

Accelerating Learning for Newcomers: The wings they need to fly

2015 EL Alliance Conference Session

Presenters:

Toshiko Maurizio, Principal
Noelia Ruiz, Bilingual Facilitator
Barbara Page, ELL Specialist
Meadow Park Middle School
Beaverton, Oregon



Session Agenda:

I. Introduction: Guiding Principles, Oregon ELP Standards and OCR Guidance

II. Session Objectives

- A. Develop a clearer understanding of the specialized literacy and oracy needs of Newcomer English Learners.**
- B. Acquire new practices aligned with the Oregon ELP standards to develop Newcomer literacy while building oral language and content knowledge.**
- C. Learn about a Saturday and after-school Newcomer program at Meadow Park Middle School in Beaverton, Oregon.**





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“Education gives me the wings I need to fly.”



Martha, a Chibok girl in Nigeria, when asked what education means to her.

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Guiding Principles

- Newcomers need specialized “fast track” instruction that is intensive and accelerated in order to master English for college and careers.
- Language is learned through action --- meaningful, engaging interaction across content areas (van Lier & Walqui, 2012).
- Cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic pluralism are assets; we all learn from each other.



Today's focus is on literacy and oral language. For future presentations:

Consider submitting for ORTESOL, Tri-TESOL, OABE (RFPs out now!!) and next year's EL Alliance! So work to be done on ...

- ★ Affective and cultural needs of Newcomers, including trauma - Capua and Marshall,
- ★ Addressing newcomer literacy in bilingual and dual language programs
- ★ Other? Please write ideas on cards for our **SpellingCity** raffle!





Learning languages is fun!
We learn by interacting.

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What is a Newcomer?

A “Newcomer” for our purposes is a student new to the country (<3 years) who is testing at the beginning level in English, recommended by an ELL Specialist and approved by parents.

Some definitions of Newcomers or Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) are more precise, requiring specified number of years of interrupted schooling.

They have (at least!) Double the Work.



English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards

April 2014 - Guiding Principle #5:

ELLs with limited or interrupted formal education **must be provided access to targeted supports** that allow them to develop foundational literacy skills in an **accelerated time frame** (DeCapua & Marshall, 2011). Educators can refer to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for ELA section **“Reading: Foundational Skills”** for this purpose.



Guidance from OCR (2015):

“...some school districts have designed programs to meet the unique needs of EL students whose formal education has been interrupted in their country of origin....

newcomer programs as a bridge to general education classrooms. ”

“....a school district will typically have to provide **more EL services for the**

least English proficient EL students...”



Guidance from OCR (2015) cont.:

“....it is unlikely the Departments would find a violation in the area of EL student segregation by a school district that offers a **voluntary newcomer EL program with self-contained EL programs for a limited duration** (generally for one year) so long as it schedules the newcomer EL students’ nonacademic subjects, lunchtime, and recess with non-EL students; encourages newcomer EL students to participate in integrated after-school activities; and evaluates their English proficiency regularly to allow appropriate transitions out of the newcomer EL program throughout the academic year.”



We all learn
from each other.



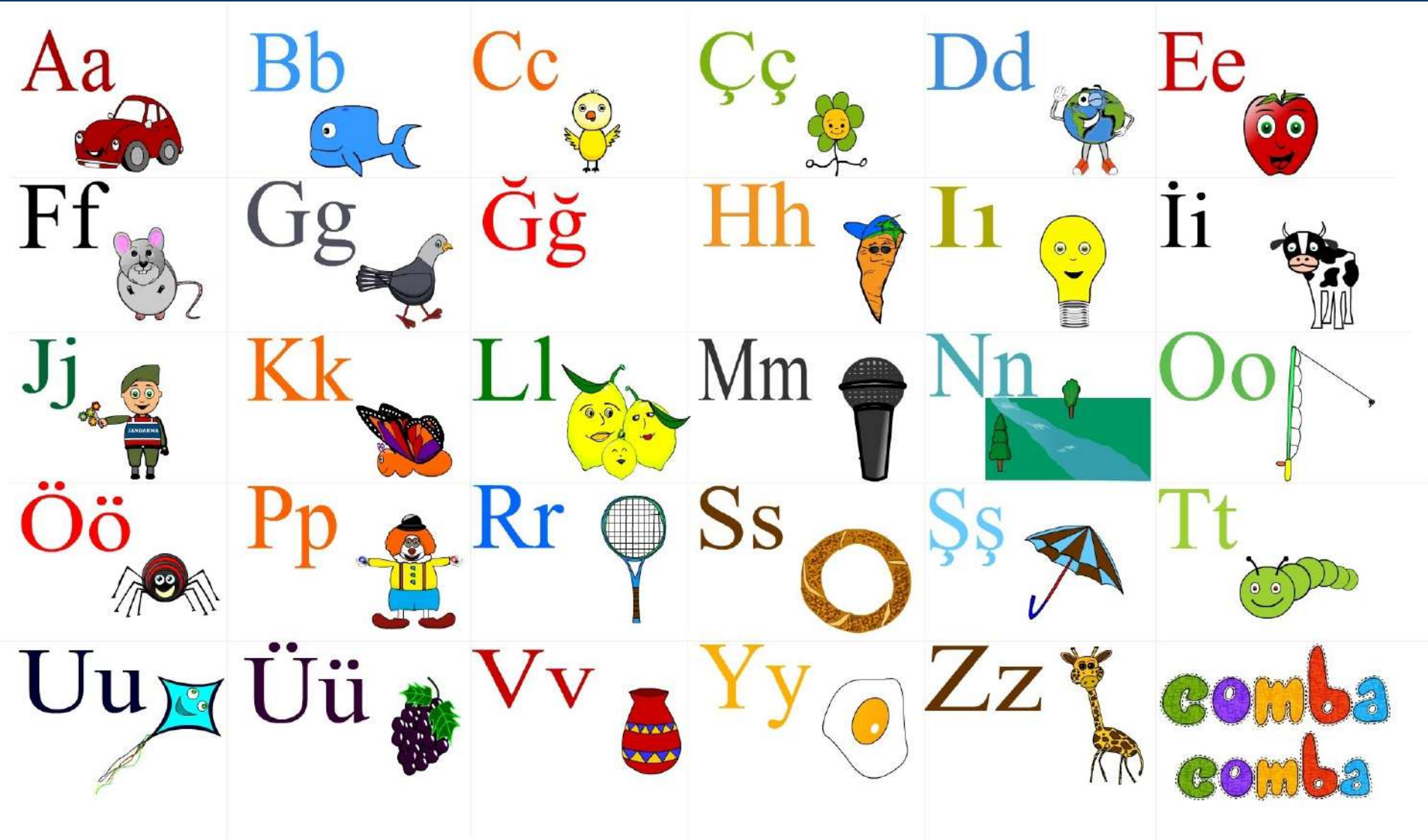


Objective #1: Develop a clearer understanding of the specialized literacy and oracy needs of Newcomer English Learners.

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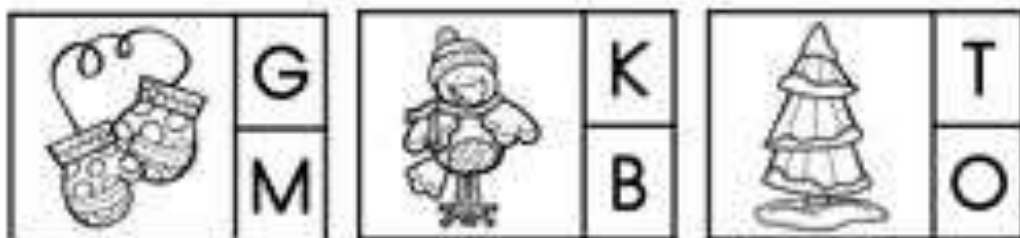


Why do Newcomer ELs need specialized literacy instruction? Discuss.



Winter Beginning Sounds

Color the beginning sound for each winter object.



f r e e z i n g

Beginning literacy programs for native speakers assume a 5 year old's 5,000+ word oral vocabulary and often require background knowledge Newcomers might not have.





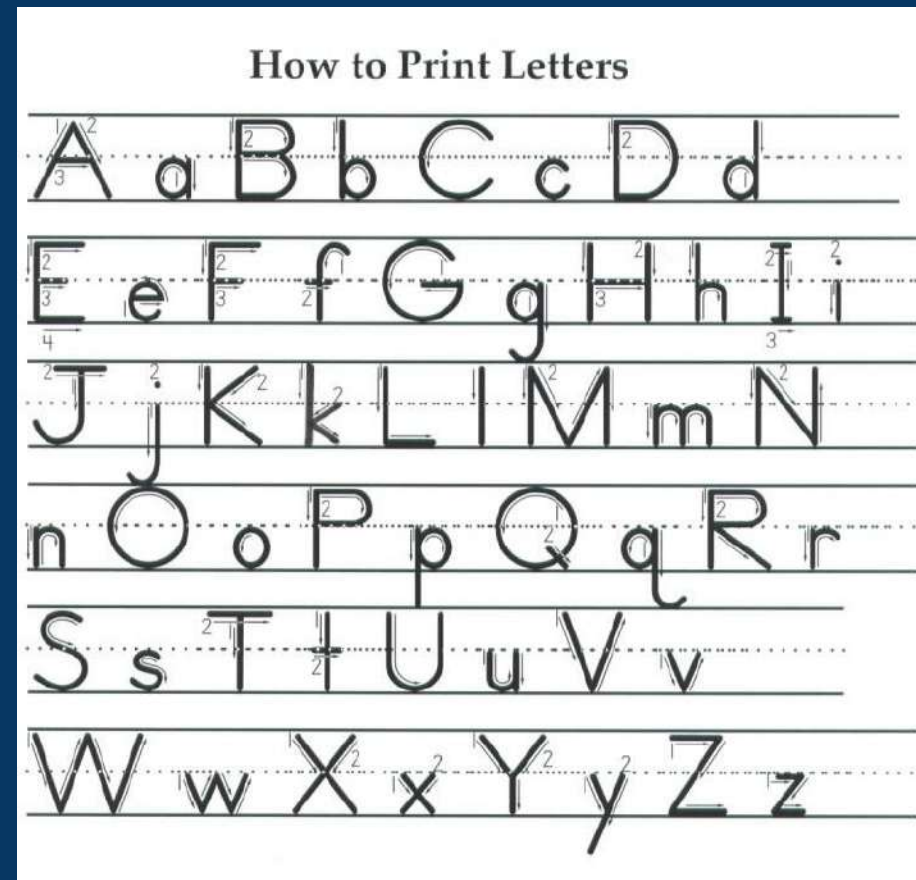
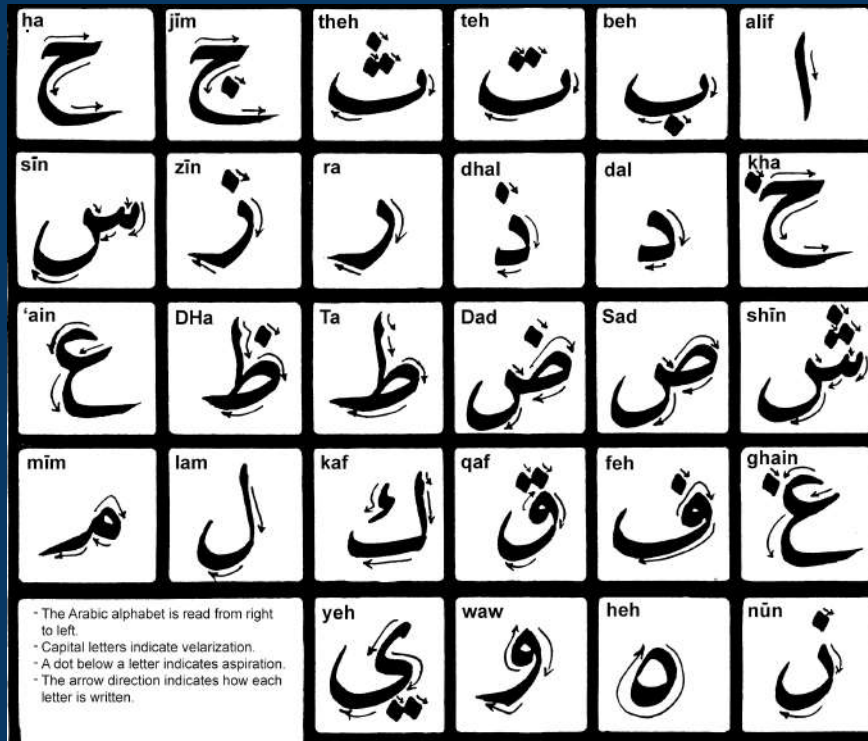
Different writing systems add to the fun.

Where would you start?

나랏말싸미 中國에 달아
 文^문字^자와로서 르스 못디아니 할씩
 이런 전초로 어린 백^백姓^성이
 니르고져 흥배이셔도
 무춤내 제쁘들시러 퍼디
 몬흥노미하나라
 내이를 爲^원하야 어엿비너겨
 새로스물여 疊^중字^자를 밍그노니
 사름마다히여수빙니겨날로부메
 便^편安^안한키하고져 흥상르미니라



The explicit instruction needed isn't dumbing down. It's giving a leg up.



Newcomers have no time to lose....

- 1,000 words to navigate school & community
- 2,000 - 3,000 high-frequency words needed to start guessing from context while reading
- then 20,000+ words, oral and print, to catch up by high school, 50,000 for college
- vocabulary is learned through multiple repetitions, and literacy must build on a foothold of oral language

**We need to establish that
feedback loop STAT!**



You can't reach the top without both!



**Literacy
back up**

**Oral
Vocabulary
“foothold”**





Objective #2: Acquire new practices aligned with the Oregon ELP standards to develop Newcomer literacy while building oral language and content knowledge.



How to meet the specialized literacy learning needs of Newcomers

- ★ Teach “frequently occurring” vocabulary to navigate and adjust to school and community.
- ★ **Harness** new words and ensure vocabulary recycling by explicit teaching of reading skills through everyday words (e.g. colors, numbers, days of the week) and **targeted content vocabulary** (e.g. 50 states, animals). Songs are great!



How to meet the specialized literacy learning needs of Newcomers (cont.)

- ★ Tie new words to readings for **recycling**.
- ★ Provide for **extensive fluency practice**.
- ★ Teach and **correct** the tricky structures before they fossilize: irregular past, past negatives and questions, past participles, general plurals.
- ★ **Accelerate** - ratchet it up!



Create the snowball effect!



In a first language, children listen, then begin to babble and eventually reach a point of “language explosion” when they learn a threshold number of words, often around 18 months.

New language learners also need to absorb the words around them and practice them in a safe space. Soon they’ll begin to “parse” more and more of the words they hear (the snowball!) and gain all-important phonological awareness of English.

Triage: One-on-one tutoring

Create a Newcomer “first aid kit” with sections on the alphabet, numbers, time, money, etc.

Our SNA Curriculum lists activities correlated to ELP and Literacy standards that can be done by aides or volunteers under the direction of an ELL Specialist.

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Sample Project-Based Practices for Newcomer classes

Sample Unit “Creatures of the World” - Cross-curricular Humanities & Science-based ELD (grades 6,7,8)

- ★ Introduce vocabulary - [Oxford Picture Dictionary](#)
- ★ Phonics and spelling practice - [SpellingCity](#)
- ★ Close reading at instructional level
- [Access Science](#)



Sample Project-Based Practices for Newcomer classes (cont.)

- ★ Higher-order thinking skills: Classify, Predict, Solve
- ★ Extensive reading for fluency, pronunciation & recycling of vocab: Raz Kids
- ★ Culminating Group Project:
presentation on endangered species



Objective #3

Meadow Park's Saturday and After-School Newcomer Program leverages the support of the community, including an innovative high school volunteer program.



Happy Newcomers and Volunteers



Saturday Newcomer Academy
March 7th, 2015
10 countries, grades 5-11

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Extending learning - Meadow Park's Saturday Newcomer Academy



Third year of
pilot program
to extend
learning
opportunities
to our
newcomer
ELs.



Aisha & Raul:
Why do you like
helping others?

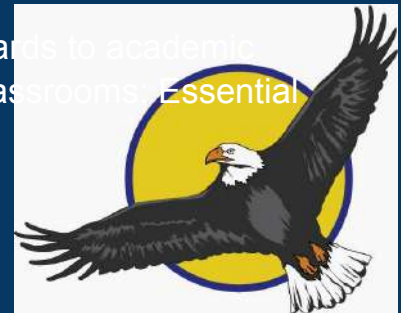


**High School Volunteers
provide one-on-one learning,
mentorship and inspiration.**



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Resources

Fry word lists 1 - 400 - FLASHCARDS :)

Grammar to Go English Grammar Practice (Pearson Education)

Reading A-Z & Raz Kids

SpellingCity

Imagine Learning

Keys to Learning (Pearson Longman)

ACCESS for Newcomers

ACCESS Math, Science, World & American History (Great Source/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)

Oxford Picture Dictionary (Oxford University Press)

Oxford Picture Dictionary in the Content Areas



Questions & Comments?

Contact information

toshiko_maurizio@beaverton.k12.or.us

noelia_ruiz@beaverton.k12.or.us

barbara_page@beaverton.k12.or.us



Giving our newcomers their “wings” makes a world of difference to them, to their families and to our community as a whole.



Thank
you!

