

DOWNLOAD PDF USING TECHNOLOGY IN MIDDLE GRADES LANGUAGE ARTS

Chapter 1 : Successful Strategies for Teaching Reading to Middle Grades English Language Learners

Using Technology in Middle Grades Language Arts will provide you with ideas for incorporating technology into your classroom for real results. There are practical "how to" tips and suggested activities, as well as scores of resources.

If your classroom is far from a 1:1: Erin Bittman on August 25, If your classroom is far from a 1:1: Here are some simple tech tools students can use to create awesome projects. Students can work together in cooperative learning groups or independently depending on your access to technology in your school district. Rather than having students use Microsoft Word, change things up by having them create a digital book. Students will love adding images to make their story come to life! Students can collaborate and create a Choose Your Own Adventure story! Each child adds a paragraph to the story and at least two options for readers to choose from. They insert images by adding the link to an image they like online. Story Bird With Story Bird , kids can choose images and invent their very own unique story to go along with the pictures. Students must use their inference skills to depict an image. What is the character feeling? Where does the story take place setting? There is no right or wrong answer. Have students share a computer and agree on an image. Then they go off and depict the image as they see it. The students can then compare and contrast their results. Students can collaborate and create a science comic strip, such as: Students choose different body parts and limbs for their creature. Then, they choose a habitat. For example, orb spider eyes: You use your keen sense of touch to track down prey. You could also group students into teams to create a habitat that would be suitable for all of their animals! Blabberize Blabberize is a free tool that makes photos come to life! Students upload a photo, create a mouth and record whatever they would like their image to say! Students can take turns talking. This tool can be used to give a history or science report. Little Bird Tales Students can create digital books, add or draw photos and insert their very own voice with Little Bird Tales! You could have each student create a page to create a class book. Click here for an example. Older students can work in teams and create a digital book for a presentation. Hit the genie square to generate a question. Then they can compare and contrast their results. Free Rice Have students make a difference by practicing their math, chemistry, anatomy, geography, foreign language, vocabulary, grammar, humanities and even for the SAT. Students can go on Free Rice and calculate how much rice they donated as a group and create a graph to show their weekly results. This can be an ongoing project throughout the year. Groups can compare and contrast their results. Animoto A free Animoto account lets students create second videos, which can be challenging! Have students explain something in 30 seconds through music and images. Above is an example of a water cycle video. Boggle How many letters can you chain together to form a word? Try to form as many words as you can before time runs out! Have students work in teams to create words. Erin Bittman is a designer turned teacher. Check out her blog E Is for Explore! You can also find E Is for Explore! Posted by Erin Bittman.

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Chapter 2 : English Language Arts Standards » Writing » Grade | Common Core State Standards Initiative

Using Technology in Middle Grades Language Arts will provides with ideas for incorporating technology into a classroom for real results. There are practical how-to tips and suggested activities, as well as scores of resources.

At home spelling practice: The elementary language arts program emphasizes purposeful writing: Students begin writing in kindergarten, even before they can read, by drawing and using phonetic spelling. In elementary school, students are expected to write every day. They write frequently in writing workshops, practice all types of writing, receive feedback from their classmates, conference with their teachers, and learn editing skills. In addition, students also use writing as a tool for learning content in all subject areas: The Being a Writer program is a yearlong writing curriculum for grades K–6 that combines two decades of research in the areas of writing, motivation, and learning theory with social and ethical development. The program has two goals: Teachers use trade books for genre immersion and author studies. In addition, teachers integrate writing instruction with regular community-building elements and guided partner work that develops in students a sense of autonomy, belonging, and competence. Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. Instruction in the other language arts skills is embedded in application. Speaking and listening skills are taught and then applied in both informal group discussion and public speaking situations. Our district scope and sequence of language skills introduces students to the formal structure of English and highlights grammatical skills to be emphasized each year. First and second grade teachers use the Words Their Way program to teach spelling. Finally, systematic handwriting instruction rounds out the language arts program. Assessment in the language arts includes a variety of instruments: The culminating sixth grade performance assessment task also targets the language arts program. It requires that students develop a research question, conduct research, write a report, word process the report, deliver it orally to an assessment panel, and self-evaluate their performance. Secondary Language Arts The secondary language arts program in Central Bucks integrates reading, literature study, writing, speaking, and research skills at each grade level. Our program goal is to have students achieve high academic standards in the language arts: Students read and respond to literature classic as well as contemporary novels in discussions called literature circles. They respond to their reading in blogs and journals and also learn to analyze the craft of literature. They write personal narratives, informative pieces, argument pieces, and creative stories, poems, or plays. They learn research skills and present their findings in speeches, media presentations, and papers. In middle level, students engage in thematic units. The textbook Language and Literature McDougal-Littell supports the curriculum, and additional novels, plays, and nonfiction works are required each year. In grade 7, students have a double block of English Language Arts. Some students are identified for honors English each year. In grade 9, a double block of reading and writing is also provided for students who need extra support to reach the standards. In senior high, students take core English courses in grades 10, 11, and Central Bucks uses block scheduling, so all students have ninety minute classes for one semester each year: All three years of study are offered at different challenge levels honors and academic. In addition, AP English is offered to qualified juniors and seniors.

Chapter 3 : Using Technology in the English/Language Arts Classroom for "Sophisticated Responses"

In contrast to reports of math and science technology use, language arts teachers are using a multitude of digital platforms to facilitate communication between students; technology offers opportunities for students to engage in formal and informal writing at every grade level.

Implementing these strategies while integrating technology. Reflecting on the experience and revisiting these strategies regularly. Included as part of the article are four brief cases of teachers whose practices demonstrate a critical approach to technology integration. As such, it has dramatically changed the face of education in the 21st century and will continue to do so, but the extent to which technological change has improved or revolutionized teaching and learning remains a topic of debate among educators. In the field of English, Barton claimed that there were two broad areas of technological focus a decade ago: As this article will show, Hawisher and Selfe and Hawisher have demonstrated the power of computer technology in writing instruction while Myers , Wilhelm , Gilster , and others addressed the evolution of new conceptions of literacy as a result of the proliferation of computer technology. Pope and Golub provided general principals and practices for infusing technology, which serve as a good starting point for teachers and teacher educators. Absent from the literature, however, are measured directions for how teachers might develop technology literacy themselves, as well as specific plans for how they might begin to critically assess the potential that technology holds for them in enhancing their English language arts or methods instruction. This article aims to fill this gap by providing practical strategies for English teachers and teacher educators to develop a critical approach toward and pedagogical framework for technology integration, the first step being to recognize the complexity of the enterprise. Bangert-Drowns and Pyke pointed out that, although there has been a large financial investment in bringing technology to schools, there has been little commensurate investment in preparing teachers to implement it effectively. A large body of research is speculative of the extent to which technology improves learning, suggesting that more studies need to be conducted Alliance for Childhood, ; Cuban , , ; Landry, ; Oppenheimer, This disconnect is made apparent every time we, the authors, attend conferences where educators, on the one hand, share stories of wireless classrooms and portable laptops, while others lament not having air conditioning and enough textbooks. Postman warned that technology lulls people into believing that all children will have the same access to information and that technology will equalize learning opportunities for the rich and the poor. While significant potential exists for technology to improve learning opportunities for schools with low-income students, issues of access and equity continue to be a challenge today. The current push for technology applications is not new Cuban, ; Trump, However, the speed and haste at which new technologies are rushed into schools has often overshadowed the necessary pedagogical discussions that guide the use of those technologies. The fact that most teachers use computers at home more than at school points to the complexities of using technology effectively in schools Cuban For now, in the majority of American schools, there is little evidence of a technological revolution in instruction, and teachers continue to be infrequent and limited users of new technology applications for teaching and learning Cuban, Denton asked the following question of technology: Technology is much more complex, providing both benefits and challenges in varying degrees. In order to inspire the kind of media and technology literacy in our students called for by Shaw and others, we must simultaneously be cultivating it in our teachers. The reality is that technology is a complex, dynamic, and ever-changing part of our society and world today and, given this, it is important to have an informed approach towards its role within our own sphere of influence. For our purposes, this context is the English language arts classroom, with the crucial understanding that technology and media provide yet another critical layer of complexity to defining what English is and specifying its connection to the larger issue of literacy. This resistance to pinpointing English as a narrowly defined discipline that does not allow for accommodating a larger sense of what English is has persevered. The goal of the conference was, in part, to see if a consensus about the teaching of English could be reached across levels of schooling in a

constructive manner Elbow, , p. Consistent with Moffet , Elbow was struck by the diversity of answers to the question of defining English: More so, I think, than most other disciplines. Despite its multifaceted nature, participants at the conference were able to reach some consensus about the teaching of English, if not a definition itself. Conceptualized by Shirley Brice Heath, consensus focused upon the central business of English studies having three main components: Using language actively in a diversity of ways and settingsâ€”that is, not only in the classroom as exercises for teachers but in a range of social settings with various audiences, where the language makes a difference. Reflecting on language use. Turning back and self-consciously reflecting on how one has been using languageâ€”examining these processes of talking, listening, writing, and reading. Trying to ensure that this using and reflecting go on in conditions of both nourishment and challenge, that is conditions where teachers care about students themselves and what they actively learnâ€”not just about skills or scores or grades. It also includes language, literature and composition, as well as process, product, content, form, and skills. But it involves more. For it is through language that we make sense of the worldâ€”that we make the world. Kaplan pointed out that teachers must come to terms with technology and do so in terms of their educational philosophy. Instead of becoming complicit in technological change, Kaplan advocates the need for teachers to become involved and active in this change process. Reading ourselves, as teachers of English in a technological world, awakens us to our roles, and our complicity, in the world. To foster the liberatory education that Freire advocates, our practical work must begin with reading the world, but it must not end there, acquiescing to that apparently authoritative text in front of us. Rather, teachers must actively appropriate the world-text, and thus reinscribeâ€”re-visionâ€”the technology of the word. In *Changing Our Minds: While readers and writers can and often do work alone, they also need to be able to work in collaborative settings in order to solve contemporary problems that are often interdisciplinary, ranging from implementing environmental protection to balancing the issues of ethnic diversity to creating fair world trade regulations. Having these tools and being able to manipulate them in order to generate a full range of ideas and show what can be done with them will constitute the acquisition of this new literacy. Tools expand our cognition, and the current technology industry provides a perpetual stream of new tools daily. In turn, these tools create the need for new skills, flexibility, and a critical eye. Technology, especially in the form of hypertext, which fosters connections on the Internet, has become an essential medium for this emerging literacy, due to its growing prevalence and importance in our society and our interaction with the rest of the world. In order to reach the fruition of this vision, however, teachers of the English language arts must first realize the complexities of technology and its potential and probable effects on the discipline, literacy, classroom instruction, and the learning process and develop an informed approach to integrating it into their own practice. As Kaplan pointed out, technology holds much promise for educators as powerful enactments of cognitive and social theories of reading and writing and rich extensions of privilege to those who have been excluded from public discourse. As teachers however, they have an obligation to confront the not-always-benign implications of choices foisted upon them and of choices they themselves initiate. Considering Technology in the English Language Arts Classroom While technology surely receives more exposure in mathematics and science, it has also affected the manner in which we approach the teaching of the English language arts in innumerable ways. This application is probably familiar to most teachers at this point. The English teaching community, especially at the K level, is only just beginning to wrestle with the pedagogical complexities inherent in integrating these technologies into writing, language, and literature classrooms. With no clear sense of effective technology use, teachers often ignore it altogether or resort to exposing students simply to whatever current software is most available, with little instructional support or curricular connection. As a result, a larger sense of context is often lackingâ€”in other words, the reasons teachers should use technology and how it can be used to advance their existing curricular goals and classroom practices. In the teaching of the English language arts, the notion of context has always been important, and research has long supported this. Technology use must have a relevant context, as well, and in terms of using it to teach the English language arts, developing a critical mindset is key for teachers to implement*

technologies efficiently and effectively. To integrate technologies in a classroom without an understanding of context risks using technologies ineffectively or inappropriately, thus wasting opportunities for new learning experiences and, potentially, vast amounts of money spent on underutilized technological resources. Examples include entering a computer classroom with high-end, Internet-connected computers being used by a high school English department solely as a typing instruction lab. Upon inquiring further, it was discovered that the faculty neither asked for the lab, nor were they given instruction on ways to integrate such technologies in their teaching of literature and writing. On several occasions we have encountered schools with labs that were underutilized by teachers who had received no training on how to make use of computer-assisted instruction, as well as teachers facing resistance to letting their students use the labs for fear that they would damage the computers. To avoid situations like these and to create a relevant context for technology integration in the English language arts classroom or methods course, we propose the following strategies working in tandem with one another: Develop a pedagogical framework. Ask the important questions. After implementing the strategies, teachers should try integrating the technology and reflect upon the experience as a way of revisiting and revising the strategies regularly. A detailed description of each strategy follows. In other words, the power of the pedagogy must drive the technology being implemented, so that instruction, skills, content, or literacy is enhanced in some meaningful way. Otherwise, the technology itself often becomes the content focus rather than the English language arts. Teachers must avoid the temptation to use technologies without understanding the pedagogical implications of using them. Thus the pedagogical goals take precedence; the technologies are thought of as another means of reaching those goals. A pedagogical framework for developing a critical approach to technology applications. We believe that this is an important distinction; when technology is not tied to an authentic context and purpose, it will likely become a burden for users. Therefore, when we bring technologies into our English language arts classrooms, we should do so with forethought—we should do so critically, with an explicit understanding of why we want to do it and how it will affect students, instruction, and curricular goals. Figure 1 represents our pedagogical framework for the decision-making process resulting in an informed and effective integration of technology applications into the classroom. This framework can guide teachers in planning their use of technologies. We developed the framework by defining the issues we consider when we bring technologies into the classroom, by observing other teachers who use technologies, and by engaging others in discussions about problems and challenges they faced when they or their colleagues brought technologies into their existing English language arts contexts. This understanding includes their conception of English, knowledge of their goals as teachers without the presence of those technologies, an understanding of the social and pedagogical context in which they taught, knowledge of the available technologies, how to interact with them as users and teachers, and an awareness of other issues that affect the teaching in that context. In short, the decisions that good teachers make every day when considering what to do, how to act, and how to run a successful English language arts classroom are made explicit. This framework is important in two ways. For experienced teachers, those who successfully integrate technologies in their classes and have done so previously, this framework can give form to their thinking processes and help them make future decisions regarding technologies, as well as help justify those decisions to others. For other teachers, those less experienced with technologies, this framework can guide decision-making processes and serve as a professional development tool. Making these issues visible can also help classroom teachers resist pressure to implement uncritical applications of new technologies and allow them to negotiate for the appropriate time, support, training, and resources they need. Asking the Important Questions When we begin to think about using technologies in our English classes, it is important to consider our overall goals. As a part of this process, it is important to develop and entertain key questions to decide how, when, and whether to change an activity, lesson, or unit by incorporating technology. According to Richards, a veteran high school English teacher, two affirmative answers to the following questions indicate that a teacher should make the change to implement technology: Will this use of technology enhance the conversation of the classroom? Will it validate the work of the classroom? Will it validate the individual? Is it worth the time and effort? Drawing

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on our own experiences and of those from the teachers with whom we work, we also suggest the following questions as a means of inspiring a more critical consideration for those teachers of the English language arts and English educators entertaining the thought of integrating technology: Why do I want to use technologies? Is the purpose authentic? Do I have an instructional need that is not being currently met that technology might help with? If not, is there an instructional strategy or learning activity that I want to implement that technology might enhance or assist? What are my goals and objectives as a teacher for my students? How can the technologies enhance my ability to reach these goals and objectives? What are my students capable of doing and handling with regard to technology? What are their limitations? What am I capable of doing?

Chapter 4 : Teaching English and Language Arts

However, as technology initiatives roll out, integrating technology into the classroom is our reality. With hundreds of sites, apps, Chrome extensions, and platforms available, choosing the right ones can seem overwhelming. As an eighth-grade language arts teacher, I've experienced this myself.

Teaching Technology in the Classroom Literacy Primary Education Language Arts The mere mention of the English Language Arts content area, for many people, might conjure images of ancient, dusty tomes, the sound of a classroom full of pens scratching across college-ruled paper, or the palpable befuddlement of students staring down a school year full of challenging texts and writing. Enter technology, and along with it an entirely new skill set and accompanying literacies. This is the twenty-first century after all, and English teachers would be remiss if they did not take advantage of the latest and greatest technological methods of reading, expression, and communication. Fear not, fellow English teachers, for it is possible to embrace those technologies and address those modern skills and literacies in ways that still maintain focus on state and district standards, all while piquing student interest and bolstering motivation and collaboration. Gainer and Lapp put an interesting "spin" on conceptualizing the process of reading, comprehending, and writing. In their view, the student is an active participant in this process, drawing their own meaning from texts according to their own perspectives and prior knowledge, and they blend their experiences and knowledge with new information drawn from the text, expressing their new understanding through "remix" p. This is a process that has always been prevalent in the English classroom, as students read and interpret works, draw on prior knowledge and the work of others, and then blend information and understanding into a new, original text. Applied to a specific author, or texts, Literary Remix challenges students to use digital tools to make connections between the texts and their social and historical contexts. Gainer and Lapp present a lesson, in which students make connections between works by Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes, and the racial issues that were prominent in the s and those that still persist today. This type of activity engages students in reading and understanding challenging texts, while relying on their computer skills and creativity to demonstrate higher order understanding of the texts, authors, and relationships to society and history by composing their own text. According to one teacher interviewed for this article, "[because] students in our classrooms are millennial learners, they constantly rely on technology for communication and social interaction outside of the classroom" Mr. Use of technology outside of the classroom is not an issue to contend with, but one to embrace and bring into the classroom. She pointed out one student in particular, who was a struggling reader in her class. He was unmotivated, bored, and disorganized, and scored below level on state and local assessments. Tarasiuk found, however, that this student was leading a sort of double life; outside of the classroom, he was designing websites and composing and editing videos of himself and his friends, which he prolifically posted to his YouTube channel. Some of these videos, while immature in subject matter, demonstrated essences of literary understanding, and of successful reading, planning, and writing p. Tarasiuk addresses these varying mindsets in her classroom by finding ways to incorporate ICT instruction into her curriculum. She began this process by surveying the students, in order to measure their traditional and modern literacy practices. She found that her students, even the strugglers, were adept Internet users whom enjoyed reading traditional materials while simultaneously looking for additional information, sharing their information, or communicating with peers online p. Tarasiuk was able to use her survey results to make modifications in her lessons and assessments that would incorporate ICT and bolster student motivation and interest. Replacing traditional worksheets and packets with wikis was one strategy she used to encourage student synthesis of content and collaboration. As students read, they collaborated to "organize information about vocabulary, summaries, and characterization" and add that information to their wiki pages p. Posted openly on the Internet, the use of wikis transitioned students from completing worksheets for their own use to creating polished, public content, which is accessible by anyone on the Web. The public nature of the resulting

work motivated students to invest significantly more effort than they previously had in completing traditional notes and packets. This use of wikis offers an example of how technology can be incorporated in the classroom through authentic work, while still maintaining focus on standards and traditional curricular materials. Harnessing the already-established practice of remixing and using ICT in the classroom might take other forms, such as informal writing exercises, or video montages that blend classics with a contemporary twist. Aronson discusses the use of informal writing through a series of text messages between two characters. Video montage provides similar benefits, but makes use of software like Photo Story and iMovie, or a website such as Animoto. During my observations at a local middle school, I had the opportunity to work with eighth-grade students as they created projects on Photo Story and using the online tools from Animoto. Although they were working on individual projects, many of the students naturally collaborated, sharing ideas and suggestions. The final product was a polished slideshow, complete with a soundtrack and a scripted, self-recorded voice-over, narrating the clip. The Animoto project was similar, but tasked students with creating a thirty-second movie trailer to promote one of the several Edgar Allen Poe short stories they had previously read in class. The teacher at the school stressed the importance of using technology to motivate students and hold their interest, noting a significant increase in both motivation and interest whenever technology was integrated. He did, however, offer a caveat regarding collaboration, indicating that unclear expectations and directions might allow student collaborators to stray off topic Mr. A second teacher interviewed for this article also indicated a spike in motivation and interest when technology is integrated into a lesson or activity, but also warns that savvy students might lose interest if the materials are not challenging enough, or "dumbed down" Ms. Ultimately, the use of remix and ICT in the classroom has great potential for student benefit, but the focus tends to remain on the traditional texts as the content, with the technology and literacies that accompany it being used to achieve the goal of developing new forms of expression, designing unique activities and assessments, and building a sense of community in the classroom. Building a classroom community and reaching out of the class into the school, or even the community at large, is significant benefit of technology in class. Davis and Davis discuss the use of lessons that enable students to be authors of digital texts, which allow them to connect with their peers and the greater community p. As teachers, they use web development and graphics software to enable students to create public, oral history projects, which they share with classmates. The projects are focused on course content and use the Web to publish student work and to create a forum for online student conferencing. Such publicized work, and the collaborative process of supportive conferencing and synthesis promote a tremendous sense of community in the class and among participants in the project. Students begin by researching one of a number of content-related topics in order to gain an understanding of their subject. They then set out to interview a family member, or a member of the community, about that subject. With the background knowledge provided by the preliminary research, students go into the interview process prepared and confident in their knowledge of the subject.

Chapter 5 : Technology Lesson Plans for Middle School | Creative Educator

Technology use must have a relevant context, as well, and in terms of using it to teach the English language arts, developing a critical mindset is key for teachers to implement technologies efficiently and effectively.

Nicole Bolos Carlos a pseudonym moved from Guatemala to the United States when he was in sixth grade. When Carlos started school, his teachers expected him to speak only in English and practice English in his Spanish-speaking household. Sadly, Carlos began to state that he hated school and wanted to move back to Guatemala. That summer, Carlos moved again. He also received daily small-group reading instruction that focused on vocabulary in context and comprehension. According to the U. Unfortunately, today too many of the ELLs face many challenges as they attempt to learn English and form their linguistic identities; the more languages students know, the more complex their linguistic identities are. Simply treating ELLs just like everyone else will not close the achievement gap between these students and their grade level peers. In an age of differentiated instruction, middle level educators need to be cognizant of specific reading strategies that will allow their ELLs to achieve their true potential. The benefits and challenges of biliteracy ELLs have a variety of unique characteristics that teachers should consider when determining appropriate instruction. Because students come to schools with varying levels of first language proficiencies, the amount of language instruction required varies from one student to the next. According to Cummins , students have two levels of language proficiency: In social situations, such as lunch time in the cafeteria, ELLs might have lengthy conversations in English about the past weekend. Content-specific vocabulary and specialized vocabulary for discourse have a greater linguistic complexity and require more complicated language structures. Thus, it takes students significantly more time to learn the new vocabulary, to talk about the vocabulary, to practice it, and to make it part of their knowledge base. However, middle grades educators should not distress. When students have knowledge of reading in their native languages, that knowledge can facilitate the acquisition of English by giving students a knowledge and skill base from which they can build new English skills. In addition, students who know how to read in their first language have numerous advantages when learning to read in English. Therefore, it is beneficial to encourage ELLs to use their home language to assist with English language acquisition. When teachers value the home languages of their students, it strengthens the linguistic identities of their learners. Strategies for teaching reading to middle grades ELLs In recent years, an emphasis on higher test scores has pushed teachers to focus on best practice reading strategies. Indeed, both methods have proven to be valid and reliable and should be considered when planning effective ELL instruction. However, three additional methods stand out among the research as effective instructional strategies for language learners. According to the research, interactive read-alouds, comprehension strategies, and vocabulary enrichment are three categories of reading instruction techniques to consider when planning lessons for middle grades ELLs. Reading out loud to middle level students might seem like an elementary level idea; however, when they read aloud to older students, teachers model the process of reading for ELLs. With careful planning, teachers can model the use of reading strategies, fluent reading, and careful comprehension. It is important for teachers to plan an instructional focus for their read-aloud rather than simply to read the text to the students because they are learning to read. During an interactive read-aloud, teachers make predetermined stops throughout the reading. This can be an especially effective strategy for ELLs because it makes the text comprehensible to readers. According to Herrell and Jordan , the following components are important to the effective implementation of a read-aloud plus: The teacher first prereads and chooses a text, considering the vocabulary and concepts that may be foreign to students. The teacher then gathers appropriate support materials such as visuals, realia [photos or objects], or paraphrasing in simple language. Next, the teacher sets the purpose for the lesson, explaining the directions to all students in a clear and concise manner, followed by the teacher reading the text aloud to model fluency. During reading, the teacher needs to engage the students with the text to help students make connections between what is being

read and the new vocabulary. Finally, the teacher assesses student learning in a manner that is appropriate for the lesson, such as creating a visual or paraphrasing what was read. When choosing a text to read aloud, teachers should first consider their learners. While the read-aloud is a useful strategy for instructing ELLs, it is also a wonderful opportunity to incorporate comprehension strategies. Comprehension strategies A great deal of attention has been given to reading instruction in recent years, and one conclusion experts have drawn is that successful readers employ the use of comprehension strategies. But what are comprehension strategies? Successful readers use comprehension strategies to make sense of the texts they read. Many teachers are highly effective at teaching mini-lessons on comprehension strategies. One way teachers can teach comprehension strategies is through shared reading. Shared reading has traditionally been used with elementary students. However, according to Freeman and Freeman , shared reading is crucial for middle grades students who find it challenging to read grade level texts. In shared reading, the teacher demonstrates fluency by reading a text aloud. The students then read the text aloud with the teacher while practicing fluency together. As students gain proficiency with the strategies, teachers can gradually transition to a guided reading lesson with a shared reading component within the guided reading lesson. To implement this method, teachers select a small group of students at the same stage of development, choose a culturally relevant text to read, model fluent reading, and provide detailed vocabulary instruction Cloud et al. While all of these methods for teaching comprehension strategies are beneficial to ELLs, it is important to choose the method that best fits the linguistic needs of the specific students being taught. A plethora of resources is available to educators for teaching comprehension strategies see Appendix A. It should be clarified that these strategies are merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to comprehension. Many lessons that teachers already use in their classrooms can be easily adapted for ELLs, if vocabulary, reading ability, and interest are taken into consideration. Debriefing allows teachers to reinforce the key components of the strategies that were taught during the whole-class minilesson and small-group instruction. Although students can employ many comprehension strategies, if they do not, for example, understand the vocabulary words they are reading, they will not achieve comprehension. The type and depth of vocabulary instruction will vary from lesson to lesson based on the specific language needs of the students. At the middle level, teachers can: It is important to note that vocabulary instruction should be infused within reading instruction and words should not be taught in isolation. Without context, students are less likely to learn and retain new vocabulary words. Frontloading is one method for teaching vocabulary prior to the start of a lesson. Using cognates, word walls, or student-developed definitions with pictures are a few popular ways to preview vocabulary with students before they encounter the words within a reading Cloud et al. For example, when teaching vocabulary, educators can present a photo or model of the item being defined along with its definition. This will allow students to pair something visual and concrete with the definition to make it more meaningful. Another powerful vocabulary strategy for ELLs is identifying cognates, or words that come from the same base language and have a similar form. Teachers can employ a multitude of vocabulary strategies during their reading instruction, some of which are highlighted in Appendix B. Another vocabulary strategy teachers can employ is the use of graphic organizers to organize thinking. When teachers use graphic organizers for vocabulary instruction, ELLs benefit from the clear breakdown of the vocabulary words and their meanings. Graphic organizers are beneficial for teaching difficult or abstract vocabulary concepts such as prefixes, root words, and suffixes. When using graphic organizers, such as the Frayer Model, students a write the vocabulary word, b write the definition of the word, c use the word correctly in a sentence, and d draw an illustration Cloud et al. The more tools teachers have for teaching vocabularyâ€”whether cognates, realia, games, or graphic organizersâ€”the more likely ELLs will successfully learn new words. Implications and conclusion In looking at the best methods for teaching reading to middle level ELLs, it is important to understand that a variety of program options may be available. By building on what students already know, teachers can avoid oversimplifying the curriculum for their ELLs. Ultimately, teachers can facilitate the transition between short-term comprehension strategies and lifelong comprehension skills. Another important consideration for reading instruction is that all

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the strategies discussed are strategies that will benefit all learners, regardless of their language needs or the programs in which they are placed. Whether reading instruction occurs in the mainstream, special education, ESL, bilingual, or dual language classroom, all students can benefit from reading strategy instruction. No matter the program, teachers should work hard to ensure that students do not ever encounter the negative school experiences that Carlos felt when he first moved to the United States. The ultimate goal is for ELLs to experience success in reading and achieve their full potential.

Chapter 6 : Incorporating Technology into the Modern English Language Arts Classroom - Inquiries Journal

An "unofficial" site for teachers using 6 traits This site is a couple of years old, but has some good ideas The Writing Fix - This is a cool website, although it's hard to navigate. Worth a look because of the interactive activities.

Chapter 7 : Lesson Plans - ReadWriteThink

iTooch 6th Grade Language Arts Quality lessons, challenging quizzes help kids learn core concepts Bottom line: This solid companion to the ELA classroom offers brief lessons and quizzes to reinforce key concepts and skills.

Chapter 8 : 10 Collaborative Technology Projects Your Students Will Love!

If your classroom is far from a environment, it can be hard to find great technology projects that really work. These simple tech tools work.

Chapter 9 : Middle School Reading Apps and Websites | Common Sense Education

These features all work nicely for middle or high school language arts classes. Right now, the only books available are those available through Google Books. Many works in the language arts canon can be found there, but if you want to read something more recent, a specific edition of a work, or a particular translation, you might have trouble.