

**The Case for Authentic Use of Informational Texts for ELs**

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MATSOL  
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**Who I Am**

- Classroom Teacher
- Literacy Specialist
- Literacy Consultant
- Assistant Professor

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**What We Know About Literacy and Science**

1. Children need to read, write, and speak about something interesting (Allington, 2002; Guthrie et al., 1999).
2. Reading and writing can be used as tools of inquiry in science. Reading and writing benefit when embedded in an inquiry-based science setting (Pearson et al., 2010).

“When literacy activities are driven by inquiry, students simultaneously learn how to read and write science texts and to do science” (Pearson et al., 2010, p. 459-460).

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**Authentic Learning**

- “Replicate or reflect reading and writing activities that occur in the lives of people outside of a learning-to-read-and-write context and purpose.”

Duke, Purcell-Gates, Hall, & Tower, 2006

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**Authenticity of Activities:**

- “This reading, writing, or listening-to-text purpose exists in the lives of people outside a classroom, or it is as authentic as the use of that genre for that purpose can be.”

Duke, Purcell-Gates, Hall, & Tower, 2006

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**Authenticity of Texts**

- “This text type occurs naturally in the lives of people outside a classroom. You can find it in bookstores or order it for home delivery. This category also includes texts that are written primarily for instructional purposes but that closely mimic the naturally occurring texts—the only difference being the publisher’s audience.”

Duke, Purcell-Gates, Hall, & Tower, 2006

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### Authenticity Scenarios

- Using fiction texts to teach information.
  - Read *Rainbow Fish* and identified that he needed air, food, and shelter to survive.
- Literacy-centric, content-independent
  - Read a text about sharks pointing out text features with little mention of sharks.

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### Authenticity Scenarios

- Content-driven, absent literacy goals
  - Read about the layers of the earth without any mention of a reading strategy.
- Balance between literacy and content knowledge goals—“each in the service of the other” (Moje, & Greenleaf, 2010).
  - Read about drug addiction. Reviewed highlighting as a tool to pick out the most important parts of the text. Then, students shared highlighted parts in discussion.

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### DESE “Selected Populations” Data Summer 2014

Title	% of School	% of District	% of State
First Language not English	28.1	26.8	17.3
English Language Learner	18.5	13	7.9
Low-income	75.3	59.7	38.3
Students with Disabilities	22.9	21.6	17.0

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- ### Summer Program Setting
- Staff
    - Director and Assistant Director
    - 2 interventionists, 10 teachers, 6 paraprofessionals, 1 art intern
    - Target students—41 struggling readers and writers entering 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade
  - 5 classrooms
  - Team taught
  - Four weeks long, four days a week, four hours a day
  - 1 hour of debriefing/planning for staff
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### Purpose

Provide intensive summer interventions in literacy for struggling readers and writers (predominantly ELL) through science and art.

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- ### Mantras and Goal
- Our Mantras
- Every child will read something well every day.
  - Reading, writing, and learning are for authentic purposes.
  - Our curriculum is the child’s needs.
- Goal: Authentic, targeted learning.
- © Sacramento 2014

## Planning our Ocean Content

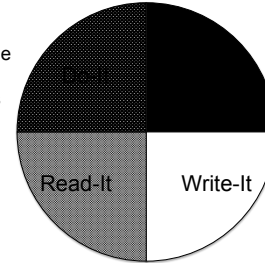
Professional Development Sessions

- Developing science content, experiments, and field trips with Marine Science Educator
- Informational text focus—how to scaffold learning
- Analyzing assessment data and determining next instructional steps



## Multi-modal approach to learning (Pearson et al., 2010)

Introducing and using the language of experiments and science



## Program Planning (Month)

	Themes (Essential Questions, Content Goals, Target Vocabulary)	Texts—Reading Opportunities	Texts—Writing Opportunities	Experiences (Art, Field Trips, Experiments)	Materials
Week 1		* Guided reading			
Week 2		* Guided reading			
Week 3		* Guided reading			
Week 4		* Guided reading			



## Do-It

- Conduct experiments
- Go on fieldtrips
- Watch videos
- Keeping scientific journals—integrating writing



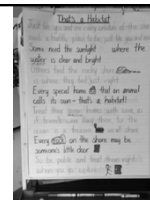
## Talk-It

- What I thought I knew/ What I have learned as a scientist chart (Revised KWL charts)
- Discussing experiments—making predictions, discussing results, drawing conclusions
- Shared writing experiences






## Read-It

- experiences with reading texts
- Topic-based texts for read alouds and guided reading
- Reading and rereading multiple texts— independently, in pairs, rereading, with support, as read alouds
- Researching their own questions—paired research






### Reading...

- Independent level text
- Instructional level text (guided reading—guiding children in their discomfort and independent attempts to work through text)
- Frustrational level text (with support in modeled or shared reading)

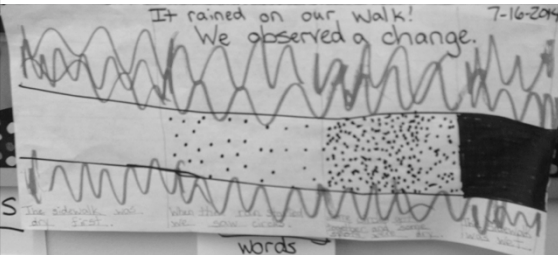





### Write-It

- Wrote lab reports (informational)
- Wrote guides—how to prepare for a natural disaster in Salem (informational)
- Wrote about experiences on field trips and what happened when they touched the animals (narrative)
- Wrote to advocate to Save the Manatees (opinion)







### Shared writing— Observing Like Scientists


21

### Art extensions (on campus)

### Sample Daily Schedule


- Morning Meeting
- Responsive Classroom
- Discussion
- Daily agenda
- Fluency work with poems
- Content generation
- Reading workshop
- Guided reading
- Word work
- Independent reading
- Read alouds
- Writing Workshop
- Writing about science experiments, field trips, videos, their research, and reading
- Daily wrap-up
- Goals for the next day
- Content focus
- Daily debriefing and planning time for teachers



### Reading Outcomes

Number of Children	Growth on the BAS reading assessment
21 children (53%)	+1.5-3 months
6 children (15%)	+4-6 months
7 children (18%)	+7-9 months
6 children (15%)	maintained

- 7 children (14%) who were previously below grade level are now on or above grade level
- An average of 3.7 months of growth in four weeks
- Attendance = 91%



### More Progress!

- 93% of the children increased their spelling ability
- 95% of the children increased in their content knowledge







### Pre-Program Writing

I know the weather can be rainy and sunny and cloudy and snow cold and windy. I look. I hear. The rainy.

I know the beach  The weather  Write the ocean


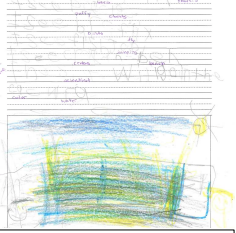


In the weather  
can be rainy and sunny  
and snow  
and windy  
I see the rain:  
rainy and wet  
sunny and hot  
cloudy  
snowy



### Post-Program Writing

I see the animals jumping on the water. I see the water moving. I see the water low tide. I see rocks on the water. I see the grass on the water. I see blue water. I see gray water. I see big sky. I see the sun. I see the sun on the water. I see bees on the flowers. I see puffy clouds. I see fish jumping. I see crabs on the beach. The scientist is working in the colored water.





### As a Scientist, I've learned...

"Scientists do the same experiments over and over again to see if what they're doing is really true."

"A scientist never gives up because they want to know how the world works."


"Sometimes an experiment doesn't work and sometimes it does – that's part of being a scientist."



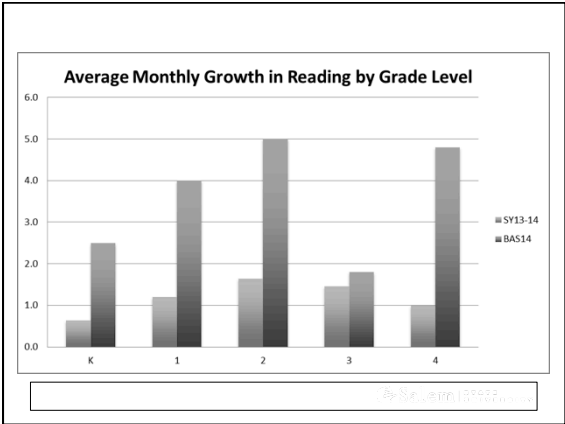
### Draw a Scientist

What does a scientist do?

Scientist work in their lab.  
I want to be a scientist  
so much scientist  
are good at finding things!



Dere,  
Ms. Condie  
Ethan I come to school on Fridays  
Saturday and Sunday? Kelly likes  
singer



### Principles for Improving Children’s Literacy and Science Achievement

1. All children learn best when the learning is situated in context (Goldschmidt, 2010; Guthrie et al., 1999), and this is particularly true for ELL students (Cummins, 2000).
2. More authentic learning opportunities increase students’ literacy achievement (Duke et al., 2006).

### Implications and Application

We believe that programs such as this can be implemented during and outside of the school year. It will take:

- Revising/designing curricula focused on authentic learning opportunities.
- Collaboration between classroom teachers, ESL teachers, content-area teachers, and district leaders for PD opportunities.

### Questions and Comments

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Thanks for coming!