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# Introduction

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This is an exciting time to be a teacher. The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCSS for ELA/Literacy; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) have invigorated the teaching profession and ushered in a new era of creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and collaboration, not only for students, but also for educators. While teachers across the nation are embracing this opportunity, they also recognize the challenges the CCSS for ELA/Literacy may present for educating children who are learning English as an additional language. Championing the idea of supporting English Learners' (ELs') simultaneous development of rich content knowledge and English makes intuitive sense. Creating powerful lessons and units of study that achieve this purpose is a bit more complicated. And yet, we expect nothing less of teachers.

All children have the right to a world-class education. This includes school experiences that are interactive and engaging, meaningful and relevant, and intellectually rich and challenging with intentional scaffolding that moves learners toward independence. A world-class education values students' primary languages and cultures as assets—valuable in their own right and resources to build upon for further learning. A world-class education supports students to develop deep content knowledge in science, history/social studies, English language arts, mathematics, the arts, and other content areas, as well as the advanced levels of language needed to interact meaningfully with others and with texts across the disciplines. This meaningful interaction could be via collaborative conversations where students share knowledge, ask for clarification or elaboration, and build on one another's ideas—all of which support deeper learning. It could be through analyzing

and interpreting complex texts: digging deeper into the meanings of the texts and learning about how writers select and shape language purposefully to convey their ideas. Meaningful interactions can also be in the form of writing to represent one's understandings of the world, to entertain one's peers through a well-crafted story, or to persuade others to think a certain way or even to do something.

Whether or not ELs receive a world-class education depends in large part on their teachers' knowledge of pedagogy, content, and language, as well as their ability to reflect on and adapt their instructional practice to address the learning needs of their students. This volume was designed to deepen teachers' knowledge and provide practical instructional approaches for supporting kindergarten through fifth-grade ELs to meet the ambitious expectations set forth in the CCSS for ELA/Literacy. The chapters in this volume provide concrete ideas for engaging ELs in a range of intellectually rich tasks using a variety of text types to develop content knowledge and academic English simultaneously.

The second chapter, by Lems and Abousalem, focuses on the importance of immersing young ELs in the rich language and ideas of storybooks. In the primary grades, teacher storybook read-alouds are an ideal way to help ELs build oral language, vocabulary, and understandings about how literary texts work. The authors describe how Abousalem, a classroom teacher, provides many opportunities for her kindergarten and first-grade students to discuss a literary text and learn about the language in the text. In the third chapter, Merino, Fortes, Dubcovsky, and Galli-Banducci illustrate how a second/third-grade teacher, Rosa, enacted different types of scaffolding for her ELs through an inquiry-based science unit on snails. Merino et al. illustrate how Rosa facilitated students' understandings of descriptive language, beginning with a highly scaffolded stage and then moving through a "fading" stage and finally to a "transfer of responsibility" stage, where students were more independently able to observe and describe snails. Another layer in this chapter is that Rosa was conducting the science inquiry unit as her teacher research project in a teacher preparation course.

In Chapter 4, Capitelli, Alvarez, and Valdes provide a framework for understanding language demands and opportunities for embedding language development in instruction in an "Integrated Perspective on the Dimensions of School Communication." They demonstrate this perspective in action by describing lessons from a second-grade earth science unit and a fifth-grade U.S. history unit. They show how second-grade ELs develop vocabulary and use it meaningfully to orally describe the properties of rocks and compare and contrast different kinds of rocks, all the while deepening their understandings of the science concepts and preparing for writing. In the fifth-grade example, Capitelli et al. show how ELs worked collaboratively, first, to read a section of history text carefully using a focus question and, then, to determine which pieces of information were most pertinent to answering the focus question (*Who benefitted from the conflicts between Europeans and Native Americans?*). Through lively discussion and debate, the students prepared to write individual responses.

In the fifth chapter, Spycher and Linn-Nieves share approaches for supporting third–fifth graders to write various text types in integrated ELA and science. In this chapter, an organizing framework for planning units of study—the "teaching and learning cycle"—is explained. Spycher and Linn-Nieves demonstrate how ELs engage in a "text reconstruction" task in which they listen

actively to a short informational text about bats, take notes on important words and phrases, discuss their notes with peers, and then collaboratively reconstruct the text. All the while, the students apply their understandings of how English works to make meaning and deepen their understandings of the topic. In Chapter 6, Garegnani shares how she raises her fourth- and fifth-grade ELs' language awareness through dialogue about the language features of different science text types. Through "scaffolded language analysis," Garegnani shows how, in the planning process, she analyzes the texts her students encounter for their language features and then discusses these features with her students in meaningful and highly interactive ways. It is through these interactive discussions about how the language of complex texts work that her ELs begin to gain confidence in understanding the language when they read and in producing similar language patterns themselves.

In Chapter 7, Levine discusses how ELs in third–fifth grade can be supported to read two different text types—an informational text about the circulatory system and a biography about a scientist—through three stages of a learning cycle: exploration, concept development, and application. Through these stages, Levine illustrates how multiple instructional approaches and strategies (e.g., questioning, sentence frames) can be used to support ELs to understand the texts and to begin using the language of the text types. August and Haynes present an approach for supporting ELs to read literary texts—Augmented Curriculum for ELLs, or ACE—in Chapter 8. In this chapter, fourth graders develop text-level, sentence-level, and word-level understandings through analysis of the texts they are reading in mainstream and supplemental lessons. These lessons address close-reading techniques, text-based evidence, writing from sources, and academic vocabulary. August and Haynes stress that supplemental mini-lessons should also address the particular learning needs of ELs, including attention to building background knowledge, vocabulary (e.g., cognate knowledge, morphology), and syntax, particularly where it concerns understanding the components of complex sentences.

In the ninth chapter, Mercuri and Yarussi share how they integrated language learning into an inquiry-based science unit on weather and weather changes in the fifth grade. In the 6-week-long unit, students engaged with the content knowledge in interactive ways (e.g., through several lab experiments) while they also learned about the characteristics of the text types used. Mercuri and Yarussi discuss how Yarussi, the classroom teacher, used multiple approaches to support her students' understandings of the science concepts and development of scientific literacy, including guiding her students to record their science experiment observations in lab reports and providing them with paragraph frames to discuss and write their findings. In Chapter 10, O'Loughlin provides a fresh take on the use of picture books to promote language and literacy development in integrated ELA and history/social science in fifth grade. O'Loughlin illustrates how using picture books for the study of historical topics helps the content "come alive" for ELs. Importantly, using picture books promotes language and literacy development and visual literacy, as the strategic use of visuals in picture books provides an opportunity for ELs to apply their growing language abilities to explain events and relationships between events and to integrate and discuss information they have learned from multiple texts on the same topic.

Several common themes resonate throughout the chapters in this volume. One is that young ELs need many social experiences where they interact meaningfully with rich texts, engaging content, and their peers to develop conceptual understandings. At the same time, they need to

develop an awareness of how language works to make meaning so that they can draw upon this language awareness as they continue to interpret texts, engage in academic tasks, and produce texts of their own (Derewianka & Jones, 2012). The metaphorical term “scaffolding” (Bruner, 1983; Gibbons, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978a) is also a common thread running throughout these chapters. The authors in each of these chapters demonstrate how ELs are able to engage in cognitively demanding, intellectually rich tasks using complex texts when they are provided with appropriate levels of scaffolding. The examples of scaffolding presented in these chapters illustrate how *temporary* support is adjusted to ELs’ particular learning needs in order to improve their access to meaning. As Hammond (2006) has indicated, scaffolding “does not just spontaneously occur” (p. 271). Teachers must know their students well, understand the cognitive and linguistic demands of texts and tasks, plan in advance, and be purposeful about the approaches they use in order for scaffolding to be appropriate for learners’ needs.

Several other themes weave these chapters together. One is that attention to second language learning is integrated with attention to content knowledge learning and not addressed in isolation. Whereas teachers need to focus on specific aspects of language (e.g., vocabulary, syntax, text structure and organization) their ELs need to develop in order to be successful in school, this does not mean that language learning should be divorced from content. In fact, the opposite is true. Language and content are inextricably linked (Schleppegrell, 2004). In order for students to learn academic English, they must learn it in the context of intellectually engaging tasks where they interact meaningfully with rich texts and with others and use language to make meaning.

A critical theme that emerges throughout these chapters is that texts and tasks matter. English learners cannot develop academic English if the texts they interact with are simplified and devoid of the rich language they are expected to develop. Tasks matter, too. When students engage in meaningful collaborative conversations about content and about language, they develop new understandings together that they may not have come to on their own. Learning and language are social processes. Teachers can teach some things explicitly, but many understandings need to be developed through meaningful interactions with others. Collaborative conversations that involve extended discourse about rich topics stretch children’s thinking and language as they shape and reshape their ideas and the ways they express themselves.

As you will find in the chapters in this volume, ELs in Kindergarten through the fifth grade are in a better position to meet the high expectations of the CCSS for ELA/Literacy and to develop advanced levels of English when they are engaged with intellectually rich and engaging tasks and when their teachers are purposeful about the ways in which they build their students’ awareness of how English works to make meaning. When young ELs come to see language as a resource for making meaning and have the linguistic tools to construct these meanings in a variety of contexts, the possibilities are endless.