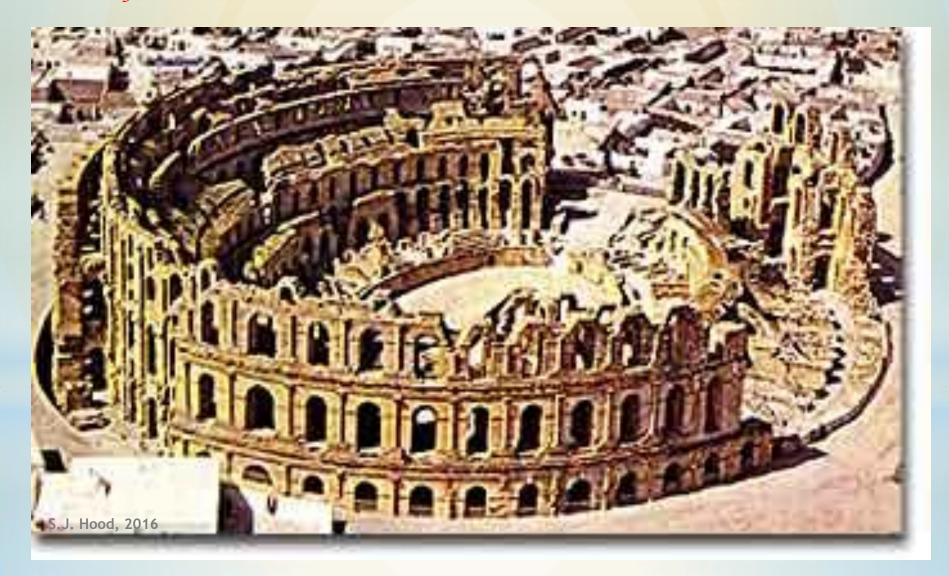# Using Information Gap Activities to Improve English Learners' Oral Language Proficiency

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*Discuss the importance of oral language development activities.

*Compare controlled and communicative production activities.

*Participate in a seventh grade Roman trade routes information gap activity.

*Identify the forms, functions, and vocabulary necessary for the Trade Routes information gap activity.

*Objectives

*Why is oral language development important for English learners?

*Write-Pair Share-Pair Pair Share

Speaking and Listening
• Participate in purposeful collaborative conversations with partners as well as in small and large groups.
• Comprehend information presented orally or visually.
• Share information in a variety of formats (including those that employ the use of technology).
• Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks.

*Key Practices & Disciplinary Core Ideas of the ELA CCSS

* Communicate (orally, in writing, and through other representations) about concepts, procedures, strategies, claims, arguments, and other information related to problem solving:

  * Create, label, describe, and use in presenting solutions to a math problem multiple written representations of a problem.

  * Explain in words orally or in writing relationships between quantities and multiple representations of problem solutions.

  * Present information, description of solutions, explanations, and arguments to others.

  * Respond to questions or critiques from others.

  * Ask questions about others' solutions, strategies, and procedures for solving problems.

* Mathematics CCSS

- Oral language proficiency plays an important role in development of literacy in ELLs.

- Naturalistic, authentic language samples provide more valid assessment of language proficiency.

- Having well-developed oral language proficiency in English is associated with well-developed reading comprehension skills in English.

- Well-developed oral language skills in English are associated with better writing skills in English (limited research).

- Literacy programs that provide instructional support of oral language development in English, along with high-quality instruction in literacy skills and strategies, are the most successful.

- Vocabulary and background knowledge, acquired through oral language, should be targeted intensively throughout literacy instruction. The need to develop stronger English language proficiency to become literate in English argues for an early, ongoing, and intensive effort to develop this oral proficiency.

* Developing Literacy in Second-Language Learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth (2006)

- Improving oral English proficiency is a must. ELLs' language limitations begin to impede their progress most noticeably as they move beyond the early stages of reading, and vocabulary and content knowledge become increasingly relevant for continued reading success usually around 3rd grade.

- Critical that teachers work to develop ELLs' oral English, particularly vocabulary and their content knowledge from the time they start school, even as they are learning the reading basics.

- ELLs need intensive oral English language development, especially vocabulary and academic English instruction. Effective ELD provides both explicit teaching of features of English and ample, meaningful opportunities to use English.

* What Research Says About Teaching ELLs (Goldenberg, 2008)

* **Controlled Practice**
  * Elicits the specific use of the form.
  * Focuses on accuracy.
  * Exercise may provide form & meaning.
* Examples:
  * Cloze activities
  * Sentence frames
  * Bingo

* Controlled Production Activities (Lyster, 2009)

Amphibians and Reptiles

* Amphibians live in damp places, _____ reptiles live in dry places.

* _____ amphibians, reptiles have scales. _____ reptiles, amphibians breathe with lungs.

* Amphibians eat insects and reptiles do _____.

* _____ reptiles and amphibians use camouflage for survival.

* _____ reptiles, amphibians have powerful legs and webbed feet.

* _____ amphibians, reptiles lay hard-shelled eggs.

* Production Activity: Controlled Practice (Lyster, 2009)

* **Communicative Practice**
    * Open-ended tasks
    * Motivating purpose to use language
    * Students provide form & meaning
* Examples:
    * Student created books
    * Science experiments
    * Role play

* Communicative Activities (Lyster, 2009)

*Tasks must be designed so Els negotiate for meaning.

*The successful completion of the task requires using the target language. Students learn the grammar & vocabulary, explicitly, before they participate in the task.

*Grade them!

*OLD Activities Must Be Carefully Planned & Carried Out

- Originated in Great Britain in late '70s.
- Communication: Each person possesses information that is unknown to others.
- To overcome the gap we must communicate with others.
- All students participate equally & actively.
- Based on Vygotsky's theory that social interaction is the basis of human cognition, Swain's output theory that output allows for the meaningful use of one's linguistic resources, and research that shows that when learners create and modify meaning they stand a better chance of internalizing the language than those who produce it only to display correct language forms.
- Ideal for classrooms based on content rather than language because they teach the skills learners need in order to discover new information.
- Develops communication skills.
- Develops cultural competence.

*Information Gap Activities (Walz, 1996)

*Examples of different types of Information Gap activities

*Focus on **BICS**

*Focus on **CALP**
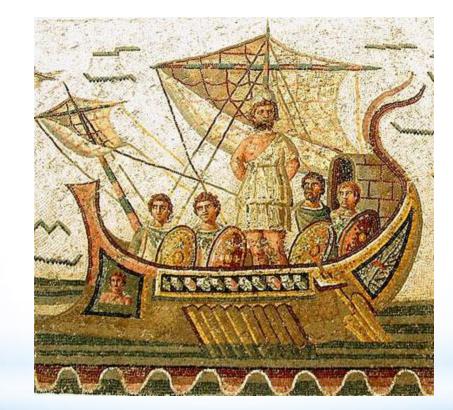
*Use the **CCSS**

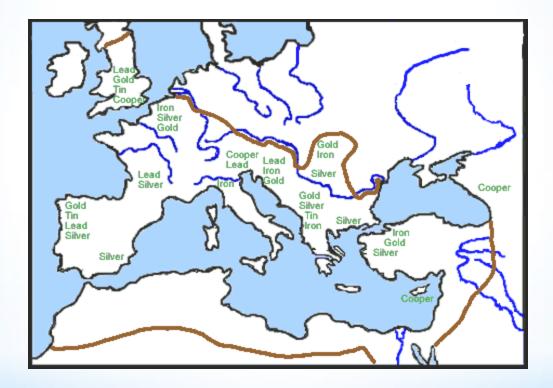*Fun to Create!

S.J. Hood, 2016

*Seventh Grade Social Studies

*Historical Knowledge

*Relate significant events and eras in local, state, United States, and world history to past and present issues and developments.

*7.2. Examine the importance of trade routes and trace the rise of cultural centers and trade cities in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

*Oregon Standards by Design

S.J. Hood, 2016

* Pairs
* Partner A; partner B
* Privacy folders
* Use a whisper voice.
* Partner A begins.
* Go back and forth.
  * Ask each other for trade routes between the ports indicated.
  * Draw the trade route.
  * Ask what trade goods were traded on the routes.
  * Ask where entertainment centers were located.

*Let's Try It!

*What are the forms, functions, and academic vocabulary needed to be successful at this particular information gap activity?

*Prerequisite Knowledge

*Use an easy scoring rubric.

*Decide what you want to assess (vocabulary, amount of information, grammar structure, culture, etc.)

*Grade Them!

* 9th & 10th grades; ELA CC
  * **Anchor Standard 3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.**
  * 9-10.RL.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
* 4th grade; Science
  * 4-ESS2-2 Analyze and interpret data from maps to describe patterns of Earth's features.
  * Clarification Statement: Maps can include topographic maps of Earth's land and ocean floor, as well as maps of the locations of mountains, continental boundaries, volcanoes, and earthquakes.
* 2nd grade; Math CC
  * **J. Reason with shapes and their attributes.**
  * 2.G.1 Recognize and draw shapes having specified attributes, such as a given number of angles or a given number of equal faces. (Sizes are compared directly or visually, not compared by measuring.)
  * Identify triangles, quadrilaterals, pentagons, hexagons, and cubes.

*Brainstorming

* **4th grade; Science**
  * 4-ESS2-2 Analyze and interpret data from maps to describe patterns of Earth's features.
  * Clarification Statement: Maps can include topographic maps of Earth's land and ocean floor, as well as maps of the locations of mountains, continental boundaries, volcanoes, and earthquakes.

* Sharing of oral language development activities.

* Discussion

*References

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