

Never Give Up!

A Perseverance Unit to Enhance Second Language Acquisition

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Introduction

As an adult learning a second language, I feel inferior when I am asked to speak the language in front of a native speaker. The first time I pushed myself to greet a parent in Spanish, I was confronted with the reality of how little Spanish I actually knew. My greeting must have sounded pretty convincing, because this parent responded by rapidly asking questions about how her child was doing. I found myself smiling and nodding a lot. I found myself mentally going through the words that were being spoken, desperately trying to make some sense out of what I was hearing. This experience was eye-opening for me. It made me realize how some my students must feel on a daily basis. Anxiety in the foreign language classroom is common and often times, students pretend to understand instead of asking questions for fear of feeling inferior. One way to alleviate this is by making the classroom a safe place to take risks. When students know that they can make mistakes and ask questions with no repercussions, they are more likely to do so. Another way to support students is to provide them with experiences to interact with one another and with texts read in class. I think that one of the best ways to support student learning in the classroom is through the use of mentor texts. These texts provide a model for students that they can use in a variety of ways. Mentor texts lend themselves to vocabulary development, model good writing, and enhance reading comprehension by providing picture clues. My ultimate goal is to provide my students with a safe learning environment where they feel comfortable speaking and writing in a second language.

Rationale and Background

I have always struggled with how to reach my second language learners. I find that I am more interested in the meaning they are trying to convey than the grammatical accuracy of their utterances. I thought that I was doing them a favor by repeating an incorrect statement back to them in the correct way. I assumed that because they could communicate with me socially, academic conversation and abilities were present as well. I have spent the last few years scratching my head in confusion as I graded reading comprehension and vocabulary tests. I was amazed that students who could discuss the stories so well could fail the test. The students who always participated in class discussions were struggling with written tasks. Several problems presented themselves as I analyzed the data. I noticed a pattern in their inability to use vocabulary words in context. Similar problems were noted in regards to their writing. Many ESL students had difficulty expressing their ideas in a coherent manner. A huge gap between what I thought they knew and what the data was showing me became evident. Clearly something was missing from my instruction. This realization encouraged me to start implementing new strategies with my ESL learners. I have developed two main goals that I have for all of my students, but my ESL students in particular. First, I want my students to have a deeper understanding of the vocabulary words that we are working with in class. I want students

to be able to use them in various discursive settings, mostly social and academic ones. If the students do not understand key words from a story, meaning is lost. I want to provide my students with meaningful and engaging opportunities to use vocabulary words in context. Second, I want my students to be able to express what they are learning in their writing.

To accomplish these goals, I am creating a unit on the theme of perseverance. Lessons centered on a theme in which students are interested encourages them to actively use the language. Crookes and Schmidt agree that motivation can be a significant factor in second language acquisition. They insist that motivating students into the lesson by speaking enthusiastically about the content being studied will increase student interest. Varying the activities and materials is also encouraged as they say it decreases boredom and increases attention. Lastly they encourage cooperative learning as it builds student self-confidence. I am using mentor texts to model great writing while making connections to the theme of perseverance. Each day the students will have opportunities to practice comprehension, speaking, and writing skills by responding to the mentor texts read aloud. These experiences will be outlined through strategically designed lessons. At the end of the unit the students will complete a perseverance kite with which they will demonstrate what they have learned about showing perseverance through writing, speaking, and drawing. A gallery crawl will take place upon completion so that students can interact with one another's work and provide comments. A gallery crawl is a museum style activity whereby the teacher hangs all student work around the room. The students will walk around the room and inspect their classmates' work. It will also allow them to make connections with their classmates and shed light on common goals that they may discover they have. After the gallery crawl students will continue to develop their understanding of perseverance as they determine two goals that they would like to accomplish before the end of first grade.

I teach first grade at a full immersion Dual-Language program. My school is comprised of a diverse population of students. 13% are African American, 60% are Hispanic, 19% are White, and 8% range from Asian to Indian-American. Our LEP (Limited English Proficiency) population is 60%. That is significant to note, because it means that in each classroom ESL strategies need to be in place. Before the students come to first grade they learn in a Kindergarten classroom where 80% of the day is taught in Spanish and the other 20% of the day is taught in English. When they start first grade their day is divided in half. My students spend fifty percent of their day in a Spanish-speaking classroom and fifty percent of their day in an English-speaking classroom. I am responsible for teaching the English portion of the day. I currently have 48 students that come to me with a range of skills, abilities, and background knowledge. As shown in the numbers above, half of the students that I teach come from homes where English is the primary language spoken. The other half, speak a language other than English at home. This equates to instructional challenges. Over the past four years, I have noted that my ESL (English as a Second Language) students' struggle with reading comprehension and using key vocabulary words appropriately. Writing is also an area of weakness, as they tend to have issues with subject/verb agreement and word order.

Enhancing Second Language Acquisition

Nancy Cloud, Fred Genesee, and Else Hamayan state that there are five factors that must guide

the environment for second-language learning.

The teaching must be meaningful.

The teaching must be relevant.

The language spoken should be slightly beyond the current ability level of the student.

The content must be important to the learner.

The language spoken should be the primary one used in the class.

They state that when students are engaged in an activity that interests them, they learn language incidentally and naturally. Incidental learning is effective in the development of language proficiency. I found this interesting as I have noticed examples of incidental learning taking place in my classroom. Students teach other students every day in both social and academic settings. Right now in my classroom we are studying mammals. I have heard students using surprising vocabulary about mammals due to the interactions that they have had with their peers about zoo trips or shows that they watched on Discovery Channel. I use these moments to further guide my instruction. Cloud et al suggest that using what students have learned in this manner can provide the teacher with direction on where to go next in terms of enhancing existing vocabulary and grammar structures.

Another way to strengthen the classroom environment is to bring in realia and photos when introducing a new topic. Allowing the students to discuss and manipulate these items enhances the content even more. Incorporating concrete objects and interactive tasks makes the learning meaningful even if the students are not familiar with all of the vocabulary and grammar. Larry Selinker has similar things to say regarding spoken language in the classroom. He states that language too advanced may still be helpful by providing learners with samples of language they will be able to incorporate into interlanguage when the time is right. By interlanguage, he is referring to a learner's developing second language knowledge. "It may have some characteristics of the learner's first language, characteristics of the learner's second language, and some characteristics that seem to be general."

In terms of language development, a learner goes through systematic and predictable stages. These stages are similar to the ones that they go through while acquiring their first language. Pienemann, et al (1998) demonstrated a framework for describing second language learners of English, and mentioned that second language learners follow the developmental sequence in question formation. The following shows his stages for question formation.

Stage 1: Single words, formulae, or sentence fragments

Stage 2 – Declarative word order

Stage 3 – Wh-fronting, no inversion, do – fronting, other = fronting

Stage 4 – Inversion in wh- +copula and yes/no question

Stage 5 – Inversion in wh-questions with both and auxiliary and main verb

Stage 6 – Complex questions

This poses the question, "What is the best way to teach children who are in the developing stages of language acquisition?" Clearly students will come into the classroom at different developmental stages. Researchers have many views on this. According to Lightbown and Spada, the majority of research states that a balance of form-based instruction and meaning-based instruction is the best way to go. From personal experience, I know that there needs to be a mixture of both in order to track growth and determine what to teach next.

This unit has a heavy focus on teacher read-alouds. Many of the activities are based on a story that will be read to the students. Lightbrown and Spada suggest that reading and being read to while using picture cues to determine meaning is beneficial. A comprehension-based study done with students who were attending an ESL class showed that students who listened to the teacher reading or read independently during the thirty minute class period performed just as well as students in the regular-ed classroom on comprehension tests. With the addition of teacher feedback and classroom interaction, the progress was even greater, and in some cases surpassed the progress of peers solely in the regular classroom setting.

The previously mentioned study not only accounted for reading comprehension growth, but writing growth as well. It was shown that students who listened or read to texts for thirty minutes a day wrote as well or better than their regular-education peers. There is a clear connection between reading and writing. Knowledge of one strengthens the other. Menon and Mirabito (1999) state that children learn a great deal through writing that applies to their reading. In two studies conducted by them, teachers noticed strong connections between reading and writing. When teachers gave writing time each day, the amount of free reading increased. In addition, comments made about books were more frequent and more critical. This is why I have included many different types of writing response activities in this unit. Through students own writing they learn about the writing cycle and process. As they write they learn more about the physical and mechanical aspects of writing as well as develop a deeper meaning of the content being studied.

What do I do when a student makes a mistake? How should I handle it so that they are not afraid to take risks in the future? These questions have been asked by both researchers and teachers alike. Lightbown and Spada suggest that providing guided, form-focused instruction and corrective feedback in certain circumstances is beneficial.

Vocabulary Development

Based on what I have seen happen in the classroom over the past four years, I wanted to investigate how I could support my second language learners. One way that I would like to do this is by focusing on vocabulary development. Frequency with which a word is seen is key. According to Paul Nation, a learner needs to have many meaningful encounters with a new word before it becomes firmly established in memory. Nation states that the learner needs to know the 3,000 or so high frequency words of the language. These are an immediate high priority and there is little sense in focusing on other vocabulary until these are well learned. Nation (1990) argues that after these high frequency words are learned, the next focus for the teacher is on helping the learners develop strategies to comprehend and learn the low-frequency words of the language. Because of the very poor coverage that low frequency words give, it is not worth spending class time on actually teaching these words. It is more efficient to spend class time on the strategies of guessing from context, using word parts and mnemonic techniques to remember words, and using vocabulary cards to remember foreign language - first language word pairs.

It can take as many as sixteen interactions with a word to commit it to memory. Echevarria, Vogt, and Short agree. They are the developers of the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) model. They say that there are five components that must be present in vocabulary

instructions for ELL learners.

The words must be intentionally selected and directly related to the topic being learned.

Direct instruction must take place.

Modeling must take place. Examples of how to use the word, as well as providing the students with visual representation of the word, aids in acquisition.

Multiple exposures to the word are necessary. The word or words cannot be used in an isolated situation and become engrained in the memory.

There needs to be a system to track these new vocabulary words so that they can be reinforced and reviewed as necessary.

Patsy Lightbown agrees that a tracking system, such as a notebook, has been associated with better vocabulary development. In the classroom, we brainstorm ideas for motions that we could do to help us remember the meaning of a specific word. For example, when discussing the word “graceful” we made a list of things that might move gracefully. We then determined that a butterfly moved gracefully and that if we made our hands in the shape of a butterfly and moved our hands back and forth slowly, we would be making a “graceful” movement. My young students need to connect their vocabulary words to experiences or situations that they can relate to so that they can internalize the meanings of the words and commit them to memory. Jan Hulstijn and Bhatia Laufer provide evidence that vocabulary development is more successful when learners are fully engaged in activities that require them to attend carefully to the new words and use them in productive tasks. Creating motions for their words gives them a task to do and provides them with some frame of reference when they see the words in context.

While the introduction of new words does take place in the classroom, there are also opportunities to learn new vocabulary without direct instruction. Stephen Krashen says that the best source of vocabulary growth is reading for pleasure. Similarly, Dee Gardner suggests that reading a variety of texts is an essential part of vocabulary growth. A study done in Montreal Canada supported their ideas. In the study, students were given simple readers to take home and read on their own. Individualized vocabulary measures were established so that growth could be monitored. Significant growth was noted in only six weeks. The individualized component is important in determining if vocabulary growth was present or not. Prior knowledge plays a huge role in vocabulary development. Some words will be easier to identify by students if they are cognates of their first language. I feel confident that my students will commit the word perseverance to memory quickly because the word in Spanish is perseverancia. Building upon what they already know helps establish a deeper meaning of the word. This information is riveting in terms of second language acquisition. It provides the basis for why I want to write a unit in which vocabulary is a strong component. It is my goal that my students leave my classroom with stronger vocabulary knowledge so that they can feel comfortable using in context.

Strategies:

Interest Inventories

A powerful motivator for engagement is student choice. Interest inventories allow students to

voice their interests. The teacher uses these inventories as a guide to creating meaningful activities. Students are more likely to stay focused and interested if the activity appeals to them. Krashen's affective filter hypothesis comes into play here. If students put up an affective filter due to boredom or anxiety, they will be unable to acquire the new skill being presented. By taking the unit in a direction that is preferred by the students, and allowing them choices in the activities they complete, I minimize the barrier that they might otherwise put up.

Thinking Maps

Thinking maps such as Venn Diagrams, Flow Maps, Circle Maps, and Multi-Flow Maps are used to help students better comprehend. These maps are designed to help students organize their thoughts. By using thinking maps, students will be able to use specific comprehension skills while having a visual representation to aid them. A study done in Long Beach California demonstrated that the Roosevelt Elementary School ESL students made significant gains through the usage of thinking maps. Stefanie Holzman, principal of the school in Long Beach, said that Thinking Maps become a translator of language and thinking from one language-mind (Spanish) to another language-mind (English). I often notice in my classroom that students run into trouble when they are trying to explain what they know about a topic. They have great ideas and vocabulary knowledge in their primary language that sometimes gets lost when they try to explain it in the second language. Thinking Maps help bridge that gap and allow students to create visual explanations of what is going on cognitively.

Mentor Texts

A mentor text is a piece of writing that can be used to teach a writer some aspect of the writing process. Specific texts will be chosen so that students can study the way an author writes while connecting to the theme of perseverance. According to Vygotsky, children learn best when they are in the "zone of proximal development" and can work in collaboration with a more knowledgeable other (mentor text). The purpose of using mentor texts will be to provide the students with opportunities to use work of the chosen authors as a model as well as to develop comprehension skills through the stories that we read together.

Think-Alouds

The purpose of think-alouds is to model for students the thought processes that take place when material is read. When using think-alouds, teachers verbalize their thoughts while they are reading orally. Students will understand comprehension strategies better because they can see how the mind can respond to thinking through trouble spots and constructing meaning from text. This will help second language learners as they work to glean meaning from the content.

Cooperative Group Activities

Students need to be proactive in the learning process. Ovando and Collier (1998) state that a vigorous, inquiry-based learning style is recommended as an effective method for students to become "actively engaged in solving a problem. Working in cooperative groups helps them discover new ways of perceiving their world, intensely apply learning strategies to the next task, develop family-like community among classmates, and share the excitement of a special

discovery.” These activities include “Numbered Heads Together”, “Think-Pair-Share” and “Jigsaw.”

Reading Response Groups

For post-reading practice, I will use a strategy suggested by Elina Raso (1996) called an Information Gap Activity. Students are paired, each having an information chart about the reading. Each student’s chart has information on it that the other student’s chart is missing. Students have to ask their partner questions to complete their own chart. This encourages communication through questioning, reading a chart, and oral language skills. Raso also encourages teachers to create information grids for students to fill in after reading text passages. This helps the students to organize the information. After practicing with the material that has been read, it is time for both the student and the teacher to evaluate the students’ level of understanding. With information grids, students can compare their information with others in the class.

Text-to-Text Connections

Research conducted by Moss and Hendershot (2000) clearly shows that prior knowledge (including experiences and emotions) is a major factor in students being able to comprehend what they read. Research also shows that students who are explicitly taught strategies to build background and use strategies that activate prior knowledge comprehend better than students who don’t. Making personal connections to the text is an extremely important part of this unit. I want the students to use the schema that they have to strengthen their understanding of new ideas that are introduced.

KWL Charts (Know – Want to know – Learned) Charts

These charts are graphic organizers that help identify the information that students already know as well as the questions that they have about a topic. It provides scaffolding for the students and prepares them for new content that is being taught. At the end of a lesson the students list what they learned. This is a time when the questions can be revisited and concepts can be reviewed.

Bloom’s Taxonomy Question Stems

Benjamin Bloom (1956) developed a classification of levels of intellectual behavior in learning. This taxonomy contains three overlapping domains: the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. Within the cognitive domain, he identified six levels: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. I have chosen to focus on the question stems from the analysis level. I feel that these questions will encourage my students to find deeper meaning in the ideas that we discuss. The question stems are as follows:

Which events could have happened...?

If ... happened, what might the ending have been?

How was this similar to...?

What was the underlying theme of...?

What do you see as other possible outcomes?
Why did ... changes occur?
Can you compare your ... with that presented in...?
Can you explain what must have happened when...?
How is ... similar to ...?
What are some of the problems of...?
Can you distinguish between...?
What were some of the motives behind...?
What was the turning point in the game?
What was the problem with...?

Foldables

Foldables are 3-D paper constructions that allow learners to record and process new words and concepts in a hands-on, kinesthetic way. Learners retain more concepts due to the process of creation and manipulation. These can be used in a variety of ways. One usage is to determine examples and non-examples of key vocabulary words. They can also be used to strengthen comprehension skills. A foldable could have four sections labeled characters, setting, problem, and solution. The students could demonstrate their understanding of the story elements, while including key vocabulary, by completing each section of the Foldable.

Activities

Pre-unit Activity- Interest Inventories

Before writing this unit I gave my students an interest inventory that they filled out to give me information on what topics interest them and how they learn the best (auditory, kinesthetic, visual). I took this information into account as I planned the unit. The stories that I chose are based on feedback about topics they enjoyed. I also planned post-reading activities that targeted the three types of learners as much as possible.

Activity 1 – All Shook Up

I will start the unit by introducing the concept of perseverance and building background knowledge about what perseverance is. Students will share what they know about this word and what questions they have about it by adding to our class KWL chart. Throughout the unit, students will have the chance to write what they have learned or questions that they have on sticky notes and attach them to the chart. I will do an activity called “All Shook Up” to help students visually understand the concept of perseverance. The materials needed include: three or four plastic jars with tight lids, a plastic bowl, three or four pints of whipping cream, honey, plastic knives, and sliced bread. I will first pour a pint of whipping cream into each container and place the lids on securely. The jars will be passed among the students, giving each student several moments to shake the jar before passing it on. Remind them not to give up – with perseverance they will have delicious butter. While the students are shaking the jars you may want to read a story. I have chosen to read our first mentor text about perseverance called The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle. After a few minutes of shaking, stop the students and ask them

what would happen if they gave up now. Connect this experience to what would happen if the spider gave up when spinning the web. Explain that quitting keeps great things from happening. If we lose patience and give up, nothing good will develop. It should take about 10 minutes for the cream to separate into a lump of butter in each jar. Carefully remove the butter and place it in a large plastic bowl. Drizzle honey over the butter. Invite the kids to spread the delicious treat on a piece of bread. While enjoying this snack that we persevered to produce, have students share personal experiences with a partner of times when they showed perseverance to accomplish a goal.

Activity 2 – Weaving a Perseverance Web

Have the students think back to the story The Very Busy Spider and have a quick five-minute discussion about the characters in the story and how they demonstrated perseverance. Ask the students to stand in a circle, facing one another. Join the circle with them and bring a ball of yarn with you. Start by telling the students something that you were able to accomplish through perseverance. Then call the name of a student and throw them the ball of yarn while holding on to the end of the string. This student will share their accomplishment, hold onto the string and throw the ball to another student. Once all students have had an opportunity to throw the ball of yarn it will be tossed back to me. We have not created a perseverance web where we heard (25 in my case) different examples of how things can be accomplished when you don't give up. After completing this group activity, students will be asked to tie it back to the story The Very Busy Spider. They will demonstrate how the story connects to their personal lives by completing a text-to-self-connection sheet, which is in the shape of a spider web. On one side of the web will be a place to cite events that happened in the story. On the other side of the web will be a personal experience that they have had that connects to that specific story event.

Activity 3 – Unsinkable!

The next mentor text that will be read to the students is the story called Unsinkable! by Larry Dane Brimner. In this story, the main character, Alex, demonstrates perseverance by swimming across the pool with the encouragement of his friends. I will be doing a Think-Aloud while reading the story. As the main character is going through the mental process of what he is going to decide to do in regards to swimming across or staying safely at the side, I will say out loud to the students what I am thinking as I'm reading. At the end of the story we will do an experiment that will further solidify the concept. The experiment is called Sink or Swim? The materials needed include: a clear glass bowl with water and modeling clay (Not Play-Doh). The students need to roll clay into four balls, three of them small and one a little larger (like small and big marbles). They need to drop each small one into the water and watch them sink. This is something that could have happened to the Alex from our story. Next, take the larger clay ball and start reshaping it to form the shape of a simple canoe. Talk about how this can be connected to how Alex decided to swim across the pool. Discuss how it's possible to work through the challenges and achieve your goal by "reshaping" your attitude, just as Alex did. Put the "boat" in the water and watch it float.

Activity 4 – Horton Hatches the Egg Venn Diagram and Art Activity

The third mentor text that I will read is Horton Hatches the Egg by Dr. Seuss. In this story, Horton the elephant sits on an egg for his friend while she takes a vacation. Through the cold and rain he sits on the egg and never leaves it until it hatches. After reading we will compare Horton to his friend Mayzie by using a Venn diagram. The students will determine character traits that would define each of them. They will analyze which character demonstrated perseverance. The students will then do an art and writing project based on the ending of the book. When the egg finally hatches, it comes out half elephant, half bird. This is because Horton took such good care of it. They will need to come up with an animal other than Horton the elephant that could have sat on the egg for Mayzie. Students will draw a picture of the animal sitting on the egg and then the combination of Mayzie the bird and the animal that they have chosen. They need to write about why the animal looks the way it does and how the animal's perseverance caused the egg to come out as something other than a bird.

Activity 5 – Horton Jigsaw

Using the story Horton Hatches the Egg, the students will do a cooperative learning activity called Jigsaw to help them answer questions. These questions were written using Benjamin Bloom's question stems. To begin the activity, each student will receive a copy of the questions and will read over them with his or her "home" group. They will then leave their "home" groups and meet in "expert" groups. Expert groups discuss the material and brainstorm ways in which to present their understandings to the other members of their "home" group. The experts return to their "home" groups to teach their portion of the materials and to learn from the other members of their "home" group.

The questions for the activity are as follows:

Which events could have happened in real life?

If Mayzie had stayed on her egg the entire time, what might have happened at the end of the story?

How is Horton similar to Mayzie?

How is Horton different from Mayzie?

How was this story similar to the other stories that we have read about perseverance?

What were some of the reasons that Horton did not leave the egg?

What was the problem with what Mayzie did?

After doing the Jigsaw activity we will review questions as a class and time will be given to add post-it notes to our Perseverance KWL chart.

Activity 6 – I Think I Can

The next mentor text that will be used is the classic story of The Little Engine that Could. I will tell the students to listen carefully to the events of the story because they will be assembling a flow map train of their own to help them sequence the events of the story. Students will be given an empty flow map with six boxes. Each box will be in the shape of a train. Based on student ability, they will need to identify six main events from the story and write them on the train cars provided. Some train cars will be filled in already. Higher learners will be given the first and last event and will have to write in the four middle events. Middle-level learners will be given

the first, third, and last event and will have to write in the three middle events. Lower-level learners will be given all of the events on another sheet of paper. These students will have to cut and paste the events in sequential order onto their flow map.

Activity 7 – Character Trading Cards

Many students can relate to playing sports and getting frustrated when they do not win. The mentor text Winners Never Quit! by Mia Hamm is a great story about a girl who wants to give up soccer because she loses a game. Her teammates and siblings teach her that giving up is no way to solve her problems. Throughout the story I will have the students turn-and-talk with their partner about how they can relate to Mia. After reading the students will share some things that they discussed with their turn-and-talk partner. I will then show them some sports trading cards as well as a trading card that I will make about myself. These cards highlight a person's talent and gives information or "stats" about that person. Using these ideas, students will create their own trading card. They may choose to do a sports trading card, a music trading card, or any trading card that highlights a talent that they have in which they demonstrated perseverance. They will need to write their name, age, talent, and how they became accomplished at that talent. There will be space for them to draw themselves in action on the trading card as well. When they finish I will make copies and make a class trading card book.

Activity 8 – Vocabulary building with The Pumpkin Runner

To help students understand that you are never too old to try new things and persevere I will read the mentor text The Pumpkin Runner by Marsha Arnold. This is a story about a 61 year old Australian potato farmer who decides to run a 500 mile race from Melbourne to Sydney. This story lends itself to great vocabulary enrichment and helps the students to learn about a new place. To enhance the story the students will do a pumpkin patch vocabulary activity. Students will be given a pumpkin patch consisting of words and their definitions (with pictures). There will be two sets of pumpkin patches created; A and B. Students with pumpkins from pumpkin patch A have to find a partner that has pumpkins from pumpkin patch B. They will share the information on their pumpkins to help each other have a complete set of words and definitions. This is an information gap activity that encourages students to negotiate for meaning by asking each other questions to find the missing information.

Activity 9 – Pumpkin Runner Foldable

The story The Pumpkin Runner is not only a great story to use to build vocabulary, but it also teaches the children that sometimes hard work is required to reach one's goals. To help the students better understand this concept, as well as the author's purpose for writing the story, they will construct a foldable. The foldable will contain five sections. On the front of the foldable the students will write each of the following question words: Who? Where? What? When? and How? On the inside of the first flap they will write about and draw the main character in the story. On the second flap they will draw and write about the setting of the story. On the third flap they will draw and write about the goal that the main character wanted to achieve. On the fourth flap they will draw and write about the time period of the story. On the last flap they will draw and write how the main character demonstrated perseverance by accomplishing his goal.

Activity 10 – Perseverance Postage Stamp

To help students learn how to take risks and persevere to achieve their goals we will read the mentor text The Dot by Peter H. Reynolds. The teacher encourages the students to make a mark and see where it takes her. In many instances, someone helps us persevere and encourages us to be our best. To thank them, we will write letters to someone who helped us accomplish one of our goals and encouraged us to never give up. We will then create a perseverance postage stamp that will contain words and pictures which describe something that we accomplished through perseverance.

Activity 11 – Perseverance Kite

The last mentor text in the unit before the culminating activity is the story *The Kite* from the book Frog and Toad are Friends by Arnold Lobel. In this story, Frog and Toad make a kite and have a hard time getting it to fly. They are made fun of by the birds and they almost give up. After reading the story that students will make their own perseverance kite. On one side of the kite they will draw a picture and write about what they have learned about perseverance through our unit of study. They will also have a chance to write their findings on a post-it note to add to our KWL chart. Attached to the kite will be a string and two bows. On the bows they will write two goals that they want to accomplish over the next year. It is my hope that they will realize the importance of perseverance in accomplishing these goals.

Activity 12 – Final Project

Culminating Activity – To allow the students a chance to express what they have learned about perseverance and what it means to them I will have them complete a final project. They will be given a list of projects that they can do and based on their interest inventories and learning styles, they will choose the one that best suits their needs and interests. After completing one of the projects, we will have a perseverance gallery crawl. The projects will be displayed (or presented) and all students will have a chance to share what they have learned over the course of the unit. The students can choose from the following final projects:

Design a poster

Make up a song

Shape poem

Diorama

Short story

Art project (with written explanation)

Present a short skit (with a partner or small group)

Notes

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Seuss, Dr.. *Horton Hatches the Egg*. New York: Random House, 1968.

Annotated Bibliography for Teachers

Cappelli, Rose, and Lynn R. Dorfman. *Mentor Texts: Teaching Writing Through Children's Literature, K-6*. New York: Stenhouse Publishers, 2007. This book provides teachers with a detailed list of mentor texts that would be appropriate to read when studying a particular theme. It also lists the suggested grade levels for each book.

Cloud, Nancy, Fred Genesee, and Else Hamayan. *Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 2000. This book provides teachers with strategies to support second language learners. While the strategies are geared toward students acquiring a second language, many can be used to enhance vocabulary of a student's primary language.

Echevarria, Jana, Deborah J. Short, and Maryellen Vogt. *Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: The SIOP Model*. Boston: Allyn & Amp, 2007. This book provides teachers with a number of activities that they can do in the classroom to support their second language learners. It explains the SIOP model in language that is easy to understand. The strategies in this book can be used in a variety of classroom settings.

Keene, Ellin Oliver, and Susan Zimmermann. *Mosaic of Thought: Teaching Comprehension in a Reader's Workshop*. Chicago: Heinemann, 1997. This book provides teachers with ideas that they can use when teaching reading comprehension. They can be used during small group instruction or can be adapted for whole group instruction.

Lightbrown, Patsy M., and Nina Spada. *How Languages are Learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

This book provides teachers information on how languages are acquired and shares a number of research studies that have been done on second language acquisition.

Marzano, Robert J., Debra J. Pickering, and Jane E. Pollock. *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*. Virginia: Prentice Hall, 2004. This book is helpful when trying to find meaningful and engaging activities to use in the classroom.

Ovando, Carlos Julio. *Bilingual and ESL Classrooms: Teaching In Multicultural Contexts*. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 1998.

This book is an excellent resource for both ESL and classroom teachers. It provides teachers with strategies that build vocabulary and comprehension skills for second language learners.

Annotated Bibliography for Students

Arnold, Marsha Diane, and Brad Sneed. *The Pumpkin Runner*. New York: Dial Books For Young Readers, 1998.

This is a story about a man how show perseverance by running a great distance without stopping. It has vocabulary that lends itself to vocabulary development through context clues.

Brimner, Larry Dane, and Christine Tripp. *Unsinkable!* . New York: Children's Press, 2002.

This is a story about a boy who faces his fears by swimming across the pool. It is a story about encouragement from friends and perseverance.

Carle, Eric. *The Very Busy Spider*. New York: Philomel Books, 1999.

This story is about a spider that spins his web and due to his perseverance, creates a masterpiece.

Hamm, Mia, and Carol Thompson. *Winners Never Quit!*. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.

This book is about a girl named Mia who loves to play soccer. She gets upset when she doesn't win a game and she decides to quit. Her family and friends convince her that true winners keep playing, even when they lose.

Lobel, Arnold. "The Kite." In *Frog and Toad are Friends* . (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 18-28.

This is a classic story featuring Frog and Toad. In the story, Frog and Toad take their kite to the meadow, but have trouble getting it to fly. They are made fun of and almost give up. With perseverance and determination, they get their kite to fly.

Piper, Watty, and Loren Long. *The Little Engine that Could*. New York: Philomel Books, 2005.

In this story, the Little Engine strives to make it up a hill. Positive self-image and perseverance are strong themes in this story.

Reynolds, Peter. *The Dot*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2003.

In this story the reader meets a character named Vashti. When Vashti angrily stabs a dot onto an empty art class assignment, her teacher wisely follows through with a lesson in life by framing her dot for all to see.

Seuss, Dr.. *Horton Hatches the Egg*. New York: Random House, 1968.

In this story, Horton the Elephant decides to sit on an egg for a bird that he knows. Even when conditions get terrible and Horton wants to give up, he doesn't. This is an excellent story to read when studying themes of responsibility or perseverance.

Appendix –

Implementing District Standards

The following district standards will be met through the implementation of this unit:

2.03 Read and comprehend both fiction and nonfiction text appropriate for grade one using:
prior knowledge.

summary.

questions.

graphic organizers.

2.04 Use preparation strategies to anticipate vocabulary of a text and to connect prior knowledge and experiences to a new text.

2.05 Predict and explain what will happen next in stories.

2.06 Self-monitor comprehension by using one or two strategies (questions, retelling, summarizing).

2.07 Respond and elaborate in answering what, when, where, and how questions.

3.01 Elaborate on how information and events connect to life experiences.

3.02 Recognize and relate similar vocabulary use and concepts across experiences with texts.

3.03 Discuss unfamiliar oral and/or written vocabulary after listening to or reading texts.

3.05 Recognize how particular authors use vocabulary and language to develop an individual, recognizable voice.

4.02 Use words that describe, name characters and settings (who, where), and tell action and events (what happened, what did ___ do) in simple texts.

5.04 Use complete sentences to write simple texts.

5.06 Self-monitor composition by using one or two strategies (e.g., rereading, peer conferences).