

## *Learning Experiences*

The New York State Education Department has developed a series of resource guides for each of the seven learning standards. An integral component of these guides is learning experiences, submitted by teachers in the field. These learning experiences are rich in content, linked to the standards, and designed to assist students in becoming more independent thinkers.

Learning experiences differ from lesson plans in a few fundamental ways. They are generally projects, focusing on multiple aspects of learning extended over a period of time — weeks rather than days. They are content-based rather than skills-driven. In other words, the purpose of a learning experience is for students to learn more than just specific language skills. The students also gain understanding about topics such as geography, science, or social issues. A variety of learning tools are used, including novels, magazines, the Internet, and personal interviews. Inquiry and discovery are often elements of learning experiences in place of work sheets and exercises. Interestingly, much of the learning that takes place during a well-implemented learning experience is not easily shown in the final product of student work. It is the kind of learning that is infinitely more valuable for a lifelong learner.

The learning experiences and student work samples in this chapter were submitted by native language arts (NLA) and English as a second language (ESL) teachers. They are aligned with the New York State learning standards. The expectations of the teachers in creating these learning experiences include the development of those linguistic and cognitive abilities in all LEP/ELLs that will enable them to achieve the higher expectations of the standards and assessments. As research has demonstrated, those skills and concepts learned in one language serve as a reference point for development of a second language. This is true not only for native language arts instruction in which new concepts are introduced in the first language and then transferred to English, but also in ESL instruction in which the teacher utilizes the students' prior experience to scaffold their knowledge and abilities to complete increasingly complex academic tasks.

The specific sections of the learning experiences which have been published in New York State's resource guides are described on the following page:

### **Key Concepts:**

- ◆ Integrated instruction
- ◆ Learning experiences in the native language
- ◆ Learning experiences in ESL
- ◆ Authentic assessment
- ◆ Conditions of learning
- ◆ Measuring progress through evidence
- ◆ Using performance indicators

*It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.*

Albert Einstein

## Description of Learning Experience

### OUTLINE

<b>Title:</b>	The name of the learning experience
<b>Learning Context:</b>	Describes the purpose of the learning experience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the learning standards and performance indicators from the standards documents on which the learning experience is based;</li><li>• description of the connection to instruction in other curricular areas or of how this experience fits in the school course or curriculum; and</li><li>• what students need to know and/or be able to do to succeed with this learning experience.</li></ul>
<b>Procedure:</b>	Tells about the procedure; describes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• what the students do; and</li><li>• what the teacher does.</li></ul>
<b>Instructional/Environmental Modifications:</b>	Describes the procedures used to accommodate the range of abilities in the classroom, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• instructional modifications made; and</li><li>• physical modifications of the classroom setting.</li></ul>
<b>Materials and Supplies:</b>	Identifies the materials, supplies, and equipment needed to successfully complete the learning experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• for the student; and</li><li>• for the teacher.</li></ul>
<b>Assessment Tools and Techniques:</b>	Describes the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• techniques used to collect evidence of student progress toward meeting the learning standards (e.g., observation, group discussion, higher analytical questioning); and</li><li>• tools used to document student progress (e.g., scoring guides, rating scales, checklists, projects, taped performances).</li></ul>
<b>Time Required:</b>	For each aspect of the learning experience, the amount of time is stated for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• planning;</li><li>• implementation; and</li><li>• assessment.</li></ul>
<b>Student Work:</b>	Samples of student work that reflect the diversity of students participating in the learning experience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• description of the type of student work submitted (e.g., written, video, audio, graphics, and photos); and</li><li>• description of the evidence in the student work that supports the assessment of student performance.</li></ul>
<b>Reflection:</b>	Teacher's comment on the learning experience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how it might better meet the needs of ALL learners;</li><li>• how it might better support student progress toward the attainment of the learning standards;</li><li>• how to expand the connections to other learning standards; and</li><li>• how it reflects current scholarship in the field and "best" classroom practice.</li></ul>

*The Teaching of Language Arts to Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners: A Resource Guide for All Teachers* is one of a series of resource guides designed to serve as companion documents to the NYS learning standards. The sample learning experiences offered in this chapter are helpful examples of possible ways in which the NYS learning standards may be integrated into NLA and ESL classrooms. It is hoped that teachers and administrators will view these samples as a potential catalyst to give students enhanced opportunities to learn and achieve.

The following chart outlines the learning experiences presented in this chapter:

<b>Overview of Learning Experiences</b>			
<b>Title</b>	<b>ELA Standard(s)</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Language of Instruction</b>
Leaving Home	ELA 2 & 4	Elementary	Russian
<i>Tezen</i> : A Haitian Folktale	ELA 2 & 4	Intermediate	Haitian Creole
Exploring Racial Identity	ELA 2	Commencement	Spanish
Expressing Our Thoughts Through Poetry	ELA 2 & 4	Commencement	Chinese
The Iditarod — A 1,000-Mile Race	ELA 1 & 3	Elementary	English
Coming to America	ELA 1 & 4	Elementary	English
Learning About Scuba Diving	ELA 1 & 4	Intermediate	English
ESL Integrated Literature Unit	ELA 1 & 2	Commencement	English

# Leaving Home

Native Language Arts: Russian

ELEMENTARY

Standards and Performance Indicators

## LEARNING CONTEXT

In this learning experience, a group of fourth-grade bilingual Russian students learned and shared their families' experiences and reasons for leaving their country.

They published a group-authored book about immigration, based on questions and drawings stimulated by reading many nonfiction and fiction books, maps, and magazines related to their culture, with funding obtained through ESEA Title VII.

Students selected their own topics and acted as editors in choosing a cover, title, and sequence to their stories. All stories in the native language were translated into English by other students, who were more proficient in English.

The students' book became a part of the school library for other students to borrow.

As a related follow-up project, students could write and perform their own play about immigration, using national costumes, songs, and other artifacts. Another activity might be to prepare a bilingual travel guide to share with classmates.

## Teachers' Reflection:

*"This project helped the students accept and feel enthusiastic about their cultural differences. The feelings the children revealed in their book through their writing and illustrations stimulated feelings of acceptance, pride, and sharing with other children and their parents. Their writing opened up new forms of appreciation and communication within many families. In addition, the children shared their 'worlds' to raise the awareness levels of the other students and members of our school community."*

## ELA 2:

### Listen to and read:

- ◆ a variety of different genres, including picture books; poems; and works of fiction and nonfiction intended for young readers;
- ◆ aloud accurately and fluently, using phonics and context cues to determine pronunciation and meaning.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ use resources such as personal experiences and themes from other texts and performances to stimulate own writing;
- ◆ learn and use the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading).

## ELA 4:

### Listen to and read:

- ◆ to establish, maintain, and enhance personal relationships in class and group discussions.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ develop a personal "voice" that enables the reader to get to know the writer.

### Submitted by:

**Zora Borsky**, Title VII Resource Specialist  
**Mary Paine**, Russian Language Arts Teacher  
Community School District 28, P.S. 175  
Rego Park, NY

## PROCEDURE

### TEACHER ACTIVITIES

- During International Week, the teacher spent some time discussing her own reasons for leaving Russia, and elicited from the students their reasons for leaving. This brainstorming led to establishing their prior knowledge and experience, while modeling for the students.
- The teacher provided a large number of books about various republics in the former Soviet Union, along with some of her personal artifacts.
- The teacher provided maps of the former Soviet Union to allow the children to locate their homelands.
- Using the maps and books, the teacher encouraged the students to express their thoughts and feelings in discussions.
- Following the discussions, the students were asked to draw pictures of specific memories they held about their immigration experiences.
- The teacher asked the students to complete a timeline to help them organize the sequence of events in their stories.
- The teacher had the students use the writing process to draft, revise, and edit their stories.
- The teacher acted as a facilitator in helping the students put their book into published form.
- The teacher shared the class book with the parents of the students during parent-teacher conferences; the students were also encouraged to take the book home to read with their families.
- The teacher arranged to have the class book prominently displayed in the school's library.

### INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- ✓ Students worked in pairs and small groups, with more proficient students helping less proficient students.
- ✓ Students worked in cooperative groups in which the students chose roles that would facilitate the various needs for the book's publication.

### STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- \* The students brainstormed with the teacher about various aspects of their experiences in emigrating from Russia to the United States.
- \* The students listened to the teacher as she presented the books about the various republics in the former Soviet Union.
- \* The students located their homelands on the map provided by the teacher, and discussed what they remembered about living there.
- \* During whole group discussions, the students listened and spoke about their feelings and experiences in leaving home.
- \* The students drew pictures of important aspects of their immigration experiences.
- \* The students completed timelines based on the sequence of events they experienced in leaving Russia.
- \* The students used the writing process in completing their pages in the class book about leaving home.
- \* Working in pairs, the students who were more proficient in English helped the other students to translate their stories from Russian into English.
- \* The students, together with the teacher, assembled the class book.
- \* The students read their individual stories to the rest of the class.
- \* The students took the book home to share with their families.



### MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

- Crayons, pens, pencils
- Construction paper
- Cardboard for book covers
- Glue, adhesive tape, scissors
- Russian/English dictionaries
- *Then and Now*, a series of books about the republics of the former Soviet Union, published by Lerner Publications Company
- *Coming to America: The Kids Book about Immigration*, published by Waterfront Books



## TIME REQUIRED

- **Planning:** One week to get the materials/supplies and to decide on the sequencing of activities.
- **Implementation:** Two to three weeks, depending on the reading proficiency levels of the students.
- **Assessment:** Ongoing throughout the development and implementation of the learning experiences.



## ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

- Teacher directly observed students during all activities related to the learning experiences, and made personal notes in order to facilitate the students' progress.
- Teacher held one-on-one student conferences to review the students' written drafts, and to discuss ways to improve their ability to express their thoughts and emotions in words.
- Teacher used students' oral presentations to determine their progress.
- Teacher observed the students to assess their ability to work in groups, in terms of social interaction.

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**Shown here are the newcomer student's original illustration and the first draft of the story in Russian.**



How did your family move? Did you have time to pack up all your things?

У нас не было никакого времени,  
 мы очень торопились.  
 Потому что мамину работу папаша и его  
 выгнали с этой работы.  
 Вот почему мы быстро уехали.  
 Папа и Мама боялись <sup>что</sup> ами  
 нас не смогут прокормить.  
 Мама не работала а Папину  
 работу хотела мамаша.  
 Я забывала как я там буду учиться  
 и я очень плакала я забывала <sup>собрать</sup> на  
 завтрак и очень много плакала.  
 Я не хотела оставить большой дом  
 Потому что я там выросла.  
 И я там играю со своими  
 друзьями все свои десять лет.  
 Все плакала в моей душе  
 бутадя кошки спрыгнут. И в горле комочек.  
 И моя учительница по рисованию  
 тоже очень плакала. А почему потому  
 она жила рядом со мной и она  
 знала меня что я люблю и что  
 я люблю и какой у меня характер

we did not have time to pack up.  
 we were in a hurry.  
 Because my father was loosing his job,  
 That's why we left so fast. My father and mother were  
 scared ~~they will~~ not be able to feed us. They destroyed  
 my father's work and my mom didn't have a job.  
 I was worried. I locked my room and I cried.  
 I didn't want to leave my big house because  
 I grow up there. And I there playing with my  
 friends all my ten years. My soul was crying.  
 when my art teacher found out that I was living  
 she was crying too. she was my neighbor and she  
 knew me very well she knew what I liked to do,  
 she knew my habits, and my personality.

.....  
**Shown to the left is the first draft of an English translation completed by another Russian-speaking student more proficient in English.**

# Tezen: A Haitian Folktale

INTERMEDIATE

Native Language Arts: Haitian Creole

## LEARNING CONTEXT

The Haitian folktale, *Tezen (Teen)*, is about a young girl's friendship with a fish. The fish allows her to get cool, clear, sweet water from the spring. The girl's father becomes aware of this special friendship, is upset by it, and decides to end it. The story focuses on this friendly, pure relationship, which rendered the girl's father concerned and her brother jealous. The girl is eventually driven away from her family into the fins of her friend, Tezen, who also happens to be king of the waters. This is an excellent story for adolescent children whose parents are uncomfortable with a new culture and environment, and are prevented from interacting socially with others as a result of their own prejudices. Metaphorically, the ending of this story tells how we sometimes lose those we love and overprotect.

The learning experience brought about a great sense of pride in these sixth-grade Haitian Creole-speaking students, whose native language proficiency spanned a wide range of abilities (the group included students with a special education classification). After the story was read in class, the students had to do research by asking family members about the folktale. The students used their native language to learn about literary devices such as metaphor and simile, as well as to discuss the concepts of prejudice and cultural differences and similarities in our world.

### Teacher's Reflection:

*"The students were elated and totally committed to this project. They became more knowledgeable about the Haitian culture as they interacted with family members, who sought the opportunity to tell more stories and to engage them in the morality embedded in our stories. The link that the story brought between family members was priceless. The students' play was also spectacular. Throughout the process their growth in writing, character analysis, vocabulary and script writing was continuous and evident. The students discovered their talents as actors, artists and playwrights. They beamed with pride."*

Standards and Performance Indicators

## ELA Standard 2:

### Listen to and read:

- ◆ imaginative texts and performances, such as folktales;
- ◆ to compare characters in literature to their own lives.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ connect a personal response to literature to prior experience or knowledge;
- ◆ use resources such as personal experience and themes from other texts and performances to plan and create imaginative text

## ELA Standard 4:

### Listen and read to:

- ◆ share experiences to build a relationship with peers or adults.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ use audible voice and pacing appropriate to content and audience.

### Submitted by:

**MarieJosé Bernard**, Haitian Creole Bilingual Teacher  
Community School District 17, P.S. 22  
Brooklyn, NY

## PROCEDURE

### TEACHER ACTIVITIES

- The teacher initiated a discussion about friendship, and then, together with the students, made a concept map.
- The teacher used prompts from the story to stimulate predictions from the students.
- The teacher read the story aloud to the class.
- The teacher discussed the story with the students, using multilevel questioning involving inference, opinion, and analysis.
- The teacher elicited discussion about the relationships among the members of the girl's family.
- The teacher generated a discussion of how language, cultural awareness, and cultural relevance affect the story.
- The teacher helped the students to summarize what they learned from the story.
- The teacher selected a group of vocabulary words for the students to use in their written reactions.
- The teacher assigned a writing task in which the students were asked to provide a review or personal reaction to the story, using the new vocabulary.
- The teacher created small groups of six students to work on writing a script that they would act out.
- The teacher guided and facilitated the development of the scripts through the students' writing process.
- The teacher videotaped the performances.

### INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- ✓ Students were grouped to complement their abilities.
- ✓ They had visual aids such as cue cards; recordings of music and other props were also made available.
- ✓ Recording equipment was used to facilitate review of student work as it was discussed.
- ✓ Environmental modifications were made as needed for the performances.

### STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- \* The students brainstormed with the teacher about the many forms of friendship.
- \* The students made predictions about the story, using their experiences and prior knowledge.
- \* The students listened to the story and responded to the teacher's questions.
- \* The students participated in a discussion of family relationships and cultural traits and patterns.
- \* The students discussed important linguistic and cultural variations among groups who share the same language.
- \* The students wrote a personal response or review of the story, incorporating the new vocabulary learned.
- \* The students worked in small groups of six to create a script of a dramatic performance based on the text of the story and on related personal experiences.
- \* The students incorporated stage directions in their scripts and music and props in their performances.
- \* The students subsequently revised their work in order to clarify it or make it more effective in communicating the message or thought.
- \* The students performed their plays, using appropriate body language, speech, and intonation to deliver their lines.
- \* The students assisted in videotaping their performances.



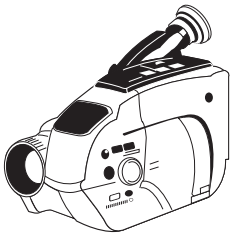
.....  
*The Republic of Haiti*





## MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

- Tape recorder
- TV and VCR
- Camcorder
- Blank audiocassettes/videocassettes
- Scanner
- Notebooks, pencils, etc.
- Computer
- Poster board
- Other supplies as needed for the project presentation
- Books: *Tezen*, by Mimi Barthelmi, and *The Magic Orange Tree: Bouki Dances Kokiyoko*, by Dianne Wolkstein



## ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The teacher assesses the work of the students on an ongoing basis throughout the learning experience on a number of dimensions:

- direct observation of the students;
- review of students' work;
- fluency in reading, participation in group discussions, and conferencing with students; and
- ability to transform the story into a script for performance.



## TIME REQUIRED

- **Planning:** Eight to 15 hours
- **Implementation:** Six to eight weeks
- **Assessment:** Ongoing throughout implementation of the learning experience

.....  
***This is a portion of the final published version of a student's written reaction to the story, Tezen:***

"Karakètè Lovena a se te yon bon timoun, li pat fè malelve ak papa l ak bèlmè. Lè bèlmè l rele pou l al chèche dlo li pa di anyen li fè sa yo mande l la. Menm si manman Lovena pa la avè l ou wè li gen bon mès. Gen pati lan istwa ki fè m panse ak lavi pa m. Manman m ak papa m ap viv ann Ayiti, se yon gran sè m k ap leve m isit lan Nou Yok. Mwen pa fè malelve avèk li, mwen koute l epitou mwen konnen lè li korije m, se paske li pa vle anyen rive m. Mwen te renmen lè Lovena te konn al bò dlo a pou l chante pou Tezen vini sou alo a. Pafwa lè ké m pa kontan mwen chita sou kabann mwen, mwen chante diferan chante tou. Istwa sa a se yon istwa ki ka aprann moun anpil bagay. Li fè m panse a jan yo fè timoun piti fè ann Ayiti."

.....  
***Translation of the student's work (by her teacher):***

"Lovena, the character in the story, was a well-mannered child. She did not disrespect her stepmother and father. Whenever her stepmother asked her to go fetch water, she never complained and did as she was told. Even though Lovena's mother was not around, one can tell that she has good manners. There were parts in the story which reminded me of my life. My mother and my father are both living in Haiti, while I live here in New York with my older sister. I do not misbehave nor do I disrespect her. I listen and obey her. I know that when she corrects me it is because she does not want anything bad to happen to me. That is why I loved the part in the story when Lovena would go by the river to sing to the fish and Tezen would swim above the water to greet her. At times when I am sad, I would sit on my bed and sing, too; sometimes, I do not sing the same song, I would sing a different song. This story has many messages and can teach a great deal. It had me thinking about children and the work they have to do in Haiti."

.....  
 The following is from the first draft of the student's  
 script of the play:

.....  
 Delapayan  
 Laena. Lovena meq. Rad  
 chire. Toujou gen ke kontan.  
 Ap viv ak papa. Bel-me le ti frèl.  
 Benmen ak you ti pwason.  
 Po mawon.  
 Kaseyis. Kaseyis gwo. Rad  
 pwop. Toujou fache. Jalou.  
 Juda. Po nwa  
 Bel-mè. Marye ak you nèg.  
 Gen you pitit gason.  
 Gen lajan. Gen de fwa li  
 kontan. Po nwa  
 Papa. Gen de pitit. Marye ak  
 you dam. Medyan. Benmen bat.  
 Po nwa.  
 Tezen. You ti pwason.  
 Benmen ak you tifi.  
 Po mawon.

.....  
 Translation of student's character  
 descriptions for script:

**Lovena:** Lovena is skinny, she lives with her father, her stepmother and her little brother. In love with a little fish. Brown complexion.

**Kaseyis:** Kaseyis is fat. His clothes are clean. He is always angry, jealous, nosy. Dark complexion.

**Bel-mè:** Married. Has a male child. He is rich. At times he is happy. Dark complexion.

**Papa:** Has two children. Married to a woman. Mean. Loves to hit. Dark complexion.

**Tezen:** A little fish. Loves a young girl. Brown skin.



# Exploring Racial Identity

COMMENCEMENT

Native Language Arts: Spanish

## LEARNING CONTEXT

In creating this learning experience, the teacher carefully and deliberately used the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English as a guide for the tasks involved. An intrinsic part of the experience called upon the cultural background and experiences of Latin American students in his high school Spanish IV class.

Having been part of a team of NLA, ESL, and ELA teachers in the BESARS program, the teacher was aware that Task III required concepts and abilities which could be developed in the students' native language of Spanish. Afterward, these concepts and abilities could be transferred during the students' acquisition of English.

The thoughtful and thorough planning that is evident in this learning experience demonstrates how using native language instruction develops linguistic and cognitive proficiencies across languages and cultures. The students' insightful written responses were ample evidence of the success of this learning experience.

## Teacher's Reflection:

*“Through this learning experience in their native language, students familiarized themselves with the content and format of an important portion of the English Regents examination that they will be required to pass in order to graduate. This particular task requires higher-order thinking skills and comparative analysis of literature from two different genres. Students were enthused about the activity and appreciated the pieces of literature as they related to their experiences and convictions.”*

Standards and Performance Indicators

## ELA Standard 2:

### Listen to and read:

- ◆ literary works that represent a range of social, historical, and cultural perspectives;
- ◆ works with a common theme and compare the treatment of that theme by different authors;
- ◆ to interpret multiple levels of meaning and subtleties in text.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ compare and contrast the treatment of literary elements in different genres and by more than one author;
- ◆ express judgments and support them through references to the text, using direct quotations and paraphrase;
- ◆ use resources such as personal experience, knowledge from other content areas, and independent reading to create imaginative, interpretive, and responsive texts.

### Submitted by:

**David Terry**, Spanish Language Arts Teacher  
Port Chester High School  
Port Chester, NY



## PROCEDURE

### TEACHER ACTIVITIES

- As a follow-up to a unit on poetry, two pieces of text from different genres were selected as a parallel to Task III of the English Regents.
- Teacher researched several topics of interest to the students.
- Teacher selected literary works based on students' experiences and their schemata of common themes in literature.
- Teacher created multiple choice questions on the readings, explaining to the students that these questions would be helpful in developing ideas for the essay.
- Teacher reproduced the test-taking environment of the English Regents examination, administering it over the course of three 40-minute periods.
- Teacher adapted the NYS ELA Regents rubrics to conform to his regular grading scale and criteria.

### INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- ✓ Students worked independently as though they were taking a Regents examination.
- ✓ Students were not allowed to take the test out of the classroom. Tests were collected after each period and given back on the following day.

### STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- \* Students needed to read carefully and to analyze the pieces of literature within the first period of testing, realizing that they might not understand all of the vocabulary.
- \* Students drew upon their prior exposure to these literary genres.
- \* Students used contextual clues and prior experience to appreciate the works more fully.
- \* Students completed the multiple choice questions.
- \* Students composed essays in which they were instructed to adhere to the conventions of formal written Spanish.



### MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

- Copy of the essay, "Mi raza," by José Martí
- Copy of the poem, "La muralla," by Nicolás Guillén
- Teacher-created multiple choice questions about the two readings
- Lined paper
- Pencils and pens





## TIME REQUIRED

- **Planning:** Two to three days to decide on the literary texts and to create the multiple choice questions.
- **Implementation:** Three class periods.
- **Assessment:** Two to three days to evaluate students' essays based on NYS English Regents rubrics and to convert the scores to teacher's regular grading scale.



## ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

- Testing conditions for the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English were reproduced to the closest degree possible, both in terms of formality and time allowed.
- Assessment was based both on the multiple choice questions and on the six-point rubric scale used for the English Regents exam.

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**Examples of teacher-created multiple choice questions:**

**Las preguntas 1-7 se refieren al poema “La muralla”**  
**Questions 1-7 refer to the poem, “The Rampart”**

1. ¿Cuál es la función de la muralla en el poema?  
*What is the function of the rampart in the poem?*
  - a) Dividir la playa y el monte  
*To divide the beach and the mountain*
  - b) Separar a los militares de los civiles  
*To separate the military and civilians*
  - c) Excluir a ciertos animales  
*To exclude certain animals*
  - d) Dejar pasar lo bueno solamente  
*To let only the good pass*
2. El verso, “Tun, tun!” constituye un ejemplo de  
*The verse, “Tun, tun!” constitutes an example of*
  - a) metáfora  
*metaphor*
  - b) onomatopeya  
*onomatopoeia*
  - c) símil  
*simile*
  - d) comparación  
*comparison*

**Las preguntas 9-14 se refieren al ensayo “Mi raza”**  
**Questions 9-14 refer to the essay, “My Race”**

9. ¿Qué podría significar la palabra “ventura” en esta lectura?  
*What could the word “fortune” mean in this reading?*
  - a) discordia  
*discord*
  - b) dicha  
*happiness*
  - c) superioridad racial  
*racial superiority*
  - d) casualidad  
*chance*
10. El autor señala que...  
*The author indicates that...*
  - a) siempre habrá racistas en su patria  
*there will always be racists in his homeland*
  - b) hoy día todavía existen muchos racistas  
*there are still many racists today*
  - c) tanto los blancos como los negros son ignorantes  
*both whites and blacks are ignorant*
  - d) el racista blanco tiene poco en común con el racista negro  
*the white racist has little in common with the black racist*

.....  
**This is one student's written response (with teacher's comments) to the following question:**

¿Qué visión o perspectiva tienen estos dos autores acerca de la humanidad con respecto a la raza?  
 ¿Cómo se asemejan en sus puntos de vista?

*What vision or perspective do these two authors have about humanity with respect to race? How do they resemble each other in their point of view?*

Los autores de los cuentos "Mi raza" y "La muralla" se inclinan a un mismo tema. El tema que estos dos autores se refieren es el racismo. El autor del cuento "La Muralla" tiene <sup>el mismo</sup> modo de pensar con el autor de "Mi raza" por que ellos dos piensan que el racismo es un fenómeno que no debe existir de ninguna manera, ni en ninguna parte del mundo. Estos dos autores piensan que el hombre tiene que estar siempre unido para triunfar en la vida.

En el poema "La Muralla" el autor dice "Para hacer esta muralla traiganme todas las manos". Cuando el autor dice esta frase, el se refiere a que vengan todos a colaborar contra los desprecios, el racismo, los malos tratos y todo lo malo sin importarnos el color de nuestra piel, el tamaño, edad, y, sexo. El auto se refiere a que todos deben de estar siempre unidos como hermanos, o mejor como una sola familia. Todo esto debe ser para que no exista ninguna clase de discriminación entre la misma gente.

En el cuento "Mi raza" el autor dice que el blanco por el color de su piel se cree superior a la otra <sup>(de) gente</sup>, y el negro por haber sufrido tanto en <sup>el tiempo</sup> esclavitud ahora piensa que tiene que ser siempre agresivo y resentido. Todos estos problemas crean la desigualdad de las razas, y la misma gente. Después de todo estos dos autores piensan que nosotros mismos somos los causantes de la discriminación que existe en el mundo hoy en día.

El autor Jose Martí nombra en su obra que "Los hombres verdaderos, negros o blancos, se tratarán con lealtad y ternura, por el gusto del merito y el orgullo de todo lo que honre la tierra!" En esta frase el autor quiere decir que algun día talvez cuando por fin la gente haya razonado todos vamos a llevarnos bien como gente consciente de paz y amor, sin ninguna clase de conflictos y guerras entre sí.

Estos dos autores en sus obras tratan de hacer a la gente <sup>bien</sup> recapacitar acerca de los problemas que causan el racismo, y las consecuencias que trae el ser racista.

*Se simboliza la muralla*

*No necesariamente*

.....  
**Translation of the student's essay with teacher's comments:**

The authors of the works, "My Race" and "The Rampart" have the same slant on a similar theme. The theme these two authors are referring to is racism. The author of the poem, "The Rampart," thinks along almost the same lines as the author of "My Race" because the two of them think that racism is a phenomenon that should not exist in any manner, not in any part of the world. These two authors think that men must be united in order to succeed in life.

In the poem, "The Rampart," the author says "To create this rampart, bring me every hand." When the author wrote this phrase, he meant that everyone needs to collaborate against contempt, racism, abuse and all misdeeds without noticing the color of our skin, size, age and gender.

*What does "The Rampart" symbolize?*

The author means that every one should always be united as brothers, or even better like one whole family. All of this should come to be so that no kind of discrimination exists between the same people.

In the story, "My Race," the author states that whites, through the color of their skin believe that they are superior to other people, and that black people for having suffered so much in the time of slavery, now he thinks that he always must be aggressive and resentful. All of these problems create the inequality of the races, and of the same people. After all, both of these authors think that we ourselves are the cause of the discrimination that exists in the world today. The author José Martí states in his work that "Real men, black and white, treat each other with loyalty and tenderness, out of a feeling of merit and pride in all that honors the earth." In this phrase the author wishes to say that perhaps one day, when at last people become reasonable, we will all become a people conscious of peace and love, without any type of conflict or wars among us.

*Not necessarily*

*Good*

In their works, these two authors attempt to make the people rethink the problems which cause racism, and the consequences that are brought on by being racist.

# Expressing Our Thoughts Through Poetry

Native Language Arts: Chinese

## LEARNING CONTEXT

This series of lessons provided extraordinary opportunities for high school students to explore the world of poetry.

The students learned how to brainstorm and generate a theme for a poem. They needed to search for details in support of the theme. They had to choose the best vocabulary to express their innermost feelings. In addition, they had to apply literary concepts and writing techniques in developing their poems.

Students of all language ability levels in Chinese were involved in this enjoyable and productive learning experience. The group writing activity served as an initial step for the students to experience the writing process. The class evaluation and revision of the poem empowered them with the critical thinking skills involved in creative writing. Afterwards, a number of the students' original poems were published in our high school's Chinese newsletter.

## Teacher's Reflection:

*“Although the lessons and activities in the learning experience were conducted in Chinese, the literary knowledge and writing techniques that the students acquired through the process will apply equally to English and other languages as well. With the prior knowledge on how to achieve an effectively written piece, these bilingual Chinese students will naturally transfer their knowledge and skills in producing creative texts in English. The interaction between the teacher, students, and peers contributed to an unforgettable learning experience.”*

COMMENCEMENT

Standards and Performance Indicators

## ELA Standard 2:

### Listen to and read:

- ◆ a range of literary elements, and use these elements to interpret the work;
- ◆ to distinguish between different forms of poetry, and recognize how the author uses poetic form to convey message or intent.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ create original pieces in a variety of literary forms, correctly using the conventions of the genre and using structure and vocabulary to achieve the effect.

## ELA Standard 4:

### Listen and read to:

- ◆ share experiences to build a relationship with a peer or adult by discussing reactions to texts.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ share the process of writing with peers and adults.

### Submitted by:

**Li Bing Wu**, Chinese Language Arts Teacher  
New York City Board of Education  
Murry Bergtraum High School  
New York, NY

## PROCEDURE

To develop an appreciation of the genre, the students have already spent one week studying selected readings of modern Chinese poetry with the teacher's guided questions, and another week reading at least five poems of their own interest. They have made comments on these poems.

## TEACHER ACTIVITIES

- Teacher asked guiding questions to elicit the students' prior knowledge.
- Teacher led class discussion on generating a theme for a poem, e.g., love, nature, friendship, harmony, etc.
- Teacher facilitated a brainstorming session on the form their poem will take.
- Teacher encouraged students to use the literary elements they have learned to express their thoughts. Literary techniques included personification, simile, metaphor, exaggeration, parallelism, satire/irony, etc. Use of effective, appropriate diction was also recommended.
- Teacher assigned students to cooperative groups and circulated as they completed their tasks.
- Teacher acted as a facilitator throughout the revision process.



*"The climax of this reading/writing process was when students were invited by other Chinese classes to recite their poems and talk about the experience."*

## INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- ✓ Groups were set up to accommodate the range of abilities in the classroom.
- ✓ Students were paired to evaluate the writing.
- ✓ Individuals were encouraged to write their reflections on the whole process.
- ✓ Whole class was involved in modifying and polishing the poem.
- ✓ Chairs were arranged in groups of four for cooperative group work; chairs formed a circle for whole class discussions.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- \* Students decided to write a group poem on the theme, "spring."
- \* Students worked cooperatively in groups of four, with each member of the group given the role of either monitor, recorder, timekeeper, or reporter.
- \* Each of the six groups took responsibility for one aspect of spring: changes from winter to spring; appearance of mountains and water; appearance of trees and flowers; activities of animals; activities of people; and summary lines which provided a sense of closure. Their work was written in marker on a large piece of construction paper to share with the entire class afterwards.
- \* Each group shared its stanza of the poem with the teacher and class for review. Together they put the stanzas in a sequential order and modified and polished the poem.
- \* Students read final version of the poem chorally, and copied it into their notebooks.
- \* Students were asked to take the poem home, revise it and/or polish it further, and write a short critique of it.
- \* Students wrote reflections of their experience in creating the poem.
- \* Students were encouraged to write a poem based on their personal experience, using the techniques learned in class.
- \* Students compiled their individual and class poems into a collection, translated them, and published them in a bilingual poetry book.



## MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

- Pictures of springtime scenes to serve as motivational tools
- Four flash cards to indicate cooperative group roles: monitor, timekeeper, recorder, and reporter
- Markers and pieces of construction paper for the students
- Colored chalks to make corrections



.....  
*This is the poem produced by the cooperative group work of Ms. Wu's class:*

## 我們的春天

——FC8-02 集體創作



春天來了，  
惠風驅走了寒冷，  
喚醒了沉睡中的萬物，  
一切都隨著春風躍動起來。

春天來了，  
山巒間起伏著一片綠意，  
溪流忘情地唱著歡歌，  
奔向大海，擁抱久別的朋友。

春天來了，  
碧綠的草木暢茂了，  
鮮艷的百花盛開了，  
帶來了一片生機。

春天來了，  
蝶兒們破蛹而出，  
鳥鳴，蛙叫，和著孩童的笑聲，  
演奏著春天的第一樂章。

春天來了，  
春風吹醒了大地，吹醒了田野，  
辛勤的農人開始忙碌於田間，  
插下新種子，洒下新希望。

我們熱愛春天，  
生機勃勃的氣息。  
我們熱愛春天，  
千嬌百媚的姿容，  
一個充滿了希望的春天。

## The Spring

(Written and translated by the Class of FC8-02  
Murry Bergtraum High School, NYC)

Spring has come,  
The pleasant wind blows away the cold,  
It wakes up the earth from sleep,  
And all begins to stir.

Spring has come,  
A green carpet stretches across the mountains,  
Streams sing happily and flow towards the sea,  
To embrace the friends with whom they have long parted.

Spring has come,  
Green grass and woods become greener,  
Beautiful flowers of all colors fully bloom.  
They bring life back to the earth.

Spring has come,  
Butterflies burst out from their cocoons.  
Birds chirping and frogs croaking,  
Together with children laughing,  
Compose the first symphony of spring.

Spring has come,  
The sun brings warmth to the earth.  
Diligent farmers start busy in the fields,  
Sowing new seeds and spreading new hope.

We love spring,  
Its vigorous tones.  
We love spring, its colorful looks,  
A season full of hope!



## TIME REQUIRED

- As presented here, this series of lessons took five instructional periods to complete.
- Students spent three instructional periods to create, revise, and evaluate the poem in the classroom setting.
- The teacher used one period to conduct the lesson, providing necessary information on how to write an effective poem.
- It could take more than one period for students to present their products in class.



## ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

- Students wrote reflections of their experiences in creating the poem.
- Students wrote comments and critiques on the poem they have composed.
- Students recited the poem to the class and other Chinese classes as well.
- Students produced and critiqued a poem of their own.

# The Iditarod — A 1,000-Mile Race

**Proficiency Level:** Low-Intermediate ESL

## LEARNING CONTEXT

This unit can be adapted for use with elementary school students in grades 1-5, at beginning through advanced proficiency levels of ESL.

Sometime prior to the annual Iditarod Sled Dog Race in March, the teacher initiates a discussion about the state of Alaska as a geographic entity in relation to the lower 48 states. Map study of the state will provide background for understanding the physical setting, the settlement of peoples and their customs, the wildlife indigenous to the state, and the historical context of the annual Iditarod Sled Dog Race.

The teacher provides a variety of books, maps, magazine and newspaper articles, videos, posters, and realia from previous races and information about the current race.

The teacher may also invite a musher (dog racer) and his/her dog to class.

## Teacher's Reflection:

*"This project was successful because it was multidisciplinary, the learning standards were addressed on numerous levels, and the project held a high interest level for the students. They were actively engaged in the learning process. The project fostered participation from all levels of students in discussions, team projects, and in individual research and reports."*

ELEMENTARY

Standards and Performance Indicators

## ELA Standard 1:

### Listen and read to:

- ◆ acquire information and/or understand procedures;
- ◆ locate and use library media resources, with assistance, to acquire information;
- ◆ compare and contrast information on one topic from two different resources.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ share data, facts, and ideas;
- ◆ take notes to record data, facts, and ideas;
- ◆ state a main idea and support it with facts and details.

## ELA Standard 3:

### Listen and read to:

- ◆ distinguish between information in media texts and fictional material.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ use personal experience and knowledge to analyze and evaluate new ideas;
- ◆ predict, explain, or show relationships between information and events.

### Submitted by:

**Rochelle S. Richter**, ESL Teacher  
Rush-Henrietta School District  
Fyle School  
Rochester, NY

## PROCEDURE

### TEACHER ACTIVITIES

- Provided tools for the learning experience such as books, articles, videos, and maps, and computer expertise to extract information from the Internet site.
- Displayed enthusiasm for the project.
- Served as a resource for geography, history, English language arts, and biology related to the project.



### MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

#### BOOKS

- Bridwell, John. Clifford book series.  
Chang, Cindy (Adapted). *Balto*.  
Cleary, Beverly. Ribsby book series.  
Flack, Marjorie. Angus book series.  
Gardiner, John. *Stone Fox*.  
Gill, Shelley. *Alaska's Three Bears*.  
Gill, Shelley. *Kiana's Iditarod*.  
Herriot, James. *Market Square Dog*.  
Jones, Tim. *Dog Heroes*.  
Kreeger, Charlene. *Alaska ABC Book*.  
Livingston, M.C. *Dog Poems*.  
O'Dell, Scott. *Black Star, Bright Dawn*.  
Paulsen, Gary. *Dogsong*.  
Ribbles, Libby. *Danger: The Dog Yard Cat*.  
Rylant, Cynthia. Henry and Mudge book series.  
White, Ed and Freedman, Donna. *Foxy's Tale*.  
Zion, Gene. Harry book series.

#### INTERNET ADDRESSES

- Web site: <http://www.alaska.alaskan.com/~iditarod/>  
E-mail: [iditarod@iditarod.org](mailto:iditarod@iditarod.org)

#### VIDEOS

- "Beyond Courage: The Dogs of the Iditarod"  
"The Iditarod XXIV 1996: The Alaskan Celebration"  
"Alaska's Three Bears"

#### OTHER MATERIALS

- Iditarod Classroom Information Packet  
Iditarod Trail Committee, Inc.  
P.O. Box 870800  
Wasilla, Alaska 99687-0800
- AKC Public Education Department  
51 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10010  
Attn: Kids' Corner
- Detailed map of Alaska with current year's route outlined.
- Illustration of a dog sled with instructions on how to create one.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- \* Read fiction and nonfiction books about Alaska — particularly about training for the Iditarod.
- \* Logged on to the Iditarod Web site daily for updates on conditions of the mushers, dogs, and weather.
- \* Acquired information from the Internet site such as biographies of mushers, local Alaskan history, and geography.
- \* Made predictions, analyzed information, and evaluated performances and performance times.
- \* Wrote descriptive journal entries, dog stories, and poems.



### INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- ✓ This unit has been done with several small ESL groups of varying language levels in grades 1-5.
- ✓ Modifications were made in the level of materials (newspaper articles, videos, etc.) used.
- ✓ Accommodations were made in requirements for writing, math skills, and information gathered from the Internet.
- ✓ Modifications were made in the teacher's expectations of the group discussions and the students' analytical and critical thinking skills. Expectations depended on the grade level and proficiency levels of the students.



## TIME REQUIRED

The project lasted approximately two to three weeks, depending on the duration of the race.

- **Planning Stage:** Two to three days prior to race
- **Implementation Stage:** Ten days for the race
- **Assessment Stage:** Takes place during race and for two to three days afterwards



## ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

- For the duration of the race, the students followed the trail on the map and they logged on to the Internet site to get information, which was shared with the group and analyzed on a daily basis.
- Math skills were used to calculate distances from checkpoint to checkpoint, distances between racers, and time differentials.
- Students predicted outcomes depending on the weather conditions, the latest information about the condition of the dogs on each team, and wildlife near the trail.
- Students used group discussion, analytical and critical thinking skills, journal writing, and observations. Students also produced a final project which entailed reading, writing, illustrating, and/or photographing.



.....  
*Example of student's work with teacher's editorial comments*

Balto  
Balto is a husky dog.  
Balto is a hero of the dogs.  
We have a statue of Balto in N.Y.C.  
Balto == lived in Alaska.  
Balto became a hero by moving  
medicine  
the medicine to save the children  
I read a book about Balto with  
my class. Balto is a brave and  
Smart dog.



# Coming to America

ELEMENTARY

Proficiency Level: Beginning ESL

## LEARNING CONTEXT

In this learning experience, ESL students in grades K-2 learn about their families' reasons for coming to America. They create a project that shares this information with others. They learn how to ask questions, listen for information, glean information from the answers, and use tape recorders in order to create a published written product that entails the use of computer technology. Photographs which incorporate their families "then" and "now" are also used in the project. The students' books become part of a kit on immigration for the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House; the kit will be lent to classes in the area.

The students' final projects may involve creating either a book, poster, game, or something else that tells and shows a "then/now" story about their families.

## Teacher's Reflection:

*"This learning experience created enthusiasm and pride in our ESL students. Not only were they able to draw on prior experiences shared with their families, but they also became more knowledgeable about world geography and computer technology. In addition, involving the George Eastman House here in Rochester created a valuable connection between their families, the school and the community. The students' projects of accordion-style books vividly told their personal immigration stories through their illustrations, photographs and their texts."*

Standards and Performance Indicators

## ELA Standard 1:

### Listen and read to:

- ◆ gather and interpret information from books, audio, oral interviews, and maps;
- ◆ ask specific questions to clarify and extend meaning.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ use details, examples, or personal experiences to explain information;
- ◆ use the process of prewriting, drafting, revising, and proofreading.

## ELA Standard 4:

### Listen to and read:

- ◆ attentively and recognize when it is appropriate to speak.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ recognize the kind of interaction appropriate for different circumstances;
- ◆ take turns speaking and responding to others' ideas.

## Submitted by:

**Margaret Miyake**, ESL Teacher  
Greece Central School District  
Parkland Elementary School  
Rochester, NY

## PROCEDURE

### TEACHER ACTIVITIES

- Teacher introduced project, showing slides of immigrants coming to New York City at the turn of the century.
- Teacher showed video, “Molly’s Pilgrim,” with guiding questions to be answered by the students.
- Teacher read aloud *The Story of the First Thanksgiving*, by Elaine Raphael, and *How Many Days to America?* by Eve Bunting, and led discussion.
- Teacher led class in brainstorming a list of questions to ask their parents about coming to America, reviewing question words and use of correct punctuation.
- Teacher demonstrated how to ask questions, be a good listener, and use a tape recorder.
- Teacher facilitated a brainstorming session on writing a letter to parents about the project.
- Teacher scheduled a time when each student would share his/her family’s interview.
- Teacher guided students in deciding how they wanted to present their information.
- Teacher showed pictures taken of each family during the student’s interview.
- Teacher helped students assemble project.
- Teacher guided students in what to include in immigration kit and included this information in evaluation of what students learned.
- Teacher developed a rubric for students to fill out when project was completed.

### INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- ✓ Except for ensuring that the needed equipment was readily available for the students to complete the project, no special modifications were necessary for this project.

### STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- \* Discussed slides by exploring possible reasons for coming, expressing their feelings, and talking about what they brought with them.
- \* Watched video, discussed it, and wrote answers to the guiding questions.
- \* Listened to the stories, sequenced pictures from them, compared them, and wrote answers to questions.
- \* Brainstormed list of questions to ask parents, wrote questions in notebook, typed questions on computer.
- \* Practiced reading questions with a classmate and using a tape recorder, while demonstrating good listening behavior.
- \* Brainstormed a letter for parents about the project; typed letter on computer; took letter, tape, and questions home and conducted interview.
- \* Decided on information and photograph to share with the class, and listened attentively when other students shared information.
- \* Chose whether to write or draw project, using resources such as maps and books if needed; scanned photograph of family into the computer, edited project, and typed it on the computer.
- \* Selected a picture from those the teacher took and explained choice.
- \* Assembled project, beginning with picture of their families in native countries, and ending with their families’ pictures in America.
- \* Prepared immigration kit and created/assembled list of materials; invited museum director to class to receive the kit.
- \* Discussed everything they did during project, and completed the rubric.





## MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

### FOR THE STUDENTS:

1. tape recorders
2. notebooks, pencils, etc.
3. blank audiocassettes
4. computer
5. poster board
6. other supplies, as needed, for project presentation

### FOR THE TEACHER:

1. video, "Molly's Pilgrim"
2. TV and VCR
3. slide projector
4. slides from Lewis Hine kit  
(from George Eastman House)
5. books: *Molly's Pilgrim*, by Barbara Cohen; *The Story of the First Thanksgiving*, by Elaine Raphael; and *How Many Days to America?* by Eve Bunting
6. computer
7. scanner



## TIME REQUIRED

- **Planning:** Five to ten hours
- **Implementation:** Fifteen to 20 days
- **Assessment:** Ongoing throughout implementation



## ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The teacher assessed the work of the students on an ongoing basis throughout the learning experience on a number of dimensions:

- Through direct observation of the students;
- Through reviewing students' work, including:
  - reading and writing questions;
  - taped interviews;
  - writing up family interviews; and
  - their published books.

.....  
*List of questions brainstormed by first-grade student in Ms. Miyake's elementary K-2 ESL class*

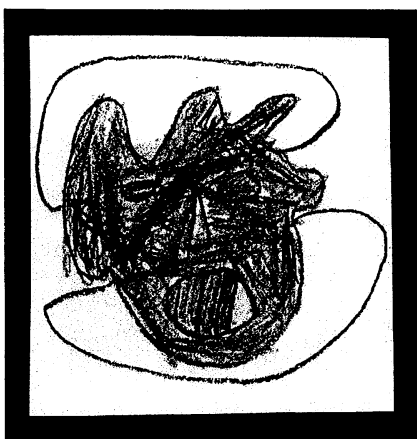
1. Why did we leave  
our country?

How did you know  
English?

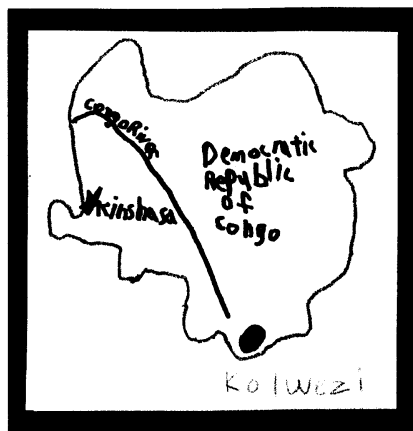
3. When did we  
come to America?

What did we  
bring from  
our country?

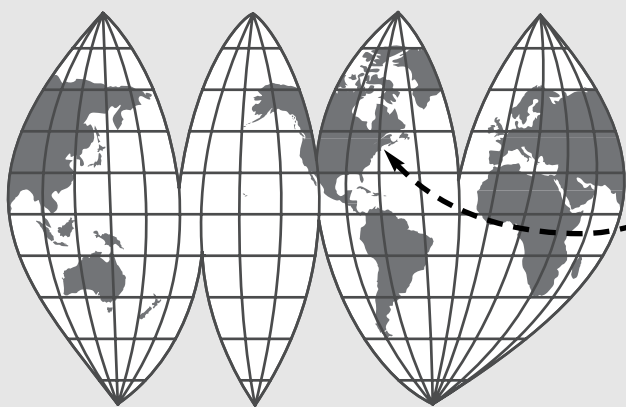
.....  
Below are two pages from the same boy's finished project:  
an accordion book about his family entitled "Coming to America"



We lived in Zaire, Africa.  
We left our country because  
of the trouble and the  
fighting among the peoples.



Then when the trouble  
started, my dad went to  
Zambia. We stayed in Zaire.  
I was born in Kolwezi.





# Learning About Scuba Diving

INTERMEDIATE

Proficiency Level: Low-Intermediate ESL

## LEARNING CONTEXT

This learning experience intends to show the beginning of a unit of study better known as a “theme cycle.”

The work is done mainly in school, but can evolve into an out-of-school activity as well.

The teacher facilitates a discussion with students about topics they are interested in learning about.

By starting from the perspective of the students’ own interests, they become enthused about and focused on the eventual topic to be explored. They learn about the ways decisions can be made through a process of voting on the topic.

During the research phase, they take on ownership and accept personal responsibility for following up on the resources they have decided to investigate.

## Teacher’s Reflection:

*“Using the ‘theme cycle’ as a learning experience allows the learner to be an active participant in what s/he will study. Student interest in the topic is already built in. The flexibility of this type of learning experience provides for many avenues of learning. It addresses many learning standards in an interrelated fashion, which is how most people learn.”*

Standards and Performance Indicators

## ELA Standard 1:

### Listen and read to:

- ◆ interpret and analyze information from nonfiction books and reference materials;
- ◆ relate new information to prior knowledge and experience.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ develop information with appropriate supporting material;
- ◆ use standard English for formal presentation.

## ELA Standard 4:

### Listen to and read:

- ◆ attentively and build on others’ ideas in conversations with peers and adults.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ use appropriate language and style for the situation and audience and take into account the ideas and interests expressed by the person receiving the message.

## Submitted by:

**Rebecca Reyes**, ESL Teacher  
Geneva City School District  
Geneva Middle School  
Geneva, NY

## PROCEDURE

The learning experience began with a group brainstorming session about topics in which the students were interested. Each student was allowed to contribute at least three ideas to the list of topics.

## TEACHER ACTIVITIES

### PHASE I:

- Teacher asked guiding questions which stimulated the students' responses.
- Teacher (or an able student) recorded students' ideas on large sheet of newsprint.
- Teacher made sure that all students understood each topic; pictures were used to give fuller explanations if necessary.
- Teacher explained that the topic selected would be decided by a vote of all the members of the class. She made sure that all of the students understood what was involved in a voting process.
- Teacher guided the students through several rounds of voting, which resulted in the top three finalists. The final vote yielded the top choice, "Scuba Diving."

### PHASE II:

- Teacher created two webs entitled "What we already know" and "What we want to know" about scuba diving.
- Teacher filled in the webs according to student responses about the topic chosen.
- Teacher facilitated a brainstorming discussion of a list of resources that could help in the study of scuba diving.



## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### PHASE I:

- \* Students brainstormed about the topics that they are interested in exploring.
- \* Students could assist in the recording on newsprint of the others' ideas about topics to be studied.
- \* When list was complete, students copied the list onto a sheet of paper.
- \* Students participated in the selection process by putting a check mark next to three of the topics. The top three choices were listed and the students then voted again. This process could go on for as many times as necessary to arrive at one topic.

### PHASE II:

- \* Students made contributions to the two webs.
- \* Student ideas were written on the webs by a student.
- \* Students brainstormed a list of resources with the teacher.
- \* A list of group responsibilities was generated for this project, and it described the etiquette to be followed during the course of the project.
- \* Students decided through discussion or vote which question to start with from the "What we want to know" web.

## INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- ✓ Students sat in a group at tables or desks in close proximity to the newsprint.
- ✓ Teacher should not be concerned with keeping a strict time frame for the project. Each phase could take one or two days depending on the proficiency levels of the students.
- ✓ When the students generate ideas for topics, it would be wise to maintain silence so that students have time to think or draw pictures of what they would like to study.
- ✓ The process of "theme cycle" allowed for many discussions, changes of plans, and "mini-lessons" within the overall project.



## MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

- Newsprint
- Markers — different colors
- Lined notebook paper
- Pens/pencils
- After topic has been chosen, a whole new list of materials will arise as different ideas are generated during discussions.
- *20,000 Leagues under the Sea*, by Jules Verne
- Resource list created by the students



## TIME REQUIRED

- Time requirements can vary greatly with this type of learning experience.
- Planning may have to be spontaneous depending on where the students go within the learning experience.

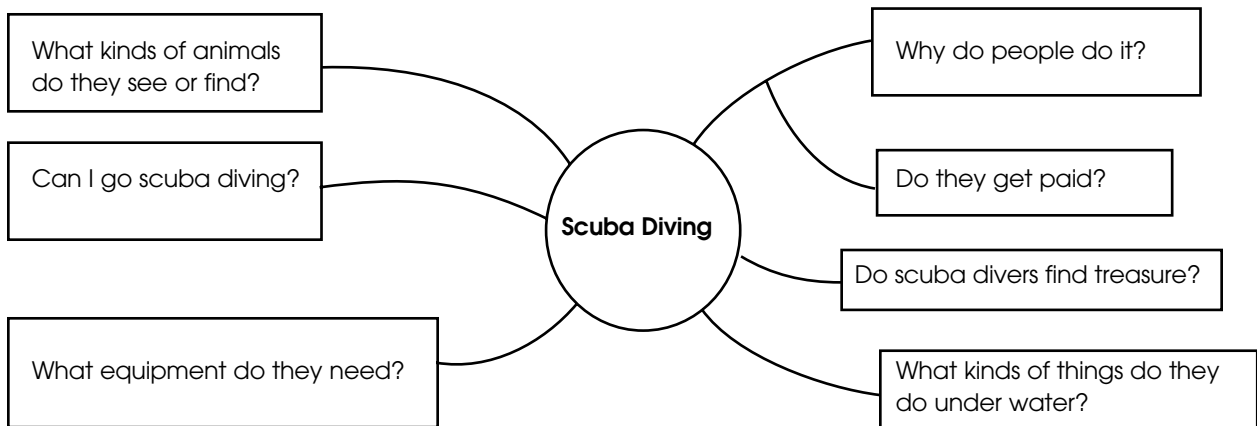


## ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

- Teacher was aware of students' body language (especially for nonverbal students) for feedback.
- Students had regularly scheduled group discussions about the topic. Teacher could assess at these points what students were having trouble with, and could review or teach a "mini-lesson" at the time it was needed.
- Teacher frequently asked comprehension and clarifying questions in order to gauge what the students perceived and to obtain new insights into the learning experience. Questions that developed the students' metacognition prepared them for other learning experiences in any classroom.
- Portfolios of students' work were maintained. They contained all drafts, finished copies, drawings, and articles of interest. Original newsprint webs and resource tools were also kept for reference throughout the learning experience.

.....  
*This is a copy of the web students created during their brainstorming session.*

### WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW



.....  
**Sample of student work**

*On a Saturday afternoon I went scuba diving with Lynsey, Angel and Victor. We had a lot of fun but, Lynsey was scared because she's never been scuba diving before. I told her that she doesn't have to be scared, that I would be there with her. So we went in the water and it was beautiful, there was alot of strange animals. Victor and Angel were fascinated, because they saw a hammer shark. Lynsey was very scared because she thought that the shark would eat us, so we got out of the water and we went home. Angel and Victor said that they had a lot of fun, and Linsey told me that she had alot of fun too.*

*By Elena Navarro*



# ESL INTEGRATED LITERATURE UNIT

COMMENCEMENT

Proficiency Level: Intermediate ESL

## LEARNING CONTEXT

This is one of several literature units secondary-level ESL students in grades 9-12 can work through as they develop their conceptual and skill bases in content areas while improving their English language skills. This particular unit centers around preparing to read and reading *The Island of the Blue Dolphins*, by Scott O'Dell, although this approach could be used for many other novels. A brief annotated bibliography of other possible novels to use with this approach is included at the end of this learning experience. This unit integrates the reading and analysis of literature, the development of research skills, and the development of English language skills for nonnative speakers, with conceptual development in Earth science, biology, physics, U.S. history, art, and music.

Students need to be able to read young adult literature with the support of a richly developed context.

## Teacher's Reflection:

*"The unit reflects current scholarship in the field of TESOL because it provides a rich context to support learning of content and reading of literature, because it encourages students to self-assess and set and work toward goals, and because it leads students to use English in authentic ways, for authentic purposes and at ever-increasing levels of complexity and proficiency."*

Standards and Performance Indicators

## ELA Standard 1:

### Listen and read to:

- ◆ collect data, facts, and ideas;
- ◆ discover relationships, concepts, and generalizations.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ acquire, interpret, apply, and transmit information;
- ◆ analyze and integrate data, facts, and ideas to communicate information.

## ELA Standard 2:

### Listen and read to:

- ◆ develop an understanding of diverse social, historical, and cultural dimensions that text and performances represent.

### Speak and write to:

- ◆ use oral and written language that follows the accepted conventions of the English language for self-expression and artistic creation.

### Submitted by:

**Margaret A. Dwyer**, ESL Teacher  
Ithaca City Schools  
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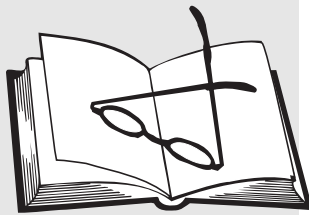
## PROCEDURE

### TEACHER

The teacher introduced the book to be read and told students that each of them would develop expertise in some area related to the book before it was read. Students chose their area of expertise in consultation with their content-area teachers and their parents. They could select areas from a list generated by the ESL teacher, or they could propose other areas of study. These areas included: Earth science, biology, physics, global studies and U.S. history, health, art, and music.

### STUDENTS

Students then worked alone, in pairs, or in small groups to research their topics, using a wide variety of resources and skills. They evaluated themselves as public speakers and writers, designed a plan to present their research findings, and prepared visual or audio aids for their presentations. These graphics remained posted around the room, or on tape for reference as the class read the novel.



#### *For example*

A student may choose to become the resident scholar on the topic of climate in the novel. The student will be told the location of the island in the novel, and then will be asked to consider all relevant factors, e.g., latitude, prevailing winds, etc., to predict the climate. The student will probably use textbooks, teachers, library materials, various government weather services on the Internet, and other sources. The student will probably create a map and/or a climatogram or other charts and graphs to supplement his/her report to the class. The student will complete a self-evaluation rating scale which describes the student's own assessment of his/her presentation, including those areas in which the student feels that improvement is needed, and notes what steps could be taken to improve his/her performance.

### INSTRUCTIONAL/ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- ✓ For low-intermediate ESL students to engage in this level of research fruitfully, extended time periods were helpful. The class met for one and a half hours daily, allowing them to make good use of the library and technology center resources, and permitting them the kind of quality group time they needed to work together successfully.
- ✓ A set of novels for the class, an adequate school library, and various work centers for computer use, art projects, and music creations and recordings were the materials and supplies necessary for this learning experience.



### TIME REQUIRED

This unit took approximately six weeks, one and a half hours per day. There was no separate time for assessment, as assessment was ongoing.



### ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

- The students' work was assessed throughout the research process, on the presentation of findings, and during reading and responding to the novel.
- An integral part of this unit and all the other related literature units includes self-evaluation. The students set and worked toward their own goals, as demonstrated on the following page.

.....  
**Student self-evaluation form for oral presentation**  
*developed by the teacher*

**Fabulous Oral Presentations Self Evaluation Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank your skills in the following areas. 1 = very weak -- 5 = very strong. For every area that you mark 3 or lower, write one or two specific steps you could take to improve.

1. I prepare my oral presentations so clearly that my audience understands the topic I am going to discuss within the first few seconds.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

2. I relate my topic to other ideas or experiences that I know my audience understands, and I always include examples of the most important points.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

2. My pronunciation is clear.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

3. My rate of speech is just right -- not too fast or too slow.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

4. My tone of voice is loud enough and interesting.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

5. I look at and speak to my audience. I do not read.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

6. I select or prepare visual aids that are attractive and interesting.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

7. I touch the audience's senses with music, food, art, or experiences when it would be helpful to do so.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

8. I use humor when I can.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

9. I communicate interest in and excitement about my topic.

1            2            3            4            5

Steps I could take to improve:

Now go back and select the first area you will work to improve. Be sure you have at least two specific steps you will take to improve in this area. Discuss this goal with your learning partner and your teacher. All three of you will sign below when your goal and your plans for reaching your goal are clear.

\_\_\_\_\_ (student) \_\_\_\_\_ (partner)

\_\_\_\_\_ (teacher)

When you give your oral presentation, how well you met your goal will be a very important part of your evaluation.

Dwyer 1996



In addition, students completed a written research report on their findings. They used the writing process to develop their reports. The first draft could be based on the information obtained for their class presentations. Throughout the writing process they continued to revise and edit their reports through peer conferences and conferences with the teacher.

*What is a tidal pool?*

The tidal pool is a pool created by the tide on the rock basin or beach. When the tide goes out and comes in, pools are formed <sup>at</sup> between the land and the sea. As the tide washes over the shore twice a day. The tidal pool can be created on the rock or sand. Middle and upper zone pools are farther from the ocean than lower zone pools (Day 4). *frags*

To survive in tidal pool, organisms have to adapt the harsh environment. When the tide ebbs, there is less and less water, the sun will shine and the wind will blow. When the tide comes in, they must able to live in the water (Atlas 1).

*Which organisms are able to live there?*

*Plants*

To live in tidal pool, the plant has to know how to live in the water or in almost no water. They have charater that is adaptive <sup>^</sup> tidal pool. They look very different from other plants on the ground.

Sea weed belongs to a group of plants called algae. They have no flowers, no leaves, and no roots. Instead of roots, sea weeds have a holdfast. They hold on to a rock really tightly to protect them, because when tides goes out, powerful winds will blow. When the tides comes in, powerful waves beat upon the tidal pool and they want to stay on the rock. The holdfast is so strong that you cannot take the seaweeds off the rock (Tide).

Their color is not green but they carry out photosynthesis like other plants. During photosynthesis, they use the sunlight, together with carbon dioxide and sea water, to make their food in this process. Seaweeds provide shrimp, crabs, fish, and many other organisms with places to hide from predator. In summer, seaweeds also help block out bright sunlight, which can make the water too hot for the animals that live there. Many kinds of animals feed on seaweeds like sea slugs and snail (Tide).

.....  
*Excerpts from student's second draft of research paper with teacher's editorial comments*

*What are the abiotic factors?*

When the tide comes in, the abiotic factors of tidal pool are same as those in the ocean. Because after the tides comes in, the tide will go out again and sea water will still here in rock basin then you can see underwater life (Day 1). This is same kind of sea water. Because this basin is made of rocks, water may not absorbed and water is not moving. The sun heats water and depletes (their oxygen or even evaporate them). Also rain water makes them contain less salt. That is why it has limited population (Day/ 2). These characteristics of tidal pool is the difference between tidal pool and other shore ecosystem (Johnson).

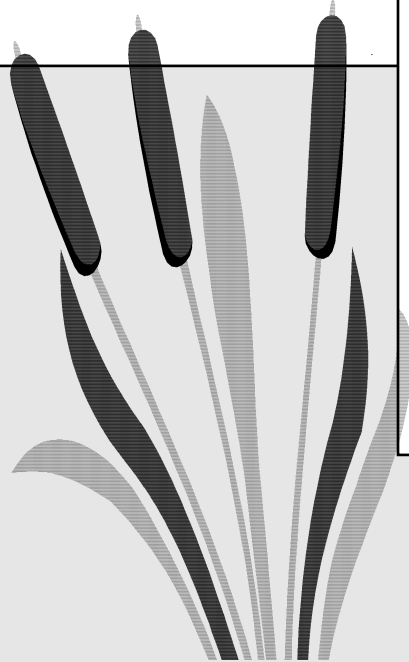
The most important thing in tidal pool is the harsh environment. The number of species in tidal pools on rocky shores along the New England coast is not as large as in a tidal pool on a rocky Pacific coast. This is because of the harsh environment like increase amount of water when tide comes in, and exposure to the sun (Ocean/ 9)

*How do human interact with tidal pools?*

Tidal pool is special to human. There is lot of organism <sup>we</sup> we can eat or we can use as a jewel. But humans are not helping tidal pools at all. They walk on the beach and trample organisms. And they gather the organisms and eat them. Also they throw away trash. Some people collect shells as a hobby. Also people set up resort area, and they build buildings such as hotels or restaurants. As well as other ecosystem, tidal pool is destroyed by human. People must stop contaminate tidal pool.

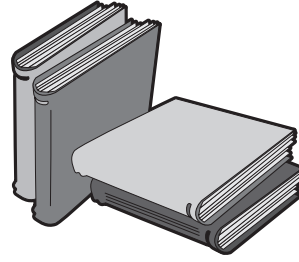
*Conclusion*

The tidal pool is created by tide, and there are lot of special plants and animals. They have the special characteristic that can live in the tidal pool. Also the abiotic factors of the tidal pool are distinct from abiotic factor of the other ecosystem. The tidal pool is important to the life of human, and also related to other ecosystem. We must preserve the tidal pool.





## Annotated Bibliography of Other Novels Which Could Be Used for a Similar Learning Experience



The following is a list of novels that could be used with secondary ESL students ranging in proficiency from low- to high-intermediate. Below each title is a partial list of possible areas for research and related study.

**Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street.***

Chicano studies; urban problems and alternatives; alternatives for youth.

**Choi, Sook Nhul. *Year of Impossible Goodbyes.***

World War II in the Pacific, especially the Japanese occupation of Korea; oppression and resistance; the politics of language and language loyalty.

**George, Jean C. *Julie of the Wolves.***

Tundra biome; traditional versus modern life in the North; wolves and wolf behavior.

**Lipsyte, Robert. *The Contender.***

Harlem past and present; the African American nationalist movement; the physiology and psychology of drug addiction; youth alternatives to drugs; the value of sports and other commitments.

**Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars.***

World War II and the Holocaust in Europe; oppression and resistance.

**Mazer, Norma Fox. *A Figure of Speech.***

Extended, nuclear, and other family structures; ancestor worship; ageism; ethical responsibilities between generations.

**O'Brien, Robert C. *Z is for Zacharia.***

Nuclear power and war; Hiroshima; the Manhattan Project; issue of nuclear testing: past, present, and future.

**Paulsen, Gary. *Dogsong.***

Tundra biome; traditional versus modern life in the North; rites of passage to adulthood.

**Peck, Ira. *The Life and Times of Martin Luther King.***

Jim Crow; segregation; civil rights movement; inspirational leaders.

**Speare, Elizabeth. *The Witch of Blackbird Pond.***

The Inquisition and the Burning Times in Europe; religious freedom and persecution in Europe and in the colonial United States; issues of intolerance; colonial life in New England.