

Total Physical Response Storytelling For Elementary and Secondary English Language Learners

I. Introductions and Goals

II. Language development through content

- A. Content becomes the story
- B. Choose target vocabulary from content and language needs
- C. Assess understanding of content concepts and language usage separately
- D. Emphasize structure in context
- E. Build in basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) with every content story
- F. Use reading to build further concept development and academic language

III. Planning for a TPRS content lessons or thematic units

- A. Consult with grade level teacher to determine the basic content objectives
- B. Decide on the language objectives
- C. Combine these two goals in the target vocabulary when possible
- D. Create many related hands-on activities to reinforce content and language objectives
- E. Modify the textbook reading passage

IV. Adaptations for lower elementary ESL students

- A. Be concrete! Use props and visuals for every gesture
- B. Slow Down! Focus on fewer target vocabulary and recycle more
- C. Keep students active and engaged with games, songs, and related activities
- D. Use more TPR and create very short mini-stories with known words
- E. Establish a class routine with repetition and recycling of vocabulary, songs, games, and activities
- F. Delay formal reading and writing activities

1. Provide lots of aural comprehensible input before introducing formal reading lessons
2. Label the room; match words to pictures; use rebus stories to build sight vocabulary and concepts of print
3. Develop phonemic awareness
4. Use the Language Experience Approach to introduce reading and writing. Use known TPRS stories as the "experience".
5. Use Dialog Journals

V. Resources for TPRS and English Language Learners at the elementary and secondary level

- A. Join the listserve for ESL teachers at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TPRSEnglish/join>
- B. Check out the following ESL materials that are TPRS compatible and easy to use in the classroom
 - *True Stories in the News* series by Sandra Heyer
 - *Jazz Chants, More Jazz Chants, Small Talk, Fairy Tale Jazz Chants* by Carolyn Graham
 - *Look Again Pictures* by Judy Winn-Bell Olsen
 - *Science Through Active Reading* and *Social Studies Through Active Reading* by Sharron Bassano and Mary Ann Christison
 - *Listen To Me* by Barbara H. Foley
 - *Problem Solving* by Linda Little and Ingrid Greenberg

TPRS for Adult English Language Learners

- I. The adult ESL classroom vs. foreign language classroom in the U.S.
 - Students are often from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds, rather than all having at least some shared experiences
 - Preconceived ideas about how adults learn a language

- Must be "serious" to be a good student
- Must do drills and homework
- Must study grammar
- Some students may be forced to attend class by employers
- Affective filter is often high

II. Cultural Awareness

- Potential sensitivity to gestures
- Reluctance to answer questions
- Reluctance to role play or act
- Perception that games are a waste of time
- Deal with enough 'bizarre' in every day interactions

III. Adult awareness

- Treat adult students as adults
- Games, activities, and stories need to be fun, but appropriate to the class
- Children's literature - when appropriate

IV. Needs analysis

- Each class is different and will have different goals (English for specific purposes)
- Importance of personalization
- Literacy levels in native language will vary. Check for literacy goals and background.

V. Comprehensible Input

- Invaluable tool for shy or intimidated students
- Accent training
- Phonemic Awareness

VI. Real language

- Introduce expressions early
- Use contractions
- Focus on survival skills and language from needs analysis

Resource for adult ESL using TPRS: *Putting it Together* by Elizabeth Skelton and Denise Milligan available at: rmhomestay@aol.com

