She demonstrates and then points to the drawing on the poster. Ms. Delgado writes "1" on the chalkboard and puts the sample she has started under the number.

"Second," she continues, as she points to the number "2" on the poster, "you fold the paper in half, this way." She takes a premade sample that was completed in step 1, demonstrates step 2, points to the drawing on the poster, writes the numeral "2" on the chalkboard, and puts the second sample under it.

"Third," she says as she points to the number "3" on the poster, "you cut on the folds you just made." She demonstrates the cutting on an additional sample, makes a "3" on the chalkboard, and puts the third sample under it. At this point she has a sample at each stage of the preparation, sitting along the chalk tray for the students to examine if the need arises.

Next, she takes a premade sample of the four-corner book she has just shown how to make and writes **CHARACTERS** on one corner. "You write the word *characters* on the first corner," she says as she demonstrates.

Ms. Delgado models each step, adding the word *setting* on the second corner, the word *problem* on the third corner, and the word *solution* on the fourth corner. She then lifts the flap on which the word *characters* is written and demonstrates the drawing of the main characters of her book. She repeats the process with the rest of the four corners.

Last of all, Ms. Delgado takes a piece of wide correction tape and puts it across the middle of her four-corner book and writes the title and author of the book on it. As she does each of these steps she refers the students to the poster and leaves a sample on the chalkboard for them to examine as they are making their own books. Once she has completed the modeled talk, she puts the supplies on a table for the students to use and calls a literature discussion group together. The rest of the class is busily engaged in making four-corner books and her group is not disturbed. They know how to make their books and know they will have an opportunity to share the books after Ms. Delgado finishes working with her groups. This was explained to them as a part of the modeled talk, and it's on the poster.

CONCLUSION

Modeled talk is helpful in lowering students' anxiety because they know what is expected of them. It serves another important function when the teacher uses it consistently. English-speaking students often learn how to model talk and use it when explaining procedures and concepts to English language learners in the classroom. Students' use of modeled talk to other students increases the opportunities for English language learners to interact successfully with their peers and it builds feelings of community within the classroom.



STRATEGIES ON VIDEO

Modeled Talk

As you view Segment 9 on the DVD that accompanies this text, watch how the kindergarten teacher models as she gives directions. Think about the following:

- How does using modeled talk contribute to the students' abilities to participate successfully in the classroom?
- Does modeling talk require any additional time on the teacher's part?
- How does modeled talk contribute to the students' language acquisition?
- What additional planning is involved in modeling teacher talk?

EXAMPLES OF APPROXIMATION BEHAVIORS RELATED TO THE TESOL STANDARDS

Pre-K–3 students will:

- follow instructions from verbal and nonverbal cues.
- gather and organize materials needed to complete a task.

4–8 students will:

- follow a sequence of instruction based on verbal directions and physical actions.

- generate and ask questions to clarify expectations.

9–12 students will:

- compare and classify information based on verbal instructions and physical modeling.
- construct a chart or visual representation of information gained through oral directions and physical modeling.

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CHAPTER

38

INTERACTIVE WRITING

Developing Writing Skills Through Active Scaffolding

This strategy addresses the following TESOL Standards:

Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas

Standard 1: Students will use English to interact in the classroom.

Standard 2: Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide

subject-matter information in spoken and written form.

Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

Interactive writing (Pinnell & McCarrier, 1994) is a form of shared writing or language experience lesson in which the teacher and students compose a story or text and share the pen in writing the words down on a chart or writing paper. The students are supported in using conventional spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. They are encouraged to write the parts of the text they are able to write. The teacher supplies the nonphonetic parts of words as she supports the students' decision making as they practice writing with conventional spelling and mechanics.

Interactive writing provides scaffolding for young children moving from invented spelling to conventional spelling or to older students who are in need of skill- and confidence-building. It is especially appropriate for English language learners because providing an experience about which to write is the first step in interactive writing. While discussing the experience, the students provide the language to be written. The teacher helps them in creating complete English sentences, sounding out the words to be written, and teaching the use of capitalization and punctuation. See Figure 38.1 for texts and skills that can be taught through interactive writing.

STEP BY STEP

The steps in conducting an interactive writing lesson are the following:

- **Provide an experience on which to focus writing**—Provide an experience to write about. Interactive writing can be done after a field trip, to share daily news, or after reading a book.

Texts	Skills
Labels	Letter formation
Lists	Initial consonants
Daily news	Final consonants
Parent newsletters	Short vowels
Formula poems	Capital letters
Friendly letters	Punctuation
Business letters	Drafting
Reports	Revising
Book reports	Editing
Big books	Alliteration
Alphabet books	Varying word choice
Fact books	Writing dialogue
Autobiographies	Citing sources
New versions of old books	Conventional spelling

Figure 38.1 Texts and Skills Appropriate for Interactive Writing Lessons

The shared experience gives the group something to write about. If the interactive writing is done with an individual, it still works best to have a recent experience to write about.

- **Gather materials**—Display a piece of chart paper on which the text will be written, or a piece of writing paper if the text is to be written with an individual student. Gather markers and correction tape. Inch-wide correction tape is best when the story is written on chart paper.

- **Start the process**—Negotiate a sentence to be written. In the beginning it is best to start with a fairly simple sentence. Have the students help you count the words in the sentence. This helps you remember it and helps the students to see the individual words as they are written.

- **Scaffold the writing**—Say the first word in the sentence slowly, drawing out the sounds. Ask the students what letter they hear at the beginning of the word. Invite one student to come and write the beginning letter, but before it is written ask, “Will you write a lower-case letter or a capital letter?” If the student answers, “Capital,” ask, “Why?” The idea is to provide all possible support for success as well as to verbalize the decisions to be made so that all students understand. Then, allow the student to write the letter. Note that with older—or more skilled—students you adjust this step, encouraging them to write whole words, or even phrases, and providing only the support necessary for the students to participate successfully.

- **Reread after each word is added**—After each word is written, go back and reread the sentence so far, pointing to each word as it is read. Continue to compose and support the children in writing the story following the same procedures. Focus on decisions that must be made as the writing is done, such as when to leave spaces, when to use capital letters, commas, periods, and so on. Use the correction tape whenever necessary, but always offer support to the student who made the error and encouragement when the error is corrected.

- **Read the story aloud**—After the text is written, celebrate with the students by having the group read it aloud. Choose a student or two to illustrate it and then display it proudly in the classroom. When completed, an interactive writing lesson should produce a story that is correctly spelled, spaced, punctuated, and capitalized. Every student in the group should be able to read it, pointing to each word as it is read.

APPLICATIONS AND EXAMPLES

Mr. Benning gathers his first-grade students on the carpet at the end of each day. He asks them to tell him about the activities they have enjoyed in school that day. As they talk about their experiences, Mr. Benning conducts an interactive writing lesson. Because he realizes that his students are at varying levels of English language development, each student is encouraged

Theory To Practice Connection

Interactive writing combines a number of effective teaching approaches for English learners: repeated practice of writing conventions, creating oral English sentences and writing them down, rereading of familiar text. All of this is supported through the interactive writing process (Tompkins & Collom, 2005).



to participate as they are able. Some students can supply beginning letters in words, others can write whole words and even some phrases. Mr. Benning supports the students in sounding out words, leaving spaces, and placing punctuation marks and capital letters. After the text is complete, the students reread it together and talk about information they want to share with their parents. This daily ritual brings closure to their school day and reminds them of stories they want to share with their parents. It also provides a daily model for the uses of writing, conventional spelling, and mechanics. Figure 38.2 shows an example of Mr. Benning's first-grade daily news texts written by students from nine different language backgrounds.

Today we went to the zoo.
We saw lots of animals.
Jose liked the monkeys the best.
Paulie liked the elephant.
We sang songs and ate lunch at the zoo.
It was fun.

Figure 38.2 Mr. Benning's Daily News (Written Interactively)

Ms. Jacobs teaches eighth-grade English. Her students are reading literature related to the Underground Railroad and she decides that an interactive writing lesson would help the students to summarize their knowledge of the railroad while simultaneously providing an opportunity for her to teach writing mechanics in an authentic way.

Ms. Jacobs provides each student with an individual whiteboard and dry-erase marker. She begins the interactive writing lesson with a question about the book *The Story of Harriet Tubman, Conductor of the Underground Railroad* (McMullan, 1991), which she has been reading aloud to the class. The students help compose a narrative about the book and Tubman's participation in the Underground Railroad. One student is chosen to write on the chart paper provided, but all students are writing the text on their white boards. Ms. Jacobs is monitoring the whiteboards and noting the abilities of the individual students as they write. She also supports the students' composing skills by making observations such as, "We've already started two sentences with 'She.' Maybe we can think of another way to begin this sentence."

Ms. Jacobs' students can write entire sentences as they contribute to the interactive narrative, but she is helping them choose interesting words, complex sentences, and literary forms in their writing.

A fascinating fact comes to light as the students are composing the story and discussing the book. When Ms. Jacobs asks the question, "Where does the Underground Railroad run?" a number of the students answer, "From Mexico to California." This revelation provides an opportunity for Ms. Jacobs to use a United States map to correct a misconception among the students about historical information that she may not have known about if it had not been for the discussion generated by the interactive writing discussion.

The English language learners in the group are participating actively and having great success in composing the story. Because a group is composing the story, the anxiety level is lowered considerably and the peer interactions make writing more enjoyable. The students learn that some of their peers are very good at finding interesting words to use, while others are more adept at deciding on good titles. They are learning to appreciate each other's unique contributions.

CONCLUSION

Interactive writing involves the students in a thought process that is converted to writing. By discussing what they will write, and when and why conventions of writing are used, students are consistently reminded of the rules of writing and spelling in English. Students soon become more confident in their ability to transcribe their thoughts into readable English text because the teacher provides support by asking questions and reminding the students to think about the rules. The conventions and thoughts they practice writing as a group are then transferred to their independent writing.



STRATEGIES ON VIDEO

Interactive Writing

Segment 12 gives you an example of an interactive writing lesson in a kindergarten classroom. As you watch this segment, think about the following:

- How does the teacher support each writer so that they can participate successfully?
- What resources are available to help the students know how to form the letters?
- How are the students involved in creating and remembering the sentence?
- How is reading integrated into an interactive writing lesson?

EXAMPLES OF APPROXIMATION BEHAVIORS RELATED TO THE TESOL STANDARDS

Pre-K–3 students will:

- contribute a letter or word to an interactive writing activity.
- correct writing errors with the teacher's support.

4–8 students will:

- contribute a phrase or a sentence to an interactive writing activity.

- suggest changes in sequence or form to enhance interactive writing products.

9–12 students will:

- contribute ideas and format for interactive writing projects.
- collaboratively revise and restructure an interactive writing project.

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SUGGESTED READINGS

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CHAPTER

39

GUIDED READING

Providing Individual Support Within a Group Setting

This strategy addresses the following TESOL Standards:

Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas

Standard 1: Students will use English to interact in the classroom.

Standard 2: Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide

subject-matter information in spoken and written form.

Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

Guided reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996) is an approach to teaching reading in a small-group setting, while providing individual coaching. The students are taught in groups of four to six, all reading at approximately the same level. Teachers use running records to determine the students' reading levels, their use of cueing systems (attention to phonics, meaning, word order, sentence structure, and the relation of the text to the students' prior experiences). Running records also determine the students' use of self-correction and their attention to self-monitoring of whether their reading is making sense.

A guided reading lesson begins with a book walk, in which the students and teacher look through the book and predict what will happen. It then progresses through multiple readings of the book with students reading to themselves at their own pace. During this time, the teacher moves from child to child in the group, listening to them read and coaching them on decoding, self-monitoring, and comprehension strategies. This coaching is done by asking the student questions like, "Does that word start with a 'd'?" or "Does that make sense?" The students continue to read until each child has been coached.

Teachers then conduct mini-lessons based on the needs of the students identified during the coaching sessions. A teacher uses this opportunity to discuss the story and determine whether the students need support in understanding what they have read. Vocabulary is discussed, clarifying and relating it to the story, the illustrations, and the students' background experiences. The group may then engage in writing, phonics, or other skills activities.

The guided reading approach is appropriate for English language learners because of the focus on vocabulary development, individual instruction, and opportunities for verbal interactions. Because the English language learners participate in a group discussion of the story and the vocabulary encountered, they benefit from the language interactions of the small-group setting. Since their needs