CHAPTER SEVEN

Teaching Reading

ELs need decoding and fluency practice to become good readers—to recognize words and comprehend the text at the same time (Grabe, 2009; Nagy, 2005; Samuels, 1979). However, the greater the attention extended to decoding, the less there is available for comprehension. ELs need balanced time and attention for word meaning, decoding, grammatical structures, background knowledge, and comprehension skills.

Within its limitations, NCLB has managed to highlight the literacy needs of ELs. However, it has been a struggle. Programs such as Reading First reduced this attention to a few reading instructional strategies that were developed and tested for general education students. After Reading First programs were implemented, dissatisfaction with EL progress began to grow. The rush to get ELs on the same page as general education students resulted in pushbacks, not only for them, but also for the general education students.

Teachers were expected to record easily observable elements of reading, such as the number of words read in one minute, and to teach to the elements that were found on the state’s tests. ELs learned to decode as quickly as possible, without understanding a word they were reading, in attempts to please the teacher. As Timothy Rasinski (2011), professor of literacy education at Kent State University, stated:

Focusing on speed does not necessarily improve automaticity. Despite the flawed reasoning behind the use of rate as an instructional goal, we are now stuck with the so-called scientifically based approach to reading fluency that draws students’ attention to speedy reading.

These practices caused ELs to fall further and further behind in developing depth of word knowledge and reading comprehension skills. They became bored with drills and continued to have difficulties with reading as they attempted to learn the content. Many ELs lost their love of reading in elementary school, and when they
reached middle school, they were unmotivated struggling readers reading several grade levels below and still limited English proficient. These are the long-term ELs who populate the middle and high schools today.

Although Reading First was not effective for ELs, it did help to draw out more research on EL literacy, which has begun to point us in the right direction. For instance, we now know that primary language helps develop language and literacy in English and content reading helps to accelerate language and literacy.

**Reading Skills and Processes**

Reading is a linguistic and metalinguistic process for ELs. It is not possible to read without making graphemic-phonemic connections, without recognizing the words to be read and the structural phrases organizing the words, and without having a reasonable store of linguistic knowledge of the language of the text (Grabe, 2009).

It is easier for young children to learn to read in their primary language. When this is not possible and they have to learn to read in English, it is much harder for them. It is also much more difficult for their teachers because the linguistics, the lower-level processes of reading (phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, working memory), and the higher-level processes of reading (comprehension processing, metacognitive awareness/content mastery) need to be intertwined for ELs to develop good reading skills. It's not an easy balancing act!

**Learning to Read in the Primary Language**

The National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth found that oral proficiency and literacy in the first language can be used to facilitate literacy development in English. Those who learn to read in their primary language are able to transfer some skills of reading to English (August, Calderon, & Carlo, 2001; August & Shanahan, 2008).

The majority of dual-language/bilingual programs teach ELs to read in their primary language before they transition to English reading around grade 2 or 3. Teachers often ask, "When is the best time to transition students to English? At second, third, or fourth grade?" The answer is, "When they have an academic vocabulary in Spanish [or other primary language] that is at grade level; their reading has reached automaticity in Spanish; they have mastered comprehension strategies for identifying cause and effect, sequencing, comparing, and contrasting; and they are able to write coherent paragraphs summarizing what they have read at grade level." Relying only on oral tests of language proficiency can be deceiving.
WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

If students' vocabularies are too small, phonological awareness does not contribute to their knowledge about print. If students' levels of phonological awareness are too low, vocabulary does not contribute to their knowledge about print (Nagy, 2005).

The expectation that a short-term vocabulary intervention will produce large improvements in reading comprehension is simply not realistic; background knowledge, concepts and content, and generative word knowledge are necessary (Nagy, 2005).

Strategies for learning vocabulary and strategies for reading comprehension should not be taught separately but in the context of the text students are about to read (Calderon, 2009).

The purpose of culturally responsive instruction is to improve opportunities for academic success by letting student strengths and interests serve as a bridge to the new learning offered by the school (Au, 2009/2010).

Comprehension is influenced by text structures such as cause and effect or time-order relationships in nonfiction, the division of plays into acts and scenes, the rhyme and rhythm of poems, and dialogue in fiction (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002).

Being able to comprehend informational text is important because the texts that most adults read are informational (Duke & Pearson, 2002).

Informational text contributes to vocabulary growth and builds knowledge; it capitalizes on students' interests and curiosities, and provides valuable links to their own experiences (Duke & Pearson, 2002).

The National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth found that instruction that provides substantial coverage in the key components of reading identified by the National Reading Panel (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension) has clear benefits for language-minority students (August & Shanahan, 2006, 2008).

Schools that are able to implement dual-language programs do not have to worry about transition. Their students develop high levels of oracy and literacy skills in two languages at each grade level (Slavin & Cheung, 200Sj Calderon & Carreon,
Some language or literacy development guides are similar between English and Spanish, such as applying prefixes and suffixes, providing formal definitions, interpreting metaphors, developing reading comprehension strategies, spelling, and writing. But these features need to be pointed out and explicitly taught in order to become effective tools for bilingual children (Carlo et al., 2005).

Some languages, like Spanish, have a shallow orthography as compared to English—that is, sounds and spellings have a high correspondence. English has a lower correspondence between spelling and pronunciation. For example, the sound of "ch" in *chile* in Spanish is /ch/, and the English version of *chili* is also pronounced with /ch/. However, English has several exceptions to the "ch" sound, as in *chef*, *chord*, *yacht*, *Charlotte*, and *echo*, whereas Spanish does not. These and many other inconsistent patterns of English make it difficult for students who are accustomed to high correlations of spelling and pronunciation.

The National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth (August & Shanahan, 2006) found that some reading skills easily transfer from one language to another. For instance, decoding and reading fluently are easier in English when ELs have learned to decode and read fluently in their primary language. This is why many ELs often keep pace with their English-speaking peers on fluency tests when the instructional focus was on decoding and fluency. However, the same ELs may not do well on reading comprehension and writing. For ELs to read and write proficiently in English, oral proficiency (word learning and grammatical understanding) in English is essential.

**Higher-Order Reading Processes**

Reading is basically a comprehension process. Comprehension strategies help students to relate ideas in a text to what they already know and make explicit what they don't know, to keep track of how well they understand what they read, and, when understanding breaks down, to identify what is causing the problem and how to solve it (Pressley, 1997). Strategy instruction is particularly important for ELs. Strategic knowledge helps ELs learn how to learn in a schooling system that is very new and perhaps very strange to them. ELs can benefit from figuring out the simplest book conventions and concepts of print and applying the more sophisticated strategies of selecting key information, organizing and mentally summarizing information, monitoring comprehension, and matching comprehension to teacher goals or test goals.
Preparin to Teach a Text

ELs need to read both fiction and nonfiction texts, as well as texts with different perspectives. Have on hand various sources of information throughout different genres. Materials should be selected to build essential information and also be of interest to the ELs. Once you have a text in mind, go through the following steps:

1. Determine desired outcomes for oracy, reading, and writing skills. How will you convey these to the ELs?

2. Identify the potential in texts for various instructional purposes, such as kinds of challenges a text would present to students—reading level, comprehension, cultural context—and text that can be handled by ELs.

3. Decide which vocabulary words to preteach so that ELs can understand and participate in the discussions, answer questions, and comprehend what they read.

4. Select questions for discussions.

5. Select ancillary materials to ensure comprehension of big ideas: real objects, pictures, websites, role-playing activities, gestures, or drawings.

6. Select a reading-comprehension or metacognitive strategy to model for the students, and plan how to model it.

7. Select the appropriate strategy to use in helping students produce writing.

8. Differentiate the level of scaffolding to provide different levels of support.

The more ELs read, the faster their vocabulary grows. The more vocabulary they have, the more eager they are to read. After they read and enjoy a good text, they want to write about it. Writing helps them learn more words. More words increase their vocabulary.

Reading Strategies

Reading is quite complex. The art of teaching reading has gone through years of iterations. Sometimes the emphasis is on decoding, sometimes fluency, and recently comprehension and word meaning. However, reading is not just fluency or comprehension or decoding. Reading is made up of several components: oral language proficiency, phonological processing, working memory, word-level skills, and text-level skills (August & Shanahan, 2008).
The National Reading Panel (2000) identified the most effective reading comprehension strategies: comprehension monitoring, using graphic and semantic organizers, using the structure of stories, answering questions, generating questions, and summarizing. Other researchers cite these comprehension strategies: predict, determine important information, summarize, make inferences, visualize, ask and answer questions, make connections, and monitor comprehension. Either set is useful in helping ELs develop strategies. However, ELs cannot be expected to make predictions or inferences or visualize if they don’t know the words necessary to understand or express that prediction or inference or to visualize. A good foundation in word recognition, or decoding, is important because once ELs have automatic recognition of words (automaticity), they can focus more on the overall meaning. Comprehension calls for knowing 85-90 percent of the words in a sentence, a question, a paragraph, or any text.

Essentially, it is easier for ELs to begin with asking and answering questions, determining important information, summarizing, making connections and making use of schema, and monitoring comprehension. Such strategies should be applied immediately after they are modeled to reinforce the knowledge of the strategy and give teachers an opportunity to check the appropriate use of the strategy.

For ELs in beginning stages, the text to be read should be chunked into smaller segments than those being read by general education students. Students should be reading something different every day and engaged in greater analysis and application as they learn and apply new vocabulary, grammar, and writing. Repetitive reading of the same long passages does not help ELs develop fluency or comprehension. Worse, reading can become “so boring.” Reading needs to be processed in smaller chunks in order to focus on strategy development. This is a great opportunity for guided practice. Don’t worry about covering the material. It will get done. It goes slowly at first because students are learning to learn. Once they practice a strategy a few times, the whole process accelerates. When time isn’t taken to develop metacognitive strategies, or learning how to learn, students get bogged down. Take your time if you want them to succeed.

**Sentence Starters**

Many times, ELs know the answer to a question but have difficulty figuring out how to start their response. Sentence starters help ELs articulate their ideas, responses, and explanations. The following sentence starters can help ELs in various types of academic discussion:
- **Summarizing.** Students create a new oral or written text that stands for an existing text. The summary contains the important information or big ideas.

  + This story tells about a …
  + This section is about the …
  + One important fact here is that …

- **Determining important information.** Students identify the most important idea in a section of text, distinguishing it from details that tell more about it.

  + The main idea is …
  + The key details that support that are …
  + The purpose of this text is to …

- **Sequencing.** Students make sense of the order in which ideas are presented to enhance comprehension.

  + The first step in this experiment is …
  + The sequence for answering this math problem is …
  + The first thing the character did was … Next, the character …

- **Making connections, visualizing, or creating schema.** Students practice relating new information to prior knowledge from their own culture or schooling. They create images to make connections between texts and their own lives and the world. They create schema when teachers model a variety of these strategies.

  + This reminds me of the time when I …
  + My parents told me a story about …
  + I read in another book that …

Some teachers glue these prompts on folders and arrange them as tents in the middle of the tables when students are working in teams. Students can practice a couple of examples per week. As teachers monitor discussions, they might want to give extra points to those who use the examples consistently.
Content-Focused Instruction

Literature is probably one of the most difficult subjects for ELs. There are too many variations of author’s language, metaphors, idioms, Anglicisms, and registers. Science, on the other hand, is a language that is more precise, more structured and consistent, and has many cognates. Math and social studies also have many cognates. Literature has very few cognates because most words are Anglo-Saxon derivatives (for example, troll, bunny, itsy bitsy spider, plot, setting, shadowing).

Introducing reading through subject-area content in the early grades has an added benefit for ELs. They learn important facts that lay a foundation for math, science, and social studies while they learn vocabulary and reading skills. Math, science, social studies, and language arts have their own unique genre structures. The way a student should read a science book is very different from how he or she should read a math problem, and that is quite different from the way he or she should read a poem or piece of literature, which in turn changes considerably when the student reads current events or history. The way to approach reading and writing in each of these subjects is most likely quite different from the way ELs have typically been asked to read and write in an ESL class. Therefore, it is important to teach students "how to read" the different subject domains. The good news for teachers is that all students benefit from reading through the content areas, and the process for teaching reading through different subject domains is basically the same as teaching reading with literature.

Teacher Modeling

Chapters 5 and 6 discussed the importance of preteaching the words that will help students derive meaning from the text. That is the first step in building comprehension. Next, teachers should consider modeling. The sequence for modeling reading comprehension is as follows:

1. The teacher models how to deconstruct each sentence, with a student, in order to construct meaning.

2. The teacher reads aloud and thinks aloud to model a comprehension strategy.

3. Students are asked to apply the deconstruction strategy and the comprehension strategy.

4. The teacher models how to summarize what they have learned after each paragraph using the new words.
S. Students read with their buddies, alternating sentences, and summarize after each paragraph.

6. The teacher monitors by walking around the classroom, recording students' use of strategies as they conduct partner reading.

For example, in the following passage, the teacher's think-alouds for monitoring comprehension are in brackets:

There's lots of evidence of drastic changes {big changes} in climate occurring in the distant past. {We know a lot about many changes in climate that have happened in the past.} Earth today may again be in the midst {in the middle} of such a climate change. {Today, there are many changes happening again.} In the last one hundred years, studies show that {people have studied these changes and they can show us that} global temperatures {temperatures around the world} have risen {have gone up} an average of 0.6 degrees C. {What is that "C"? Is it centigrade; is it centimeter? I'm not sure. My reading partner isn't sure either. I better ask my teacher. I'm going to put this on a sticky note and put the sticky note on the parking lot so that my teacher can explain this to us.}

This teacher substituted easier words for some of the words, indicating that the students can also do their think-alouds with easy words. Showing students that even teachers don't know everything and that they ask for help after they have tried figuring it out is a way of reassuring the students that it is all right to get help. After modeling, the teacher asks the students to read a paragraph with their reading buddy and deconstruct it sentence by sentence to make sure they understand what they are reading.

The next day, the teacher conducts think-alouds to model comprehension strategies, such as summarizing, finding cause and effect or main idea, or sequencing. For example, the teacher reads a paragraph aloud and then summarizes it at the end. Alternatively, with the help of a student, the teacher models how to read alternating sentences and summarize at the end of each paragraph. She emphasizes that this time, instead of deconstructing, the students are actually constructing quality sentences using as many of the new words as possible. She reminds students that this is the time to activate that working memory that has stored the new words.

When modeling reading aloud, demonstrate and elaborate on many of the important subtle techniques—such as pronunciation of words and dramatic voice inflection—that add meaning and emotion to the written word. Model how to ask
comprehension questions or think aloud while reading so the students can apply metacognitive devices during their silent reading (for example, fix-it strategies, purpose for reading, finding main idea, summarizing a few sentences).

**Partner Reading**

Partner reading and summarizing is critically important for ELs while reading math, science, and social studies. It helps students understand and learn the content areas. There are several options for partner reading approaches. Those that call for students to alternate reading sentences aloud with a partner are most effective with ELs. One option is for the first student to read a sentence and do a think-aloud; he or she is then followed by the second student, who reads the next sentence and does a think-aloud. Another is to alternate reading each sentence aloud (without the think-aloud), followed by both peers talking about what they read after each paragraph.

Reading only one sentence at a time helps them to approach reading in smaller chunks and gives them more confidence. It also keeps both partners on task. They have to listen to each other because there is no time for distraction. Students can get distracted or bored or wander off mentally when their buddy is reading a whole paragraph, especially if the buddy is a struggling reader. Alternating sentences keeps both alert and listening to one another. Having to summarize what they read after each paragraph helps even further.

While students are partner reading, walk from pair to pair and catch them doing something right. Record a strategy they used, the application of new words, fluency, or extended discourse. Use your notes to later give feedback to the students or to share the progress with their parents.

Ten minutes of daily partner reading for each subject area will yield dramatic improvements in reading for all students. ELs can reread independently at another time. Partner reading is more effective than silent reading because the students get to hear themselves read and discuss the content to be mastered with a buddy. They can test their ideas and second-language efforts in a safe context. It is most effective immediately after the teacher models, when the strategy and the flow of the narrative are fresh in their minds.

Silent reading following partner reading helps students reinforce their reading skills and anchor their understanding. Since it will then be familiar reading, they will feel accomplished and enjoy reading. When they are asked to read silently
the first time a text is introduced, the fear of failure or embarrassment makes it difficult for them to plow through by themselves. Silent reading doesn't help ELs if vocabulary instruction and partner reading have not preceded it.

**Sponge Activities After Reading**

While employing the partner reading strategy, some pairs will finish reading and discussing before others. Have a list of enrichment or sponge activities to soak up the time. Post them on chart paper or distribute them on cards for these pairs. Maybe they earn an extra point for each? Here are some examples of what the partners can do:

- Discuss what they learned.
- Map out main ideas or critical elements.
- Find meanings of words they don't know.
- Work on their word banks.
- Give each other pretests and practice the answers missed.
- Work on the pronunciation of new words.
- Write in their journals or learning logs.

**Choral Reading**

Choral reading can be conducted in several ways: the whole class reads aloud together with the teacher; the teacher reads a sentence or paragraph, and the class reads the following sentence or paragraph together; one student table reads together, then another; half the class reads, then the other half; and so forth. Choral reading is beneficial when the teacher is presenting a new text, particularly if the new text has features and structures that are different from the text the students have been accustomed to reading. This strategy helps all students practice pronunciation and prosody. However, teachers should use choral reading for only three to five minutes per subject area per day to leave time for the other types of reading.

**Example Literacy Block**

During the ExC-ELL project, researchers worked with teachers to test ways to introduce ELs to a full range of reading skills and different types and levels of
vocabulary, to build fluency, and to ensure that students master the concepts and content they are reading (Calderon, 2007a, 2007b; Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011). These researchers among others (Calderon, Ford, Raphael, & Teale, 2010) propose implementing language and literacy components in five phases for a balanced literacy approach that can address diverse reading levels of students. They propose the literacy block as shown in figure 7.1.

Teachers like to use this format because they get to work with both the whole class and small groups for differentiation. Students can be reading at three or four different levels on the same topic, learning the same vocabulary. (Publishers such as the Wright Group LEAD21 and Benchmark Education Company produce books on the same themes but at different readability levels.) The literacy block is effective for differentiating, accelerating, and providing equity in literacy. Following is an example of a ninety-minute literacy block using the model in figure 7.1 but adapted for effective instruction for ELs.

During the first thirty minutes of the ninety-minute literacy block, second-grade teacher Mrs. Ramos introduces the tier 1, 2, and 3 vocabulary words that she selected from the texts the students are about to read; the vocabulary words range from easy to sophisticated to content-specific words dealing with ecosystems. Mrs. Ramos presents steps 1 through 5 (see chapter 6) of vocabulary instruction for each word. Turning to their left-elbow buddies, the students interact to practice vocabulary step 6: applying each new word in different contexts. After twelve minutes, the teacher reminds the students that these words are the vocabulary objective of the day and that she wants to see them written from memory on their exit passes (see chapter 9) at the end of the ninety minutes. Mrs. Ramos explains that the content objective is to learn about animals that live in these different ecosystems, and the reading comprehension strategy is finding examples of cause and effect. She highlights a grammatical structure (a compound sentence) for step 7 of vocabulary instruction and mentions that this week they will be studying compound sentences and using them in their writing. She uses the SMART Board to show photographs of the ecosystems they will be reading about and the flowers and animals that live in each to build some background knowledge. Using a think-aloud strategy with one of the books, she models thinking about text features and structures and finding an example of cause and effect. Her timer goes off, indicating the thirty minutes are up; it is time to move to student practice.

After Mrs. Ramos finishes her whole-group instruction, the students go to their desks, which are configured for teams of four. Each table has four books that are the same and at the same readability level. Mrs. Ramos has twenty-four students
**WHOLE-GROUP** Interactive Reading
All students learn the same concepts, theme vocabulary, and literacy skills.

**SMALL-GROUP** Differentiated Reading
Students work with the teacher in small groups, using carefully crafted connected text sets (same topic, same key vocabulary, same covers, different readability levels).

**INDEPENDENT** Application and Practice
Students practice and extend skills and strategies with peers, online, and in reading centers.

**WHOLE-GROUP** Cross-Text Sharing
Students build on what they learned through cross-text sharing, inquiry projects, and cooperative learning activities. Small mixed groups share unique content from the differentiated readers and work on inquiry projects.

**WHOLE-GROUP** Writing and Language Arts
Students learn grammar and mechanics, and fully participate in all aspects of the writing process.

**WHOLE-GROUP** Inquiry and Wrap-Up
The whole class reconvenes to share what they have learned and produced, to make text connections, and to participate in assessment.

Figure 7.1: A balanced literacy approach.
*Source: Adapted from Calderon, Ford, Raphael, & Teale, 2010.*
reading at four levels. Four students are newcomers reading at a K-level; eight students are at level1.5; eight are at level2; and four are at an advanced level ranging from 2.5 to 3.5. Although the students are sitting in teams of four, they read in pairs using readers at their level. The teacher walks around to monitor for quality reading, use of new vocabulary, and application of comprehension strategies. This helps her target the needs of students for the small-group instruction that will follow this phase. It is also an opportunity to use her observation protocol and record the progress of her two lowest and two highest readers. Tomorrow, she will observe and record four of her students at class level. Each day, she records different students; when she has gone through the whole class, she starts all over again.

After twelve minutes, she calls her K-1 group over to work with them on additional vocabulary and decoding skills for the next twenty minutes. The other teams of four are rereading, summarizing orally what they read, and mapping the information using graphic organizers. Each team has a different ecosystem, and they will present information about their ecosystem to the whole class; they must also formulate two questions to ask the other teams after they present their information. Each student must do one-quarter of the presentation. The ELs, who are reading their K-1 ecosystem book with the teacher's assistance, will need to go back after twenty minutes and work on their presentation and graphic organizer.

After twenty minutes, the teacher asks another team of four to work with her. The ELs work on their presentation; the other students are on the computers reading e-books, doing some e-activities, or completing e-assessments.

When the teacher is finished with the small-group instruction, she addresses the whole group again. Mrs. Ramos has about two hundred single-copy books in her classroom library. She reminds students to take one home for the week; read it with parents, siblings, or caretakers; and bring a note on Friday confirming it was read at home. Toward the end of the period, she collects exit passes.

What does the rest of the week look like?

On day 2, for the first ten minutes, Mrs. Ramos introduces new tier 1, 2, and 3 words using the seven steps. She asks students to spend ten minutes doing partner reading of the second part of the book, alternating sentences and taking turns retelling what they learned after each paragraph. She monitors the retelling.

Then, for the next ten minutes, she highlights and discusses features of expository text structures. She asks students to integrate tier 2 and 3 words into their writing.
objective for the week: using cause and effect and the editing strategy of eliminating unnecessary repetition. Since this is the beginning of the year, she distributes a sheet listing sentence starters and connectors— for example, in addition and in conclusion. The students will be assigned a cooperative writing project, so she reviews the card of social protocols that students have on their desks, explaining how to interrupt politely, question, and reach consensus. She proceeds to explain the writing activity.

The thirty-minute writing segment begins with team prewriting as Mrs. Ramos guides the students through the writing activity, followed by an editing strategy. All students work with cooperative learning strategies that support discussions about the text with particular oral strategies (for example, recall, paraphrasing, summarization, question formulation, and sentence starter frames).

Teams spend the last thirty minutes working on their graphic organizers, formulating questions, and rehearsing for their presentations. Some are on the computers reading or working on e-activities ore-assessments. Toward the end of the period, Mrs. Ramos collects exit passes.

Days 3 and 4 are repeats of the day 1 schedule. Mrs. Ramos explicitly teaches more vocabulary with the seven steps, provides more explicit instruction and modeling of another comprehension skill, "making inferences," that dovetails with cause and effect. She works with two other groups for twenty minutes each. Students work on their writings and their presentations.

Day 5 is a day of celebration. Students present their graphic organizers and the information they learned about their ecosystems. They pose their questions to the other teams before and after each presentation. This helps the other teams stay focused on the information and encourages them to write down some key words while listening in order to be able to answer the questions. After forty minutes of presentations, applause, and celebrations, Mrs. Ramos explains what inquiry and research mean. She spends fifteen minutes showing examples on the SMART Board and asking students to "put their heads together" and start to think about what kind of research they would like to do next week on ecosystems. She shows some of the research and products from the previous year’s students and gets them excited about what they can accomplish.

The next twenty minutes are spent celebrating the writing masterpieces of each team. Students share their well-edited stories and some creative decorations made out of construction paper.
Mrs. Ramos spends the last fifteen minutes debriefing the students and collecting their exit passes, the classroom library books they took home for independent reading, and the notes signed by parents that they read the book at home.

Since performance assessments and monitoring of student progress are conducted during every activity, traditional tests can be conducted on day S every two weeks or so. Types of daily assessments can include: observation and documentation of students using new vocabulary, of fluency during partner reading, or of social, cooperative, or behavioral skills during partner and team activities; reading inventories during team activities; rubrics and team and individual products focusing on the use of tier 2 and 3 words, question formulation, and presentation or oral discourse.

Following is another example of time allocations for the ninety-minute literacy block:

- Five minutes for the introduction of tasks and goals, objectives, or expected outcomes
- Ten minutes for preteaching vocabulary
- Ten minutes for background building
- Ten minutes for modeling the reading comprehension skill to be applied
- Ten minutes for partner reading and summarizing
- Ten minutes for a whole-group discussion or activity
- Ten minutes for basic reading and writing skills
- Ten minutes for writing
- Ten minutes for anchoring what the students have learned thus far
- Five minutes for writing exit passes

Teachers who only have forty-five or sixty minutes can stop where time runs out and pick up where they left off the next day.

Some teachers look at this schedule and say, "But you only have ten minutes here for reading!" Myths have emerged from past teaching practices and beliefs about reading—such as, a teacher needs to read aloud to children for half the period, students should spend half the period reading silently, and teachers should model a
reading strategy for half the period and have students use that strategy during their silent reading. The ten-minute formula actually enables more student reading, practice and application of reading comprehension skills, and better content connections.

**Grammar, Syntax, and Pronunciation**

Students learn grammatical and syntactic features such as prepositional phrases, spelling, tense, compound sentences, and passive voice faster when the teacher points them out in the text the students are reading. There are differences between sound/symbol and syntactic/structural relationships to keep in mind while teaching Spanish speakers to read in English.

For instance, in Spanish, vowels have only one sound and one way of writing that sound. English has about fifteen different vowel sounds and numerous combinations of vowels. How many different vowel sounds can you count in the following words?

pea, pit, pate, pet, pat, putt, pert, pooh, put, Poe, paw, par

beet, bit, bait, bet, bat, bite, but, bought, bottle, boot, boat, boy, bow

ELs may have pronunciation difficulties with:

- Vowel digraph combinations -au, ow, eigh, all, au, aw, oo
- Consonant blends -sl, sm, st, scr, spr, str
- Consonant digraphs -th, wh, ph; the differences between these digraphs: sh, ch (ship, chip; share, chair; Shirley, Chuck)
- Initial sounds -kn, qu, wr
- Final sounds -ck, ng, gh
- Variations of the "-ed" endings - crawled, walked, sprinted
- Variations of the "-s" endings - pats, classes, welcomes

Some syntactic structures may also cause difficulties:

- Compound sentences or chunks of words that contain long noun phrases - when it rains, we have to wear our raincoats, boots, and …
• Compound words-playground, sidewalk, trash can, blackboard
• Connectors or prepositional phrases-next, besides, is ... than, if ... then, since, nevertheless, inspite of, according to, athome, intime
• Collocations or phrasal verbs and institutionalized units-not yet, have a nice day, certainly, I see your point but ..., asfar as I know, see ya
• Passive voice structures-The two biggest mortgage lenders were rescued by the government versus The government rescued the two biggest mortgage lenders.

In addition to tense, punctuation, and part of speech, syntactic structures can be taught from the context of what the students are about to read. Grammar is the basis of tying core concepts together in textbooks and in discourse. Students need to practice talking about cause and effect, classification, inferences, compare/contrast, descriptions of events and processes, and so forth—in other words, all the functions that nest the core standards and core concepts to be learned. Students also need explicit instruction and examples from the texts they are reading on: compound sentences, connectors, prepositional phrases, noun phrases, verbal phrases, figurative language, metaphors, similes, idioms, passive voice structures, variation in tense, clusters, and less familiar text structures.

Balancing Strategy Instruction

Strategy instruction sometimes causes students to devote too much of their time and thinking to the features of strategies at the expense of getting meaning from texts (Murphy & Alexander, 2000). Sometimes teachers make strategy instruction more complicated than the reading selection (Pearson & Fielding, 1991). Strategy instruction for ELs must be handled with care. They will benefit from explicit explanations of some key strategies for finding cause and effect, comparing/contrasting, and problem solving, particularly those newcomers who have limited literacy skills in their primary language. But as Beck and others recommend, this should not be the whole focus of reading—again, it's the art of balancing, balancing, balancing!

Quick Tips for Teaching Reading

These quick tips offer some important reminders about teaching reading:

• Preteach key vocabulary and discussion prompts such as sentence starters.
• Focus on comprehension before speed and decoding.
• Engage in explicit reading instruction before partner reading.
• Assign partner reading before silent or independent reading.
• Use center activities to help anchor vocabulary and reading objectives or comprehension strategies.
• Use the same reading approach for subject-matter reading.
• Model, model, model!
• Have sponge activities handy for partner reading, writing, and center activities.
• Keep the literacy block balanced and moving briskly.

**Reflection Questions**

The following questions are provided to initiate discussions on the topics and processes mentioned in this chapter.

**For Teachers**

1. What aspects of the reading process described in this chapter are you implementing?
2. Which parts have you been leaving out and will now include?
3. Does your collection of texts cut across all subject areas and all genres? Are the texts interesting and challenging enough for ELs?

**For Administrators**

1. How will you support your teachers as they integrate more instructional strategies for developing language and literacy into all subject areas?
2. How will you balance your budget allocations to provide quality professional development and to purchase great materials (in both languages if you have a dual-language program)?
3. As you observe teachers integrate language and literacy, what instructional features do you consider to be most important?