

## Effective Approaches to Teaching

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It's my great honor to join the New Taipei City English Teachers Delegation. First, I would like to thank New Taipei City Government to provide me with the chance. Second, I want to thank the group leader-Handsome Chen and vice group leader Yvonne Li, who spent a lot of time

arranging all the activities for us. Furthermore, I also would like to show my gratitude for the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago, John Murphy School, Campanelli Elementary School, Hoover School, Jane Addams Junior High School, and Shelby County and Jay County in state of Indiana. Without their help, we couldn't visit the schools in Chicago and state of Indiana successfully.

During this trip, I really learned a great deal. I learned a lot of effective teaching strategies which I can apply in my class, including Quantum Learning, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), Balanced Literacy, the Daily 5 and teaching alphabet with sign language.

### Quantum Learning

It talks about all the sensory information (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) from the outside world entering the brain and first sent to the Thalamus. This part of the brain acts as a relay station and transfers information in two directions.



If people feel a sense of security, the sensory information converges to working memory in the prefrontal cortex. And our goal as teachers is to capture and hold working memory. On the

other hand, if people feel the fear, anxiety, stress and threat, the sensory information travels from the thalamus to the amygdala. When the activity in amygdala is high, the activity in prefrontal cortex is low. When the activity in amygdala is low, the activity in prefrontal cortex is high. Being a teacher, we need to be cautious if a student has negative emotion when he or she learns.

Besides, we should try to let students know if they can be responsible for themselves when they join some activities, they will have more choices to choose what they like. It is also another key point of Quantum learning. All in all, Quantum learning means creating a positive school culture which results in a culture of student engagement, positive behavior. Students with strong character will take responsibility of their own learning. It is for sure that when students feel safe and supported, they will learn better.

### **Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)**

Sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP) is a strategy to support classroom teachers and English learners (ELs) by using sound instructional methods. As the number of English learners increases in schools across the United States, educators are seeking effective ways to help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the classroom and beyond. SIOP is a research-based and validated model of sheltered instruction that has been widely and successfully used across the U.S. The SIOP framework helps teachers plan and deliver lessons that allow English learners to acquire academic knowledge as they develop English language proficiency.

Lesson plan development and instructional delivery in SIOP can be guided by eight elements. These include meaningful activities, connecting student backgrounds to the lesson, vocabulary comprehensible to the student, explicit instructional techniques with appropriate levels of support, frequent opportunities for the student to interact, use of hands-on activities, lessons delivered at an appropriate pace and feedback and assessment provided for the

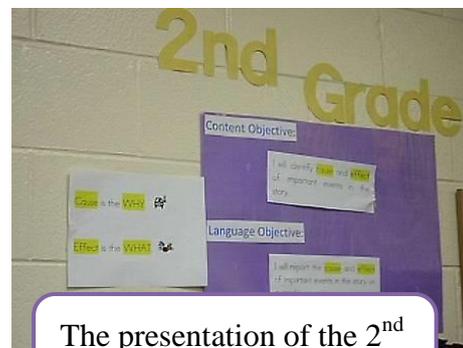
student.



The presentation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade's objectives

When teachers prepare for their teaching materials, they need to think about what the objectives of that day's class are. Through discussing the objectives with students, students will know more about the target lesson precisely.

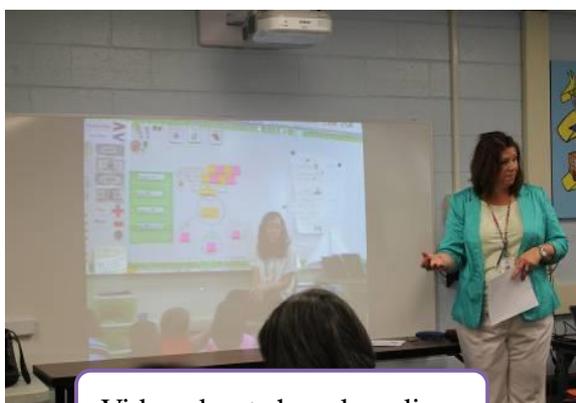
SIOP also integrates all language skills including listening, speaking, reading, writing into each lesson. SIOP is research-based. And according to the research, SIOP could enhance language acquisition through meaningful interactions and use.



The presentation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade's objectives

### Balanced literary

Balanced literacy is a must in the elementary classroom. A child must be able to read, write and comprehend in all of the subject areas. Balanced literacy includes two modes which are reading and writing. The components of reading are shared reading, guided reading, independent reading and reading aloud.



Video about shared reading

During shared reading, the teacher works with the whole class and the teacher models the use of skill and strategy. Guided reading is bridged between shared and independent reading. During guided reading, students are placed in small flexible groups

based on formative assessments. Students are taught skills and strategies at their instructional level as they are introduced to increasingly more challenging texts. Independent reading describes a time set aside for students to read an appropriate interesting and self-selected text. “Read aloud” is a time during the day when teacher reads a literature selection aloud to students. This enables children to hear the rich language of stories and the text they might not be able to read on their own or they might not have ever chosen to read.

The components of writing are shared writing, guided writing, independent writing and word study. During shared writing, the teacher models and demonstrates the process of putting ideas into written language. Guided reading is the bridge between shared and independent writing. The goal is to target individual writing needs of students. During guided writing, groups are flexible in size and configuration and are formed based on students’ needs, interests, experiences, and achievement. During independent writing, students may write about topics based on personal interests or on curriculum. The teacher will encourage students to experiment with and explore the uses of written language. Actually, the word study happens anytime in balanced literacy, not just in writing.

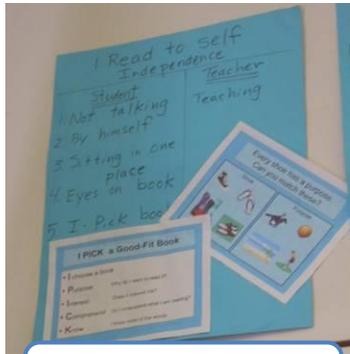
In conclusion, through balanced literacy, teachers could focus on both reading and writing instruction.

### **The Daily 5**

The Daily 5 is a series of literacy tasks which students complete daily while the teacher meets with small groups or confers with individuals. The Daily 5 is more than a management system or a curriculum framework--it is a structure that will help students develop the daily habits of reading, writing and working with peers that will lead to a lifetime of independent literacy. It is a series of literacy tasks, including Read to Self, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading, Work on Writing and Word Work which students complete while the teacher meets with students one-on-one or in small reading groups. The Daily 5 fits well with the Balanced

Literacy, giving teachers a framework to teach their language class.

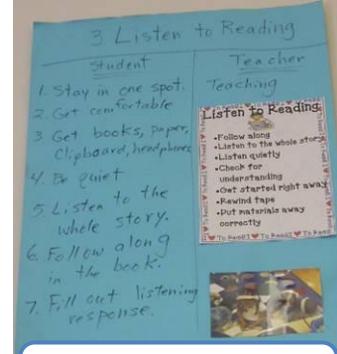
### The Daily 5 activities:



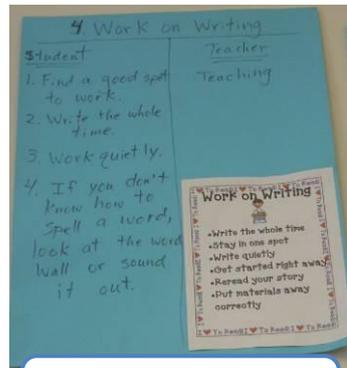
Read to Self



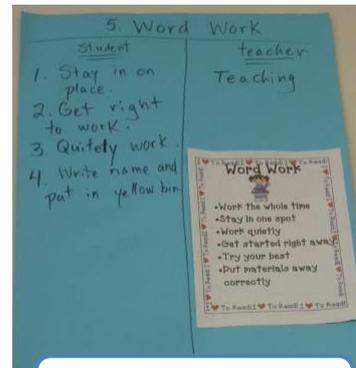
Read to Friend  
(Read to Someone)



Listen to Reading



Work on Writing



Word Work

i. Read to Self :

To become better readers, students need to practice reading to themselves. The books are all leveled and strategies are taught to students that help them choose the right books. Besides, they learn about various strategies to assist in decoding and comprehension. By the way, they can choose any place to read.



Read to Self

ii. Read to Someone :

Reading to someone allows for reciprocal helping. It is also very motivating for

most students. The students will be taught how to discuss what they have read by checking each other for comprehension during the reading.

iii. Listen to Reading :

Listening to good models of reading helps students to improve their own reading and it provides the audio support for reading that some children may be lacking.

iv. Work on Writing :

Students write about things that really matter to them. The writing could be something that a student begins to write during a writing workshop time and it also gives students independent time to develop their ideas.

v. Word Work :

Practicing spelling helps students become better spellers and writers and, also, better readers. This time can be spent on working with spelling patterns, high frequency words or working with interesting words and vocabulary.



Word Work

Besides those five activities, sometimes we will see some teachers do a little bit revision. For example, I found a teacher even extend those five activities to seven activities. Those are Read to Self, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading, Word Work, Work on Writing, *Work on Computer/Ipad*, and *Guided Reading*.



Seven activities in a day

Daily 5 Stations: Thursday			
Group 1: Emily, Ariana, Isabella, Angela	Group 2: Elizabeth, Alex, Taylor, Lillian, Lily, Elizabeth	Group 3: James, Daniel, William, Luke, Spencer	Group 4: Liam, Noah, Matthew, Luke, Carter, Michael
Buddy Read	Meet with Teacher Mrs. Rozman	Word Work	Word Work
Read to Self	Respond to your Reading 1. Complete reading 2. Read to self when done	Meet with Teacher	Read to Self
Word Work	Read to Self	Read to Self	Meet with Teacher

歡迎來到我們的教室!

Each group works on three activities a day

However, when I visited Hoover School, one of the homeroom teachers said when their students are at higher graders, they may not have daily five activities. They will have only three activities daily. Maybe it's because the time is little, when students are at higher graders, they will have more subjects to learn about. Therefore, they also have five activities to rotate-Read to Self, Buddy Read, Word Work, Meet with teacher, Respond to your Reading, but they just do three activities in a day.

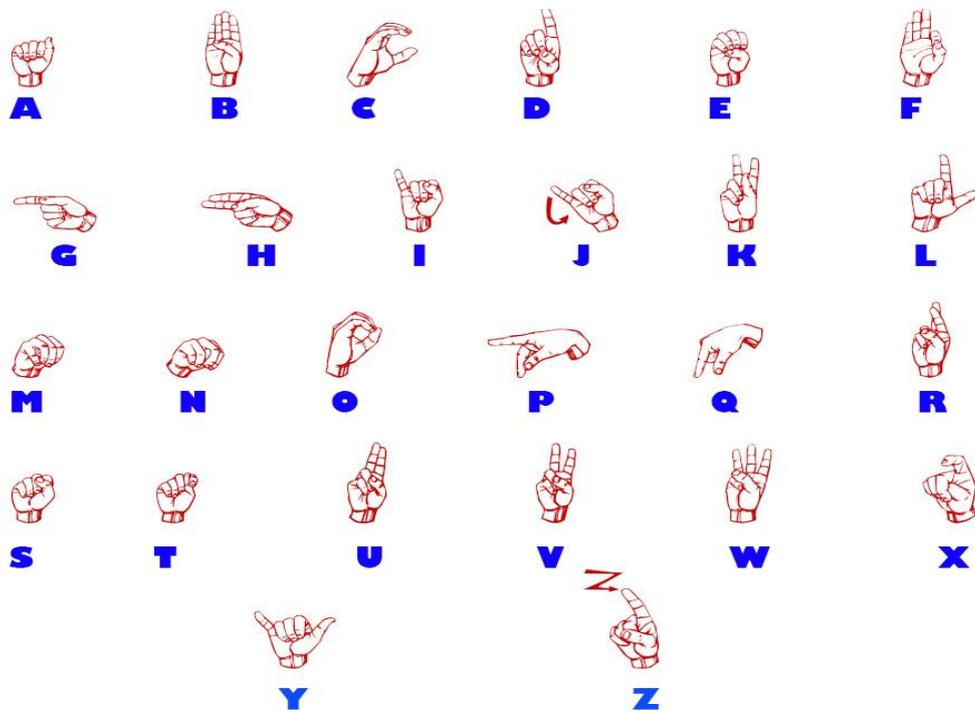
### Teaching alphabet with sign language

When I visited the kindergarten in Ball State, I found the teachers used sign language to teach alphabets. I am curious about what the effect of using sign language to teach alphabet is, so I do some research about it.

According to the research, no matter for normal baby or deaf baby, language appears earlier in the form of sign language than the oral form. Educators, Speech Language Pathologist, and parents also point out that children using sign language are good at language development (Toth, 2009). American Sign Language (ASL) is the most popular sign language in America, English-speaking parts of Canada and some parts in Mexico. ASL is a complete and complicated language, which is regarded as the fourth most popular language in America. Therefore, more and more elementary schools, junior high schools, and university students begin to learn ASL.

The teachers in the kindergarten in Ball State University combine the sign language when they teach alphabets and phonics. For example, they will say /p/ /p/, pig, P P P. They think sign language will be helpful when students learn English, so they combine sign language when they teach alphabet. However, I am curious about why they say the letter

sound first, then the example word, and the letter name last. Since I used to say the letter name first, then the letter sound, and the example word last. Mrs. Marcum, who is one of the homeroom teacher in the kindergarten, told me the reason why they said the letter sound first. It was because they found sometimes students can't figure out which letter is when they hear the letter sound. Therefore, since most students have known the letter names, the teacher think it better to practice saying the letter sound first, then the example word, and letter name last. After practicing it for a period time, Mrs. Marcum found it is good to help students make the connection between the letter sound and letter name.



## **SIGN LANGUAGE ALPHABET NET**

American Sign Language Alphabet

(Retrieved from <http://signlanguagealphabet.net/>)

## **Bring it home: In Bei-Gang Elementary School**

When I came back from the trip, I decided to apply what I learned into my class. I remember when the instructor taught us the Quantum Learning, she mentioned that if students feel the fear, it will interfere their learning. Therefore, if I want to give students some tests, I will just try to tell students, "Let's challenge ourselves to know how much we learn. Therefore, we could know which part we need to give more focus on it." Maybe students will not feel so much pressure and can understand why they need to take the test. Besides, nowadays some children tend to blame their mistakes on others. I can let students know they can be responsible for their learning.

When I visited the schools in Chicago and state of Indiana, I found that many teachers show their teaching goals to the students. When I took the professional training course of SIOP, I understood it is necessary since it will help students know clearly what they need to learn that day. Therefore, now I start to show the objectives of each lesson on the blackboard. I found that it not only helps students to know the goal of the lesson but also helps me design the course more precisely.

Just like the students in the kindergarten in Ball State University, our students also have the problem of making the connection between the letter sound and the letter names. After they get familiar with the letter name, I will try to teach them to say the letter sound first and the letter name last to see if this way also works in my class. Sign language is also the part I would like to try, since students are likely to mix up some letters. Through the sign language, I hope it will help students become more familiar with the shape of the letters and know how to differentiate those letters.

### **Reflection:**

During this trip, I learned a lot of effective approaches to teaching. All the teaching approaches I learned in America may not be completely applied in Taiwan, since each country

has its different learning culture and different educational systems. However, I think if I can get the key point of each teaching approach and integrate it little by little, this trip is rewarding. Finally, I would like to thank all the people who helped us visit America successfully again. I will try my best to make good use of what I learned there.

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