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A BEGINNING READING PROGRAM FOR A SELECT GROUP OF NATIVE STUDENTS

by

© Sandra Dianne Hobbs, B.A.

A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

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ABSTRACT

Learning to read in their first language is very difficult for some children. These difficulties are increased when children are required to learn to speak and read in a language which is different from the one used in the home. The problem is compounded when children come from homes in which they have had little exposure to the reading process. In order for children to read a language with comprehension, they must first be able to listen to and speak that language with comprehension. Their acquiring facility in the use of decoding skills is not enough. They must also understand that meaning can be obtained from print and that reading can be a source of enjoyment. Unless educators realize what is involved in teaching reading to English-as-a-second-language students, these students may be assigned to remedial reading classes rather than being given the help they need.

The purpose of the study was to prepare a beginning reading program for those students who begin school with a minimum knowledge of the English language and yet are required to listen, speak and begin reading in English.

The study consists of two major parts. Part I deals with the problem and need for the study, as well as a review of related literature. Suggested methods and recommendations for implementing the program are also provided.

Part II presents the program which consists of twenty

units developed according to a thematic approach. Eight of these units have been fully developed while the remaining twelve are presented in outline form for further development. Language development and pre-reading skills are taught through first hand experiences, conversation based on real life situations, children's literature, and the Language Experience Approach to reading. Culturally relevant material is used whenever possible.

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PART I

THE STUDY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Many students today are starting school with little, if any, knowledge of the English language, even though this will be the language of instruction! Although these children are not yet literate in any language, they usually have an adequate command of the oral language skills pertaining to their first language. This 'home' language, however, is not the dominant language of the majority culture in which they live. Their language is that of one of the smaller cultural groups within the larger culture. These children are faced with the double responsibility of becoming orally proficient in a second language and of acquiring literacy skills in that second language.

The backgrounds of these children are varied. Primarily the families belong to one of the following three categories:

(a) native North Americans

(b) ethnic groups who still maintain their culture and language after being in the country for more than one generation

(c) recent immigrants

Many of the parents do not speak English themselves and even if they do, they have decided to teach their children initially to speak in the language of their culture. Once the children begin school, a decision has to be made as to which language will be the medium of instruction. For the

majority, there may be really no choice. Lack of qualified teachers who speak the home language, coupled with the fact that there may not be enough children of the same language background to warrant a class, has resulted in English instruction whether the parents wish it or not. The increase in the number of new immigrants plus the high degree of mobility within the country has caused many schools to set up programs which are only temporary in nature. Often problems arise because of the diversity of the languages spoken. Allen (1977) reported that one school system had twelve children for whom English was a second language, but among those there were seven different 'home' languages involved. Unfortunately such children are channelled towards the remedial reading teacher or the speech therapist for help, when what is needed is instruction in English as a second language. It is generally felt that instruction in the child's first language or in both the home language and English would be the ideal. This, as Gonzales (1981a) pointed out, is indeed the ideal but not what exists in actual fact.

In addition to the families mentioned, there are also parents who wish their children to remain fluent in their home language, but who realize that progress in higher education and business is dependent on the ability to speak and read in English. Consequently, in spite of the availability of classes in the first language, these parents may elect to send their children to an English immersion program

(Goodman et al., 1979; Smith, J., 1980).

Problem

The task of acquainting second language children with pre-literacy skills and ultimately teaching them to read in English falls on the classroom teacher. Very little research has been done in this area and consequently there are few resource materials available for the teacher's use. Teaching reading to English-as-a-second-language students has been overshadowed by research and materials centered around the acquisition of oral language skills. Several authors (Goodman et al., 1979; Cziko, 1980; Ebel, 1980; P. Smith, 1980; Gonzales, 1981a) have noted that the prevailing thought appears to be that once the language is acquired, reading will take care of itself. This greatly underestimates what is involved in the reading process.

Given the emphasis on oral language skills, many students come to view correct pronunciation following successful decoding as the goal of the reading program. As a result of this misguided view of reading, such students fail to understand that meaning can be obtained from print and that reading can be a source of enjoyment. In order for students to understand that reading without comprehension is nothing more than word calling, it is necessary to stress meaning from the very beginning. Lacking this awareness, students pass through the primary grades achieving 'reading' success, only to meet with subsequent failure in the intermediate grades.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to prepare a program that would help children develop pre-literacy skills and an awareness of the language of books, matters which are often overlooked in dealing with English-as-a-second-language students. The program, which was designed for use with native children, was to concentrate on providing the children with a variety of concrete experiences, exposure to a wide range of children's literature, development of oral language through meaningful conversations, and a natural progression into actual reading through the Language Experience Approach. At all times during the development of the program, an effort was made to incorporate aspects of the children's language and culture into the program, so that both their self concept and their attitude towards school would be positive.

Need

Meaning must go hand in hand with pronunciation if the English-as-a-second-language student is ultimately to achieve reading success. Morris (1972) stressed that speaking a language does not necessarily mean that one can read it with comprehension. Therefore, those who are involved with teaching second language students must be aware of what is involved in the reading process as well as have a knowledge of oral language and decoding skills. Schafer (1977) pointed

out that if we minimize what is needed for reading with comprehension, we may move our students to what he termed "premature closure". According to him, they may be led to believe that they know enough when in actual fact they have only scratched the surface. He felt that as second language teachers we should make every effort to give our students what F. Smith (1982) called "behind the eye knowledge".

A great deal of research has been done in first language reading. In comparison, very little has been done to explore and analyze the processes involved in reading a second language (Cziko, 1980). What is available is largely based on teacher testimonials and anecdotes pertaining to particular situations with only a small amount of actual research (Smith, P., 1980; Piper, 1981). P. Smith (1980) stated that even in the literature dealing with reading, reading itself plays a secondary role to oral skills. This statement is in agreement with Goodman et al. (1979) who found that writers of bilingual reading programs, while addressing primarily the relation of phoneme-grapheme differences, tended to make the assumption that reading is nothing more than responding to print with sound. They felt that research was needed to support the general assumptions that one language is easier to read than another if it has a more regular orthography, that the reading process is different in different languages, or that different methods are more appropriate for teaching literacy in one language than in another.

Even in following the simple directions of language first and reading second, the teacher will still encounter problems. Here one is faced with a lack of operational definitions as to the level at which language proficiency is suitable to begin reading instruction (Smith, P., 1980; Gonzales, 1981a). Urzua (1980) also pointed out that a very small portion of the research done on second language acquisition was done on small children. She went on to explain that any research which had been done was still at the theory stage and had not made the transition into practice. As yet there has been no evidence to support the belief that drills or some sort of translation method has proved helpful in learning how to use the language purposefully. The key word here is purposefully, since the purposeful use of language must be the goal set for children if they are to achieve success not only in listening to and speaking the language but in reading and writing it as well.

The shortage of classroom tested research findings has resulted in instructional problems in teaching reading to second language children. As Ovando (1983) stressed, without the necessary research, there is no adequate foundation for program designs. Ebel (1980) also recognized the lack of materials available for teachers. She found that the problem of teaching reading to English-as-a-second-language students was not usually dealt with in books written by reading specialists and as a result teachers were forced to explore various sources in order to find any information

which might be considered pertinent to teaching reading to such students. Even then, she felt that there were few practical suggestions for actual classroom use and that an effort should be made to overcome this deficit.

The practical suggestions which were available dealt primarily with pronunciation. This has resulted in a lack of the realization that reading is supposed to make sense (Goodman et al., 1979; DuBois, 1979). Giordano (1980) felt that we had misled students into believing that reading is little more than symbolic decoding. Given this wrong instructional message, they came to believe that the purpose of reading was nothing more than producing acceptable English grammar.

Because of this overdependence on the language aspect in terms of phonology and syntax, many researchers found that second language students were able to perform at their appropriate grade levels through the primary grades, but they experienced increasing difficulty with their achievement levels from that point on, with an endless downward spiralling effect (Morris, 1972; Smith, J., 1980; Stewart, 1982). Morris (1972) felt that reading success in the primary grades was based solely on decoding skills and working within a controlled vocabulary. Similarly, Chall (1967) and Becker (1977) found that after grade three, school books changed to an uncontrolled adult vocabulary and those who were weak in English language were in trouble by grade four if they had not already encountered difficulty.

The assumption had generally been made that once the

child passed through the primary grades and was able 'to read', comprehension should result. This was not always the case. Consequently, Morris (1972) viewed reading for meaning and not oral production as the chief stumbling block for second language students. J. Smith (1980) concurred with Morris. She found that primary Indian children reading in English as a second language mastered decoding easily enough because it involved little abstract thinking. Usually problems arose in the intermediate grades when there was a shift from learning to read, to reading to learn. It was her opinion that these children had not really learned to read, since reading is more than simply decoding. She viewed reading as a highly conceptual and meaningful communication experience.

Gonzales (1981a) viewed the source of the problem as insufficient preparation for the second language student to adequately understand the language of the story. Without this preparation, decoding occurs without the accompanying comprehension. Stewart (1982) agreed that even after these students have gained fluency in English, they may still fail to grasp securely the meanings that exist beyond the written English code. He felt that simply translating the code may not be sufficient for them to understand and appreciate the author's intended meaning. The ability to recognize and pronounce words correctly may be very deceiving. Both teachers and students may be led to believe that reading success has been achieved whereas only word calling has

occurred.

If reading instruction is to succeed, the emphasis should be on meaning from the very beginning. While stressing the prerequisite language skills necessary for reading, we should not forget the pre-literacy skills which are also vital if children are to get meaning from print. Without first getting enjoyment from reading and knowing what reading is all about, children cannot appreciate the reading process but instead are overly concerned with skills which they cannot relate to during the reading process (Allen, 1979; Bean et al., 1981). If there is to be effective learning in initial reading, then it is mandatory that students understand how the various kinds of skill instruction are related to getting meaning from the printed page (Giordano, 1980).

According to Clarke (1980), the problem faced by reading teachers who had English-as-a-second-language students was one of attempting to provide what she termed a "global view of the task". This involved emphasizing to the children the inexact nature of reading and the need for predicting, guessing, and taking chances while at the same time helping them to acquire the fundamental language skills necessary to facilitate the process. Campbell (1981) referred to this as having a 'real world knowledge' of how the language is used. It includes gaining a knowledge of such items as idioms, analogies, multi-meaning words, non-literal meanings, slang, and colloquialisms.

Research carried out by Yorio (1971) revealed that lack

of a meaning vocabulary constituted the main problem for English-as-a-second-language students learning to read. He found that the students had learned the patterns but failed to understand the words they contained. Even when the students picked up the syntactic clues, the new vocabulary might block their comprehension to the point where they doubted the correctness of their syntactic choice.

Definitions

The following are definitions of the abbreviations which are used in the review of the literature:

(1) L^1 refers to the home language or first language of the child.

(2) L^2 refers to the target language or the dominant language of the majority culture.

(3) ESL refers to English as a second language.

(4) ESL students/ESL children. This term refers to those within the school system for whom English is a second language. Second language acquisition involves the adding of a second language once the learner has a fairly good command of his first language and it is used only to refer to sequential second language acquisition and not to simultaneous acquisition of two languages in very young children (Burt & Dulay, 1972; McLaughlin, 1978).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of the literature dealing with teaching beginning reading to second language children must of necessity take into account the factors involved in second language (L^2) acquisition. Just as it is necessary to know how a child learns to speak a language, it is also necessary to understand the skills and processes involved in becoming literate. Language and reading are closely related and a knowledge of one will facilitate an understanding of the other.

The Basis of Literacy

Literacy is often viewed in the narrow sense of whether or not a person has the ability to read and write. There has been a failure to take into account the knowledge and experiences which are the essential pre-requisites which every child must have in order to meet with success in initial reading instruction. Holdaway (1979) felt that the beginning stages of the reading process should be concerned with establishing a strong "literacy set" rather than with accurate reading and writing. This literacy set consisted of a motivation or a desire to read or be read to, familiarity with print, strategies for handling written

language, and knowledge of the conventions of print.

Literacy, then, involves more than a set of skills which allow the child to decode the printed word. It involves a set of attitudes towards written communication and a way of thinking which is divorced from the technicalities of print (Spolsky, 1982). Nunn (1981) agreed that this internalization of the universal concepts regarding the nature of literacy is just as essential as the need for a solid language base and a wide background of experiences.

A child gains this awareness of what literacy is all about by being read to, seeing parents read and learning that books are a source of pleasure (Allen, 1979). F. Smith (1982) stated that when a child is read to, he becomes aware that print is meaningful and can be turned into sound. He also comes to the realization that written language is different from oral language. Thus Spolsky (1982) viewed the home as the institution which first makes the child aware of the importance of literacy. Homes in which literacy is important are characterized by the availability of reading materials, the use of written communication such as notes and letters, and reading as a favoured form of recreation. There are homes, however, in which this is not the case and here the responsibility of providing the children with pre-literacy skills falls to the school. Spolsky (1982) pointed out that this transition from a non-literate to a literate environment may be difficult for any child, but for the child whose

language and culture are different from those of the school, this transition is much harder.

Many ESL students come from a non-literate background. For the native North American, the tradition is an oral rather than a written language. It is only in recent years that story books and various other types of reading materials are being written in the different tribal languages for children at the primary level. The task is increased by the immense diversity represented by these languages. In Canada alone, as Burnaby (1982) explained, there are eleven different language families. While some of these are represented by only one language, others are comprised of many. For example, the Algonquin family includes Abenaki, Blackfoot, Cree, Delaware, Melecite, Micmac, Montagnais, Ojibwa, and Potawatomi. Suitable reading materials in their first language are also often lacking for children who are recent immigrants or members of an ethnic group (Scott, 1982). If the parents are not literate in English themselves, then they are not capable of translating the English story books which are available. Consequently, the necessary literacy base for these children is often missing.

Pre-literacy activities should be carried out in a reading like situation and should include activities with printed language which make children aware that stories come from the print and not the pictures (Holdaway, 1979). Holdaway went on to point out that preparation for reading

should include activities with printed language to develop an understanding of the concepts of words, spaces and letters. Children should also be aware that in English the print moves from left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom (Nunn, 1981).

Hall (1976) admonished that in the majority of what today are called reading readiness programs, teachers are failing to teach to the task. Such programs fail to prepare children for reading because the instruction offered in them is unrelated to the skills required in beginning reading. Exposure to print is often delayed with the justification that the child is "not ready". But as MacGinite (1975) stated, the readiness question is meaningless unless we know the kind of instructional program which is to be used. When we ask if a child is ready, we have to know what he is ready for. Durkin (1980) believed that children were neither totally ready nor totally unready for reading. This concurred with Lesiak's (1978) statement that every child is ready to learn something about reading.

F. Smith (1982) agreed that in educational contexts "reading readiness" is often more related to form and demands of instruction than to reading itself. According to his philosophy, there is no "best age" to learn to read. Children are ready to learn to read whenever they have a purpose and an intelligible opportunity for reading. This is not viewed in terms of sitting down to a concentrated period of skills instruction but, instead, having a natural

curiosity of the world of print around them.

Literacy must first of all be relevant and functional if it is to maintain the interest of the child and motivate him to learn more about the reading process. This can only be promoted in the context of a relevant and functional curriculum which allows for the natural acquisition of literacy by building on what the child already knows which includes his language, culture, and background of experiences (Goodman et al., 1979). It was the belief of Goodman et al. that many programs were preoccupied with written forms rather than function and with skills rather than comprehension. They contended that success depended on adapting the curriculum to the student rather than trying to adapt the student to the curriculum.

Definitions of Reading

Reading is much more than merely decoding the printed symbol. Goodman (1967) viewed reading as a selective process in which the reader, using his knowledge of the language, picks up graphic cues and relates them to syntactic, semantic and phonological cues. To him, reading was a psycholinguistic guessing game; in which efficient reading results from the skill of selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time.

Wardhaugh (1969) expanded on Goodman's views to give the following very comprehensive definition of what is

involved in the reading process:

> When a person reads a text, he is attempting to discover the meaning of what he is reading by using the visual clues of spelling, his knowledge of probabilities of occurrence, his contextual-pragmatic knowledge and his syntactic and semantic competence to give a meaningful interpretation of the text. Reading is not a passive process in which a reader takes something out of the text without any effort or merely recognizes what is on the page and then interprets it, a process in which a stage of decoding precedes a stage of involvement with meaning. There is little reason to suppose that there are two such discrete overlapping stages. Reading is an active process in which the reader must make an active contribution by drawing upon and using concurrently various abilities that he has acquired. (p. 133)

This definition combines both the visual and non-visual information which F. Smith (1982) deemed essential for meaningful reading. Smith also believed that reading involves prediction. The more one knows about the text to be read, the less one has to depend on visual information. The converse of this is also true. If one has to attend to every feature of print while attempting to predict what is to come, the short term memory becomes overloaded and comprehension fails to occur.

These definitions of reading place a great deal of importance on the knowledge which the child has concerning the world in general and the reading process in particular. Harker (1980), in an attempt to clarify further what happens when a child reads, explained that comprehension results for the child when he finds a consistency between the model of reality he has come to expect and the model of reality he finds represented on the page. In Harker's

opinion, the more experiences that children had with constructing meaning from the interaction of their experiences with those found on the printed page, the greater would be their understanding and enjoyment.

Reading: Process or Skills

Given the above definitions it is obvious that reading involves a process as well as skills. Therefore it is imperative that the reading program not become fragmented into isolated skills which the child is not given opportunity or taught to apply to a real reading situation. It is unfortunate, but methodology generally tends to accomplish only its limited and specific aims. Children learn what they are taught and are often unaware of the long range implications (Smith, F., 1982).

The question then remains as to what comes first--word identification or comprehension. Malicky (1982) stated that unless a child knows why he is reading, learning letters, sounds, and words has no real purpose. Barbe (1983) felt that a child may learn to read in the very narrow sense by simply mastering the skills of decoding and this could prove to be sufficient to help him succeed on standardized tests. In his opinion, this was not enough if reading instruction was to lead students to be thinking-reading adults who read for a variety of purposes, not the least being a love of reading. Therefore the emphasis in any program should be on

what we want children to learn, then consideration can be given to how best this may be taught (Smith, F., 1981).

Language and Reading

It is generally agreed that the language of print should not exceed the child's oral proficiency. Consequently, reading programs make the assumption that the students have control of their spoken language and that the language they speak is the language represented in the text.

Kaminsky (1976) indicated that in order to learn to read the young child must possess a basic competence in the use of the grammar of the language. He must have the ability to use the phonology, syntax and semantics of the language in order to relate sound to meaning.

Both Gonzales (1981a) and Nunn (1981), in their discussions of ESL students, maintained that before meaningful reading can take place, an adequate language base must be established. Without such a base there is a danger of teaching children to read material which has syntax far in advance of their understanding. If too much disparity exists, then time must be taken to teach the necessary language structures and grammatical forms.

Becker (1977) outlined three general aspects of a child's knowledge of language which are considered important for the acquisition of reading skills. First and foremost

is the child's vocabulary-concept knowledge. This involves the concepts or meanings which are associated with the words found in the text. Therefore decoding the word and pronouncing it is not enough. The word has to trigger some meaning. It was Morris' (1972) contention that this was the main problem facing ESL students. Second was what he termed the "metalinguistic insights" held by the child. These insights involve the knowledge concerning print which is the basis for literacy. And the third aspect of importance was the extent to which the child is capable of processing language which is decontextualized. When a child reads or is read to, the language does not relate to his immediate physical environment. He cannot look around him for clues to the author's meaning. Wells (1980) felt that familiarization with written language would enable the child to move his thinking out of the realm of the supportive context of actual experience and thus understand meanings that are encoded in the linguistic message alone.

If the language strand of the reading program is to be effective, it must discover the natural context of the child's needs and use it to develop reading, speaking, and writing abilities simultaneously (Shuy, 1982). The emphasis here is on function and Shuy (1982) suggested that the place to begin is with a list of important things to learn to do with language in the school setting. Such a list would include teaching children to use language to request help, to ask for clarification, to thank, to apologize, to complain,

and to speak in turn. Although important for first language children, it is even more vital for those for whom English is a second language, since they do not always have the necessary reinforcement in the home to help them develop fluency in their new language.

When dealing with ESL students, it is necessary to maintain realistic goals. As Piper (1981) pointed out, it is both naive and cruel, to expect a child speaking no English to enter school in grade one and to achieve at the same rate as his English speaking counterparts. Gunderson (1983) felt that there was a danger in placing ESL students in a reading group without their having the necessary pre-literacy and language skills necessary to cope with the instructions given. Placement in such a group not only signals failure but uses up valuable time which could be spent in acquiring these vital skills.

While the majority of researchers in the studies reviewed felt that reading should wait until after some measure of oral proficiency has been achieved, others felt that the printed word should occur simultaneously with oral presentation. Pauls (1958) held the opinion that reading could provide a concrete support system for use in acquiring English because it portrays the phonetic systems and patterns that have to be mastered. Philips (1979) noted that early introduction to print may be helpful to students who are attempting to learn to read in a second language.

Felston (1973) similarly held the view that decoding

(which he defined as pronunciation only and not knowledge of meaning) could be viewed as a useful tool to primary readers learning to read in L^2. This tool was felt to help eliminate dependence on the spoken word. Lado (1977) stated that the negative effects of exposure to the written form have been exaggerated, at least when the auditory form is presented simultaneously. He found that the amount of learning seemed to increase with the use of written support.

Children have a natural curiosity about reading. Thus, D. Brown (1979) suggested that ESL children be given the opportunity to meet and experiment with reading materials while learning the English language. Peck (1979) saw a challenge in teaching language and literacy simultaneously. Under such conditions, the teacher must sequence the learning of both skills so that the children are learning to read the words and sentences they understand and are not required to read those that are unintelligible to them.

Literacy in the First Language

Many researchers agree that a child's chances of achieving success in reading would be greatly enhanced if he were to begin his initial encounters with literacy in his first language (Zintz, 1969; Modiano, 1973a; Gamez, 1979). The use of L^1 for reading instruction allows the education of the child to continue without interruption from the home to the school. Maintaining the use of L^1 allows immediate

progress in concept building rather than postponing this development until a new language has been acquired (Saville & Troike, 1971).

Several educational experts supported a more bilingual approach for ESL students. They advocated a program in which students learn basic academic concepts in L^1 while learning L^2. In this way the concepts will not be lost to the student while he is attempting to familiarize himself with a new language, and at the same time the school can capitalize on his knowledge of the language which he brings to the reading situation (Murphy, 1980; Miller, 1982; Spolsky, 1982). Saville and Troike (1971) maintained that the basic skills of reading could readily be transferred from one language to another and thus the child would become literate in two languages.

Research carried out by Nedler and Lindsfors (1977) revealed that students progressed more rapidly in both concept and language acquisition if the children were permitted to use their own language for concept formation. These authors noted that the ESL child's development is much more advanced than his faltering use of English will allow him to demonstrate. Using his own language within the school also allows the child to participate in a meaningful way in all aspects of the curriculum (La Fontaine, 1977).

Modiano (1973a) reported that, at the end of three years, Indián children taught to read in L^1 had higher reading comprehension than those in L^2. This concurs with

the results of a reading program carried out in L^1 with Navojo children at Rock Point. Those taught to read in L^1 first were by third grade reading in L^2 better than those taught in L^2 from the beginning (Spolsky, 1982). He also reported success with the Pacific Northwest Indian Reading Series which, while written in English, was taught through the medium of L^1 and thus functioned as a bilingual program might.

Results contradictory to these were reported by Lambert and Tucker (1972) who carried out a study with mono-lingual English speaking children who were taught only in French in kindergarten through grade one, with English language skills being introduced in the second grade. At the end of grade two, the experimental group was reading as well as the French and English groups and this level was maintained through later grades. Such results led to speculations as to why a home-school language switch results in high levels of functional bilingualism and academic achievement in middle class majority language children while at the same time producing the opposite effect on minority language children (Paulston, 1974; Cummins, 1979). The assumptions were made that the upper socio-economic status of the parents, community support, and the relative prestige of both languages involved contribute to the success of the immersion program (Cummins, 1979).

Second Language Acquisition: Cognitive

When discussing how a second language is acquired, it is necessary to look at the circumstances under which a child learns his first language in order to gain some insights into how L^2 acquisition may be facilitated. Lawrence and Hoiland (1982), in their description of how a child learns to speak, emphasized the fact that learning is done in a natural environment and is both purposeful and enjoyable. The learning is non-competitive, the child starts when he is ready, he directs his own learning through self correction and is immediately rewarded even if his efforts are only approximations of adult speech. MacNamara (1977) saw the mother as playing the major role in the child's language learning. Her early conversations with the infant are designed in such a way that the surrounding environment helps convey meaning and to this she adds facial expressions, gestures, and intonations to aid comprehension. According to him, a mother's speech to an infant is quite distinct from her speech to others.

Some research findings now reveal that a child learns his second language in much the same way as he does his first. Chun (1980) stated that both L^1 and L^2 learners progress through a series of stages by rules that the learners formulate and try themselves. L^2 learners seem to be taking an active part in the creation of their language through a process of hypothesis formulation and testing. Guskin (1976)

agreed that the developmental stages of second language learning are similar to those changes which a child goes through in learning his first language. These stages may be oversimplified into three phases, the first of which consists of one word which produces meaning, then usually two, but maybe more, words strung together with meaning, and finally longer utterances and the ability to generate unique sentences (Gonzales, 1981; Gunderson, 1983).

Research carried out by Dulay and Burt (1974a,b,c,; 1972) found that the errors made by ESL students while learning certain structures are similar to those made by children learning L^1. Consequently, they felt that these errors may be considered as a necessary step in the learning process rather than an indication of faulty learning or a need for instructional intervention. In their opinion, these findings indicated that the teaching of ESL syntax could be carried out in a less explicit manner and that methods related to the natural acquisition of L^1 could be employed in teaching L^2.

This ability which ESL children have for reconstructing English syntax in similar ways to those learning English as their first language is referred to by Dulay and Burt (1974b) as the "creative construction" process. They defined this process as follows:

> Children gradually reconstruct rules for the speech they hear, guided by universal innate mechanisms which cause them to formulate certain types of hypotheses about the language system being acquired, until the mismatch between what they are exposed to and what

> they produce is resolved. The child's creation of linguistic rules is said to be creative because no native speakers of the target language--whether peer, teacher or parent--models the kinds of sentences produced by children who are still learning the basic syntactic structures of a language. (p. 255)

In research centered around transfer between languages, Dulay and Burt (1975) found that transfer occurred in terms of learning processes rather than in terms of such products as L^1 syntactic patterns. They did not view interference as playing a significant role. Structures which were the same in both languages were not necessarily learned first and differences in structure did not result in significant first language interference.

Ervin-Tripp (1974) also found that L^2 acquisition was similar to L^1. Her research revealed that children acquiring L^2 used sentences which were similar in function and form to those first used by children learning L^1. There also tended to be the same overgeneralization of lexical forms and a similar use of simple-order strategies. She concluded that first and second language learning is similar in natural situations.

Language learning is a process and there is little reason to expect a learner to develop a new process with each new language learned (Piper, 1981). Piper felt that L^1 and L^2 acquisition differs only in the fact that the learner is older and this should be considered an asset rather than a liability. Zintz (1969) also looked at the age factor. He viewed it in terms of how much time is

available for L^2 acquisition. Whereas the L^1 learner has approximately five years to master his language before going to school, the L^2 learner is often required to learn L^2 and continue an academic course of study at the same time. He pointed out that there is also a difference in learning conditions in that L^1 learning is carried out in a supportive, informal atmosphere while the ESL student is required to "listen, repeat, and memorize".

This evidence makes it clear that the environment in which a child learns his second language must be similar to that in which he learns his first. Urzua (1980) described such an environment as one which is interactive, responsive, and dependent on supportive encouraging human beings who believe that the function of the message is far more important than the form.

Second Language Acquisition: Affective

Plann (1977) went beyond the discussion of language skills to describe language learning as a complex process related to both the child's cognitive abilities and his interaction with his environment. Some of the factors which she felt were relevant to L^2 acquisition or non-acquisition include the learner's attitudes and motivations, his linguistic needs, and the circumstances of his exposure to the target language. In acquiring a second language, it is necessary to take into account the learner's affective

orientation towards L^2 and its speakers. These factors may greatly influence the ESL student's achievement.

The process of learning to use any given language and becoming a member of the culture of those who speak it involves having to accept certain possibilities--in terms of sound, structure, and meaning--and to reject other possibilities (Christian, 1976). The child, in learning his first language, has already learned to identify with one set of possibilities and to reject others as meaningless. Christian felt this could create psychological problems for the child when he begins learning L^2. Here he is faced with learning a language consisting of sounds he may regard as meaningless and structures he has learned to reject. The child becomes confused when he can no longer rely on his intuition for adequate information. Kaminsky (1976) agreed that the child's problem is compounded when he has two language codes that present alternatives to him.

Since language not only serves as a means of communication but also as a means of identifying a person's reference group, it is therefore tied to the person's image of himself (Gonzalez-Mena, 1976). If an attempt is made to replace his language, the child may interpret this to mean that it is not as good or as useful as English and transfer these feelings to himself. Williams (1981) pointed out that this confusion over which language may be better could create emotional problems because the child may feel that the language of the home and community is being rejected by the

teacher. If the language of the school fails to make use of the language of the home in any way, then the child may come to view the home and the school as two distinct entities. Christian (1976) described these two distinctions as significant others (the home language) and generalized others (the school). He believed that the degree to which significant others are associated with reading and writing is highly important in the development of self concept and the subsequent acquisition of literacy. If a child's first language is used only as a means of oral communication and is not used for reading, he may come to feel that the language of his home is in some way inferior.

A positive attitude towards, and a desire for greater identification with, the dominant society or generalized others may be a strong motivating force for learning L^2 (Nida, 1971; Cummins, 1981). Research by Gardner and Lambert (1972) showed a relationship between external attitudes; motivation, and second language behaviour. Their term "integrative motivation" referred to the learner's desire to be part of the culture of the second language community and his positive attitude towards the people and the language they speak.

Parents and Child

There are many factors outside the direct control of the teacher and the school which influence the achievement

of the ESL student. Saville and Troike (1971) saw these as including the child-rearing practices in the home and the personality traits of the parents, as well as the parents' attitudes towards their own speech community and towards the second language group. These attitudes affect the child's perception of himself and his language in relation to the school. A five-year old who has just entered the new environment of the school may not be able to comprehend the concept of "language". He may not understand why others do not respond to his speech or why he is unable to understand and respond to theirs. Conflict is further increased if the new things he learns at school cannot be shared with his parents because he is unable to explain in his home language what he has learned in English (Brown, D., 1979).

Taking into account the wide gap which may exist between the home and the school, and the detrimental effect it could have on the child, Blanco (1978) stressed that community and parental involvement should play a vital role within the school system. Every opportunity must be made to establish a rapport with parents and/or members of the cultural community. Gonzales (1981b) felt that one way of doing this was to solicit the help of parents in the classroom as interpreters and helpers with cultural projects. In this way the child would not come to view the home and the school as two distinct entities and the parents would gain a greater understanding of what goes on in the classroom. Forrester and Little Soldier (1980), in their discussions of Indian

students, explained that such parental involvement resulted in closer co-operation between the home and the school, greater parental support of the school program and an increased parental awareness of ways to reinforce school learning at home.

Parents of ESL students may have feelings of hostility towards the target language group. Such feelings may arise in part from a sense of insecurity concerning the value of their own culture (Cummins, 1981). The school is responsible for showing children and parents alike that no one culture is better than another and that each has a valuable contribution to make to society as a whole. Ovando (1983) stated that programs aimed at teaching the ESL child can only succeed if they do not stigmatize the student's primary language and home culture.

Parental help and encouragement are vital to the success of any child--not just the ESL learner. Barbe (1983) concluded that if parents show an interest in learning, are concerned about the child's education and take time to interact with the child in a meaningful way, they are doing a great deal to ensure achievement at school.

Listening

When a student is first confronted with a second language, he hears only a stream of meaningless sounds. It is only through continuous exposure to the language that he

gradually begins to recognize elements and patterns such as phonemes, intonations, words, and phrases (Herschenhorn, 1979; Taylor, 1981). Listening, then, constitutes the first stage of learning a new language. Lewis (1979) felt that listening skills were important since a child cannot read with comprehension what he cannot first listen to and say with comprehension.

When the ESL student arrives at school, his first encounter with L^2 is oral. In many cases the only instructions he may understand are those which consist of one or two words accompanied by a demonstration. Confusion is the necessary result of such instruction since in many cases he cannot pronounce or hear the phonemes of the language which the teacher is using. Modiano (1973b) also found that ESL students may not hear all of the sounds and words used in English. For example, there is no difference between the "r" and "l" sounds in Japanese or the "oy" and "i" in Spanish and the native Chipewyan does not have the "f", "p", "v", or "x" sounds. Consequently, it is essential for ESL students to develop listening comprehension skills in order to understand what is going on in the classroom and to be able to participate in English-speaking situations. Cooke (1982) suggested that English speech at "normal speed" is often too fast to enable the learner to comprehend. Slowing down our speech could speed their learning of English.

Vocabulary

When discussing ESL students and vocabulary development, it is important to point out that the emphasis is on acquiring a meaning vocabulary and not merely achieving word recognition in the sense of decoding. With research showing that one of the major problems facing these students is lack of a meaningful vocabulary, teachers must realize that learning the grammatical patterns is of little use if the students do not understand the words they contain (Yorio, 1971).

When discussing word meanings, Herschenhorn (1979) felt it was necessary to take into account connotations (which are culture tied), idioms, expletives, cliches, and colloquialisms. Perez (1981) extended this list to include analogies, compound words, synonyms, antonyms, and multi-meaning words. A brief look at several English words quickly reveals how difficult it may be to derive meanings. For example, knowing the word "like" does not help explain "likely", or knowing "book" and "worm" does not explain "bookworm", and the meaning of "run for office" differs greatly from "run to the office".

Gonzalez-Mena (1976) viewed connotations rather than denotations as the primary source of meaning. While the denotation merely defines the word, it is the connotation which holds all the verbal and non-verbal feelings surrounding the word and provides the meaning which it holds for each

person. This supported Nunn's (1981) view that one must know something about the culture in order to communicate effectively. In order to derive meaning from words, the speaker or reader must understand them in the context in which they occur. This is particularly true for multi-meaning words and idiomatic expressions such as "it's raining cats and dogs" or "I'm broke". Such idiomatic expressions are particularly problematic for ESL students since knowledge of structure and form can do little to help decide meaning (Campbell, 1981).

Research has shown that a medium size listening vocabulary for a child of six is 12,780 words (Smith, M., 1941). When J. Brown (1964) did an analysis of the five hundred most used words in the English language, he found that there were 14,070 separate meanings--an average of twenty-eight meanings per word. With the advent of television, children today have a wider vocabulary than ever before. Vocabulary size may therefore be higher than when M. Smith (1941) and J. Brown (1964) did their research. Such figures indicate the formidable task facing the ESL student if he is to listen and read with comprehension.

Ching (1972) stressed that before a child with a language handicap could begin to read successfully, he needed to command a meaningful English vocabulary based on the interests of his age group and the concepts necessary for beginning reading. This is in agreement with Finocchiaro's (1972) opinion that priority should be given to those

vocabulary items that the students need in order to talk about themselves and the things that interest them.

Learning word meanings involves an interactive long-term memory process which is closely allied to concept development (O'Rourke, 1974; Gipe, 1980). Mastorella (1972) defined concept as a general idea, usually expressed by a word which represents a class or a group of things or actions having certain characteristics in common. Thus meanings become known by defining a word, showing how it may be used, placing it within categories, and associating it with others which have similar definitions and uses (Finocchiaro, 1972; Gipe, 1980).

There are distinctions between words which should be kept in mind when teaching vocabulary. One such distinction is between what Sinatra (1981) called function words and content words. Content words are those which symbolize things, actions, and qualities, while the function words provide the sentence structure and link the content words with one another. Although there are relatively few function words in comparison to content words, it is their role to express the specific relationship between ideas. He categorized the words into the following three groups:

(a) sequence connectors, for example, "before" and "unless"

(b) spacial connectors, for example, "between" and "across"

(c) words used to compare and contrast, for example, "more" and "like".

These are the words he felt the teacher should emphasize.

Celce-Murcia and Rosensweig (1979) made another useful distinction when considering what vocabulary is to be taught. According to their view, it is important to determine whether the vocabulary items to be presented are needed by the students for active use (recall, production) or passive use (recognition, comprehension). Following this distinction, the teacher must decide whether passive vocabulary is to be learned permanently or temporarily. A word is learned temporarily if it is required to understand a story or piece of writing with no consideration for later use. They felt that this should be one of the factors influencing the presentation of vocabulary in the ESL classroom.

Schools have traditionally failed to provide adequate vocabulary instruction. This deficiency applies to students learning English as their first language as well as those learning it as their second language. There exists no systematic program which indicates when certain words, their roots, prefixes, and suffixes are to be mastered. The typical techniques used in teaching vocabulary appear to involve asking students to learn lists of words or teaching the word "when it comes up" (Dale, 1969). Becker (1977) advocated that steps be taken to teach vocabulary systematically through the school years.

Conversation vs. Drill

In determining how to teach a second language, it is necessary to look at those conditions under which children appear to acquire a new language most easily. Evidence points to optimum learning under natural conditions with a peer group that speaks L^2 (MacNamara, 1977; Nunn, 1981; Gunderson, 1983). While Shuy (1982) stressed "naturalness" in his discussion of the language strand in the reading program for English speaking children, it would appear that the same could be said to apply to the ESL student.

A person's language abilities are brought into play when he is either attempting to make out what others are trying to communicate to him or when he is trying to communicate with others (MacNamara, 1977). Consequently, language is learned best when it is purposeful to the learner as opposed to parrotting and speaking in chorus. Teaching methods should be "life like" as opposed to "drill like" since it is in life-like situations and not drills that students must be able to use their new language most effectively (Nedler & Lindfors, 1977). Above all, we should allow the child to wait until he feels ready to use his new language before we force him to use it. The role of the teacher is to create an atmosphere in which the child feels free to take chances with his new language without fear of reprisals when he makes mistakes. Participation should be encouraged by providing ample opportunity to use language in a variety of

situations that require actual communication (Blanco, 1978).

Piper (1981) felt that the rule "fluency before accuracy" should apply to those students learning English as a second language. It was his contention that accuracy would come in time and to emphasize correctness over meaningful communication at the beginning could act as a deterrent and inhibit the child from speaking. In other words, allow the child to experiment and formulate his own rules just as a child learning his first language would do (Nedler & Lindfors, 1977). This concurs with research carried out by Dulay and Burt (1974a,b,c) which resulted in their "creative construction" theory.

Using life-like conversations to promote language results in children's gaining an understanding of the non-verbal aspects of communication which often determine the ultimate meaning of what is being said (Paulston, 1974; Gonzales, 1981b). Morris (1972) reminded us that language involves more than just learning words. It includes pitch, structure, intonation, as well as the influence of the cultural setting. These are what Frith (1973) referred to as "speech flow".

A language has social rules as well as linguistic ones. Paulston (1974) stressed the importance of knowing when and how to use language in a given context. Zintz (1969) and Murphy (1980) agreed that vocabulary should be taught and practised in the context of real situations so that the meaning could be clarified and reinforced. The emphasis should be placed on authentic language and there should not

be any demands to speak in complete sentences unless a complete sentence is the natural response to the particular stimulus (Frith, 1973).

Something is obviously needed beyond the dialogues and drills that introduce and reinforce grammar without dealing with the interests of the students and the practical applications of what is being said (Olsen, 1975). Many researchers, while strongly emphasizing the importance of giving children practice in the normal forms of conversation, maintain that some aspects of drills in terms of structure and form are required (Zintz, 1969; Paulston, 1974; Finocchiaro, 1974).

Reading Materials

From the results of twenty-seven studies conducted in the United States, it was concluded that no one method of teaching reading is better than another. Reading is such a complex process that no one method is comprehensive enough to cover all the strategies a child needs to gain meaning from print (Philips, J., 1979; Hatch, 1979). Although the majority of this research applied to children learning to read in their first language, it is equally applicable to the second language learners. Murphy (1980) stressed that in deciding on instructional methods for the ESL student, we must also take into account the assumptions derived from cognitive psychology and development linguistics.

Basal Approach

In research carried out by McCanne (1966), it was found that the use of Basal readers with ESL students resulted in higher achievement in reading skills as opposed to a combination of teaching English as a second language and the Language Experience Approach. He believed that the success rate of the Basal readers was perhaps a result of an unwillingness among ESL children to initiate original expression in a formal school setting.

In Basal reading instruction the emphasis is on vocabulary-concept development. Serra (1964) thought it was essential for teachers to consider the concept load before using such texts with ESL students. Because of the large number of concepts which are introduced in each new story, Nunn (1981) found that the pacing of the stories did not meet the needs of these students. Another drawback of this approach for the ESL child is the lack of material which coincides with either the child's experiences or his values (Goodman et al., 1979; Nunn, 1981).

Phonics/Linguistic Approach

The linguistic approach teaches the recognition of frequently occurring patterns in words. This is what primary teachers sometimes refer to as word families. Although, as Hatch (1979) pointed out, this method is very popular with second language teachers, its main concern

is with patterns rather than with meaning. Nunn (1981) agreed that isolated phonics instruction is not always an effective approach because of the neglect of meaning. Also, ESL students may have difficulty in discriminating and producing certain sounds.

That is not to say that the phonics method should be dismissed completely. Every method of teaching reading includes some phonics since it is one device used to break through the mechanical barrier of word recognition (Sepulveda, 1973). F. Smith (1982) reminded us that phonics has so many rules with almost as many exceptions that its main function is to help us decide what a word isn't rather than what it is. It is for this reason that words should not be presented in isolation. The context plus the phonic clues are needed for word identification.

Language Experience Approach

The Language Experience Approach recognizes the close relationship among listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It capitalizes on this relationship to bridge the gap between oral and written language (Murphy, 1980; Nunn, 1981; Shuy, 1982). It maintains the philosophy that the child must be immersed in and using a language in order to read it. In such a program, children are involved in a great deal of guided language experiences. They talk about these experiences and the teacher records their discussion on charts.

These charts provide the basis of the reading material for the child.

Feeley (1972) stated that a combination of Teaching English as a Second Language and a Language Experience Approach was recommended for children at the pre-school and kindergarten levels. This approach stressed oral vocabulary and writing fluency. Wisendanger and Birlem (1979) also recommended an overall Language Experience Approach. Their approach emphasized semantic and syntactic development through extensive oral activities. This was done in an effort to improve the child's vocabulary and sentence structure before he attempted to create a story.

Since the reading material for the Language Experience Approach is what the child produces himself, it contains the vocabulary and syntax with which he is familiar. The benefit of using familiar vocabulary and syntax with the ESL student cannot be overrated. The use of such material, however, may also prove to be a drawback to the Language Experience Approach. White (1979) viewed this lack of vocabulary control as a problem, since students may fail to learn some of the basic sight words unless the teacher makes a specific effort to teach them. He also felt that if this approach were used in isolation from other programs beyond the initial introduction to the reading process, students might find themselves lacking in the development of word recognition skills.

It would appear that the best method of teaching reading

to ESL children is one which combines a variety of techniques which are used to meet the individual needs of the child. Gonzales (1981a) stated that any good instructional introduction to new reading material should include a conceptual background of experiences related to the story content. It is also essential to review any vocabulary or grammatical forms and structures which may be new or difficult. Where necessary, he suggested simplifying the language of the text to help the children understand the structures.

First-Hand Experiences

There is overwhelming support for the use of concrete, hands-on experiences in teaching vocabulary and concept development to ESL students (Forrester & Little Soldier, 1980; Gonzales, 1981a,b; Nunn, 1981; Ovando, 1983). As Petty et al. (1976) and Sinatra (1981) pointed out, ESL children more than any others need this extra dimension to aid their comprehension of spoken and written English. Consequently, the best instruction will be concrete, involving a hands-on activity or experience and will use language which is comprehensible to the students and appropriate to the situation (Gonzales, 1981a).

Children learn best by active involvement. Allen (1977) suggested allowing children to use materials in order to illustrate what they know. ESL children may find it difficult to express their ideas but may be able to do so with the

aid of concrete objects which demonstrate to the teacher that they understand what is being taught. Given this understanding, the teacher can then work on the development of the necessary language skills. Therefore it is essential that the teacher provide an environment which is rich in materials so that the children feel free to work, manipulate, and create. Murphy (1980) agreed that such an environment is necessary for the growth of English syntax and vocabulary.

A time of concrete interaction with an object is required before children can begin to think about it in the abstract (Gonzalez-Mena, 1976). Also, if we fail to give children enough concrete experiences, we run the risk of having them verbalize concepts which really have very little meaning for them (Flavell, 1973). Before a sight or sound can acquire real meaning for children, they must internalize their own ideas concerning it based on their personal experiences.

Stewart (1982) and Sinatra (1981) saw the use of such visual aids as pictures, filmstrips, and movies as playing a major role in vocabulary development. These visuals provide a situational context for the new words which children learn as well as allowing them to tie what they have learned to a mental image which aids recall. They felt that pictures could provide concrete representation of concepts that might be known in L^1 but needed to be represented verbally in L^2. Rogers and Wolfle (1981) reminded us that if the experience is a vicarious one such as through pictures or

stories, then the image will not be as clear or as accurate. An important function of the teacher is to help children see the relationship between experiences and pictures and the words representing them.

Play, whether structured or unstructured, provides a natural opportunity for children to transform experience into language (Sepulveda, 1973; Piper, 1981). Gonzales (1981a) and Allen (1977) suggested the use of role playing through "pretend" situations or puppet plays to encourage the use of language in relation to experiences. They also stressed that the teacher should make the child aware of his movements and how these may be expressed through language.

Children's Literature

A child learns to read by reading and by being read to (Smith, 1982). Teale (1981) went so far as to suggest that reading to children may be the most important facet in their becoming literate. Therefore classrooms need to be rich in reading materials which are attractively displayed and easily accessible. Children need to be given every opportunity to explore books and share them with others. This is no less true for ESL children than for children for whom English is the first language.

Murphy (1980) suggested that story reading begin immediately with ESL students. Using picture books with simple accompanying texts, children soon learn "to read" the

pictures, sequence events, and relate pictures to text. Allen (1977) advised teachers to select books with thought and special attention to the needs of ESL children, in order that they could lead these children into English literacy by developing not only oral language and vocabulary but by helping them to discover books as a source of joy and pleasure. Our success, however, greatly depends on our selection of books. They should not be overly difficult at either the linguistic or conceptual level (McKay, 1982).

Language development may be encouraged through the use of literature. Nunn (1981) suggested the use of simple books which contain repetitive words or happenings to acquaint children with language structure and help with predictions. There are many stories familiar to English speaking children which meet this requirement. Examples could include The Three Bears, The Little Red Hen, and Chicken Little. Turner (1978) also agreed that the repetition involved in such stories was quite useful, since unlike the dull repetitions found in drills, it is meaningful, pleasurable and an integral part of the story. Murphy (1980) saw fit to refer to this as natural syntax drill.

Through reading to children, the teacher is providing them with direct exposure to literary language. Also much of our literature consists of imaginative and fanciful models of reality. Children must, therefore, be made aware of this. By discussing with children what has been read,

we will help them bridge the gap between their existing reality and that which is represented in literature (Harker, 1980). Flood (1977) also believed that such discussions were necessary. He found that the learning style which resulted in the most benefit for a child was one in which there was a verbal interaction between the reader and the child. He recommended that the child be involved throughout the reading process, by the teacher's first using warm up questions to prepare the child for reading, followed by verbal interaction during the reading which relates story content to past experiences and, finally, by post story evaluative questioning. Holdaway (1979) took this a step further with his "Shared Book Reading Experience" which suggests that teachers make an enlarged version of the story book so that the class is able to follow along while the teacher reads.

Another major benefit of oral reading is that the teacher provides a model for correct enunciation, phrasing, patterns of intonation, and fluency (Narang, 1982). Sepulveda (1973) suggested using poetry as one of the best ways of teaching English intonation patterns. The use of poetry and simple songs is also seen as a way to encourage participation among ESL students in oral language exercises.

Literature may also be used to help the ESL child become more aware of his own culture (Barry & MacIntyre, 1982; Scott, 1982). Through the help of parents traditional stories may be told orally in class and recorded for future

reference. The folk tales and legends of many cultures are now being translated into English and are found in both public and school libraries. William Toye's How Summer Came to Canada and The Fire Stealer, as well as Maria Campbell's Little Badger and the Fire Spirit, are excellent examples of picture story books depicting Indian legends.

Summary

A review of the related literature revealed that the emphasis in teaching reading to second language children should center primarily on how meaning and enjoyment may be obtained from print. In order for children to relate meaning to the words they speak and read, they must first encounter those words in meaningful situations. In this way they build up their background of experiences and gain mental images which will aid recall.

Children learn to read by being read to and by reading. Just as one needs to be immersed in language to learn to speak, so too learning to read involves being immersed in books. In this way children develop a 'literacy set' which leads them naturally into reading. Through reading the child also becomes aware that the 'language of books' is different from spoken language.

Research shows that second language (L^2) acquisition is very like first language (L^1) acquisition in terms of its

developmental stages. Thus learning is best done in real life situations where the language required is that which is needed for daily use. Drills and dialogues, when used, should be implemented as they would apply to actual situations.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Several researchers have found that native students have little problem with decoding. Morris (1972) stated that problems usually arose when learning to read changed to reading to learn. In many cases these children read well orally but unfortunately they were only reading words without comprehension. It is, therefore, necessary to ensure that while children are acquiring the decoding skills necessary for correct pronunciation of English words, they should also be learning the meanings associated with these words. Based on the research reported in the review of literature, a program was designed to help children develop a meaningful English vocabulary, while at the same time providing them with the pre-reading skills necessary for a good literacy foundation. It was decided to build the program around:

(1) First hand experiences
(2) Conversation based on real life situations
(3) Children's literature
(4) Language Experience Approach to Reading

The skills to be taught in the program include:

(1) Pre-requisite knowledge for reading
    (a) The conventions of print
    (b) The concepts of letter, word, sentence, and story

(c) The comprehension of reading vocabulary

(d) The recognition of reading as a source of enjoyment and information

(2) Language development

(a) Meaning vocabulary

(b) Grammatical structures

The program is also concerned with other aspects of the child's development, including problem solving, perceptual skills, and motor skills. The emphasis is placed on active involvement in the learning process.

The Population

The developer of this program is teaching on an Indian Reserve in Saskatchewan. The children are Cree Indians who come to school with a minimum knowledge of the English language. The native language is used almost exclusively in the majority of homes on the reserve. Because of a lack of Cree reading materials and the non-literate status of many parents, children come to school having had little exposure to the reading process. The proposed program is intended for use with those children in the primary grades who have lacked exposure to the English language and the reading process.

Teachers and School

The school is federally funded through the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and is located on an Indian Reserve. Every effort is made throughout the total school program to incorporate aspects of the Cree culture into the total school curriculum. While the emphasis in this program is on teaching native students to speak and read in English, it is not necessarily suggested that this is a more viable alternative than their being taught in their first language. It is, however, the only approach available, due to a lack of professional staff who speak the Cree language. Unfortunately, except for the two teacher aides and the Cree language instructor, none of the teaching staff are of native ancestry or are capable of teaching in the students' first language. For these reasons, both teachers and students are at a disadvantage. Those members of the staff who do speak the Cree language are always ready to give assistance when requested. The value of their daily help cannot be overestimated.

Materials

The program was developed using a thematic approach. Topics to be covered include:

(1) The School

(2) Fall

(3) Books

(4) Thanksgiving

(5) Halloween

(6) Self and Family

(7) Our Bodies

(8) The Community and Its Workers

(9) Christmas

(10) Winter

(11) Clothing

(12) St. Valentine's Day

(13) Housing

(14) Food

(15) Transportation

(16) Animals

(17) Easter

(18) Spring

(19) Plants

(20) Heritage

The program is designed to make use of:

(1) Information provided by parents and community members

(2) Reference materials from the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College at Saskatoon

(3) Physical objects to represent vocabulary whenever possible

(4) Children's literature

(5) Filmstrips and movies

(6) Photographs and picture file

(7) Charts and chalkboard for recording

(8) Print such as labels, signs, letters, timetables, and memos

The program was designed to incorporate the learning of English with the learning of pre-reading skills so that the transition from speaking to reading would be a natural and meaningful experience. The procedures and methods were adapted whenever possible to include materials and experiences which were familiar to the children and pertained to their Cree culture. Each unit contains a section on cultural content and it is suggested that the information provided, plus any additional facts which the teacher may have, be used whenever possible throughout the unit.

Various methods have been used throughout these units to help enhance the reading experience and to make it more meaningful to the students. Because they are ESL students, the storytime activities must first be adapted to meet their needs. In the beginning, it is suggested that the teacher aide or parent volunteer be asked to read the story first in Cree and then in English. Later as the children gain a greater understanding of their new language, stories may be read primarily in English with some of the more difficult sections being translated. At all times, the English as well as the Cree translation should be presented. The teacher should pre-read all stories prior to reading them to the class. Sometimes the sentence structure or

vocabulary may be too difficult for the students to understand. This allows the teacher time to prepare a simplified version. This does not mean that the original text is omitted but instead read first, with the simplified version read immediately after as a means of explanation. In this way, the children do not lose the language of the book as written by the author.

First Hand Experiences

Whenever possible, children will be given the opportunity to actively experience the concepts and vocabulary which are introduced. One of the criteria used in the selection of the unit themes was the possibility of each being experienced by the children, not only in the classroom, but within their home environment and surrounding area.

The presentation of new vocabulary will be accompanied by the corresponding physical object or demonstration so that the children not only hear the word but obtain a mental picture to be stored for later referral. To facilitate this, the class will take part in field trips and in role playing situations within the classroom. Real life situations will be adapted for the classroom but on a smaller scale. Such activities will involve planting seeds and learning to set a table. When it is not possible to experience things first hand, vicarious experiences in the form of films, filmstrips, and pictures will be provided as an adequate substitute.

Conversation

If children are to retain the new vocabulary which is being taught, it must be presented in meaningful situations so that they can see the usefulness of their new language. If language is presented only in drill-like forms, the children may not fully understand when and how it applies to everyday life. The teacher is responsible for setting up situations, drawing children into conversations, and providing a model for their speech.

In order to achieve these aims, an attempt will be made to have the children verbalize what they are doing as much as possible. While they role play in the different activity centers, the teachers should walk around and discuss with them what they are doing, without interfering too much with the task at hand. Every effort will be made to engage the children in conversation when they are on field trips and other outdoor activities. Many things may be missed if the teacher does most of the talking or if he/she waits until they are back in the classroom before they discuss what they saw and heard.

The children will take an active part in learning positional concepts when these concepts are incorporated with instruction in listening skills and following directions. Again a great deal of verbalization takes place. For example, children will be asked to place a book on, under, or beside a table. This they do, while explaining to the class what they are doing or after completing the task,

telling the class what they have done.

In so far as possible, the program attempts to make language instruction a two-way experience, with teacher and students learning from each other. Usually children already have a good understanding of the concepts being taught. They just do not know the English vocabulary for these concepts. Children demonstrate their understanding by providing the required Cree vocabulary. In this way they are teachers as well as students. This helps to establish a good rapport with the children and serves the additional purpose of demonstrating to the teacher the difficulties involved in learning a second language.

Language Experience Approach

The Language Experience Approach to reading introduces children to reading by drawing on their experiences as the basis of their reading material. When children take part in field trips or family outings, the things they encounter may provide the basic material for a story which they dictate and the teacher records. This approach to reading also uses familiar signs and labels which children see every day to reinforce the fact that reading is useful and meaningful. Children gain a greater understanding of books by compiling their own. They draw pictures and the teacher writes their dictated captions. At other times they may produce a wordless picture book, relying on the pictures to tell their story.

In addition to the methods already mentioned, the following are further ideas which are included in the program:

(a) Write a sequential story about preparing a meal. If fruits and vegetables are involved, the sequence may begin with harvesting the necessary items and end with their being served.

(b) Compose a class poem. The unit theme Our Bodies, which includes learning about our five senses, provides an excellent opportunity for this type of activity. Prior to the poetry writing, the class may brainstorm for ideas and new vocabulary words. The children may not be able to verbalize all the necessary words in English but may be able to demonstrate what they mean by their actions. Two examples of such poetry writing include:

(i) Our Hands
Our hands can draw
Our hands can feel
Our hands can hold, etc.

(ii) Our Senses
Ears hear
Eyes see etc.

(c) Make greeting cards for the various occasions which occur throughout the year, for example, Christmas, St. Valentine's Day and Easter.

(d) Write various types of letters, for example, invitations, thank-you notes.

(e) Make word mobiles. Choose a topic such as housing. A picture of a house would be at the top while there would be strings to hold picture word cards for each room. For example, hanging from the card on which is written the word kitchen would be picture word cards for sink, stove and refrigerator.

(f) Write a grocery list or menu for a meal.

(g) Construct a captioned 'movie'. This may be used with the theme Transportation. Given a large roll of paper which is spread out the length of the classroom, each child is assigned a section on which he or she draws a form of transportation. The teacher writes their dictated captions. When completed the 'movie' is wound around one broom stick with the beginning attached to a second. The teacher must remember to have a title scene as well as one which lists the authors and producers. Of course, no movie is complete without the final scene 'The End'. This is then mounted in a large cardboard box which has a section cut out for a screen. The movie effect is gained by turning the broom handle as a reel would turn.

(h) Write a story from a viewpoint other than their own. Children may pretend that they are Santa Claus or the Easter bunny and write a story from that viewpoint.

(i) Match word cards and labels to appropriate objects.

(j) Reinforce the letters of the alphabet with activities beyond printing and sight recognition. Examples for doing this include:

(i) Making pipe cleaner letters

(ii) Painting letters

(iii) Baking letters. Children roll out dough and shape the desired letters to be baked.

(iv) Forming letters using their bodies. Sometimes children will have to work in pairs for this activity.

(v) Outlining letters. Given an outline of a letter, the children use raisins or peanuts to place along the outline to cover it. The children may 'eat' the letter when they are finished.

(vi) Building letters. Children use tooth picks or popsicle sticks to build a letter by gluing them together to form a three dimensional figure which can stand up on its own.

Children's literature

The use of children's literature is a valuable part of any reading program. Through exposure to quality literature children become aware that the language presented in books is more than just speech written down. Good literature helps to reveal reading as a source of enjoyment, to increase vocabulary, to increase the power of expression, to expose children to the language of books, and to provide them with new experiences.

Methods used in presenting children's literature include the following:

(a) The provision for a daily storytime, during which

stories are read or told to the children using a translated or simplified version when necessary

(b) The shared book reading experience

(c) The use of the flannel board to illustrate stories

(d) The use of storybooks with accompanying cassette tapes and/or filmstrips

(e) The dramatization of stories

(f) The use of choral speaking in conjunction with poetry.

Summary

The ideas used in this program are a culmination of nine years of working with native students. An attempt was made to include all those ideas and activities which proved to be most effective during that time. It was found that new language skills were more easily learnt when presented through conversation and reinforced with first hand experiences. Vocabulary and pre-reading skills were enhanced through the use of children's literature and the Language Experience Approach to reading.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

For many children, beginning school is a traumatic experience. It must be even more traumatic for the child whose language differs from that of the teacher and other school personnel. Teachers must not only be aware of this language barrier as it affects the daily instruction but must also be aware of the psychological implications for the child. Teachers should realize that just because a child does not know the English word for an object does not mean that he does not understand the concept being taught. Often teachers underestimate what the ESL child knows and treat him as a remedial student rather than one who is having difficulty coping with a new language.

The review of related literature revealed that the child learning his second language does so using many of the same strategies that he used in learning his first language. Unlike the child learning his first language, however, the second language learner is under pressure in terms of time and performance. Children learn a language best when it is presented in natural type situations as opposed to drills. In this way they see the usefulness of the language being taught. Whenever possible the presentation of new vocabulary should be accompanied by the

corresponding concrete object. Many researchers felt that students should not begin reading in their second language until they had reached a certain level of proficiency, but they failed to identify what that level was.

The research also found that children learn to read by reading and by being read to. It failed to establish, however, any one method of teaching reading as being more effective than another. Instead a more eclectic approach was recommended with the teacher selecting those aspects of the program which would best meet the needs of the students. The Language Experience Approach to Reading was suggested for use in the early stages so that students could move naturally from speaking to reading. The use of children's literature was recommended in order to make students aware of the language of books, to increase their vocabulary, and, most importantly, to help them to view reading as a source of pleasure.

An integrated program was developed to include first hand experiences, the meaningful use of language, children's literature, and the Language Experience Approach to Reading. These are necessary if students are to acquire the literacy base necessary to succeed in a reading program. It is also essential that the teacher adapt the materials to make them culturally relevant to the student whenever possible. This cultural content helps to reinforce the meaningfulness of the reading material and helps to point out the usefulness of acquiring new language and reading skills.

The Study and A Beginning Reading Program for Native Students are presented in two parts so that the program may be easily accessible for use by classroom teachers. The program consists of twenty units, eight of which have been developed while the remaining twelve have been presented in outline form. Each unit shows how familiar themes may be used to teach new English vocabulary using concepts which the children understand. Many of the units pertain to a particular season or occasion which will influence when they are taught. They are not intended to follow any particular sequence; instead it is left to the discretion of the teacher to decide when a unit will be introduced.

The intent of the program was to provide children with a background in reading rather than in decoding skills alone, so that they would not confuse mere word calling with reading. It would have been difficult, therefore, to assess formally the effectiveness of the program at the end of the first year. Whether or not it has been truly successful will be revealed as the children progress through the primary grades or Division One and on into Division Two. As children turn to reading as a means of pleasure and a source of information, then the value of a good foundation in reading will be realized.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to assist teachers who wish to incorporate this program into the existing one in their classrooms:

1. Children should be able to see the usefulness of all material presented in the classroom.

2. Children should be made to feel proud of their own culture while learning skills which may be deeply rooted in another culture.

3. Children should first be taught those words which they will encounter frequently and will be required to use. This does not mean that words which hold a particular interest for the child are overlooked. Such words will be learned quickly and easily by the child.

4. Children should be exposed to a wide range of children's literature. No book should be denied because some sections are too difficult. Rather, these sections should be rephrased in terms the child will understand.

5. Children should be provided with first hand experiences to help reinforce the concepts taught.

6. Children should see their parents and home as closely linked with the school, one reinforcing the other.

While the program was developed for use with Cree students, it is felt that it may be adapted for many beginning ESL students. The teachers would be responsible for researching the cultural and language differences to meet the needs of their students.

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PART II

A BEGINNING READING PROGRAM FOR NATIVE STUDENTS

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Part II

FOREWORD TO TEACHERS

The following program is intended for use with children for whom English is a second language. While decoding skills are important, it is felt that in the beginning the emphasis should be placed on getting meaning from print. If not, word calling rather than reading will be the result.

The Program consists of twenty units. Eight of the unit themes have been expanded to show how they are to be used in the classroom. The remaining twelve are presented in outline form with the recommendation that they be further expanded in a similar way to the other eight. While the theme may dictate when a particular unit is to be taught, the scheduling of each unit is otherwise left to the teacher. The units are not intended to follow any particular sequence.

An attempt has been made to provide a total program which gives children an opportunity to use their new vocabulary across the curriculum as well as at home. Each unit contains a section on language development and cultural content. This allows the teacher to provide that vital link between home and school. The teacher is also made aware of language differences in order to be aware of any potential trouble areas. Whenever English vocabulary is presented, children should be given the opportunity to supply the equivalent word from their own language. Parents and other volunteers from the community should be encouraged to visit

the classroom and take an active part in helping the children, particularly with those things pertaining to their own culture.

Children's literature is another essential part of the program. Each unit contains a list of several books, poems and/or fingerplays which are appropriate for the theme. These selections are suggested but other appropriate material may be substituted or used as supplements. It is strongly felt, however, that the old storybook favourites such as "The Three Bears" and "The Little Red Hen" should be read because of their valuable repetition and predictability.

SECTION ONE: DEVELOPED UNITS

Unit Theme: School

Focus. Acquainting the children with the physical plant of the school and the people who will be working with them.

Objectives

1. To familiarize the children with the oral vocabulary which will be used daily in the school. This includes:

(a) Classroom objects, such as chalkboard, chalk, desk, painting easel, which may not be familiar to the children

(b) Other rooms, including the gym, library, and washrooms, which the children may be using

(c) Rooms, such as the principal's office, staff room, and industrial arts room, which the child may not be using but may still be curious about

(d) Playground equipment such as swings, see-saw slides and monkey bars.

2. To acquaint the children with school personnel

(a) Teacher aide

(b) Librarian

(c) School nurse

(d) Principal

3. To introduce print

This involves pointing out that words may stand for objects and actions and that the letters of the alphabet go together in particular sequences to

form words.

4. To introduce simple directions such as "Stand-up" and "Go to your seat".

Skills

1. Language development

(a) Vocabulary--names of classroom and playground objects

(b) Greetings and introductions, such as:

Hello, I'm ----

My name is ----

What's your name?

(c) Directions necessary in school

(d) Sentence structures involving the positional concepts here and there.

2. Pre-reading skills

(a) The printed word may be used to represent an object.

(b) Children are introduced to the letters Ss and Qq.

Activities

1. First hand experiences

Take a tour of the school. Point out the labels on doors and tell what each says. Meet the librarian, principal and school nurse. Explain to the children what goes on in each room and the items which are peculiar to each particular room, e.g., gym as opposed

to library.

Children are told that they must walk quietly through the school; there should be no running or shouting. This would be a good time to introduce them to Mr. O, a hand puppet with the letter O on his chest. Mr. O reminds them when it is necessary to be quiet. The letter is presented incidentally and no attempt is made to drill for recognition.

2. Conversation

The school personnel met on the tour are introduced to the children. Also those children who wish to do so are given the opportunity to introduce themselves to these people. Within the classroom setting, children may introduce themselves to Mr. O.

When discussing classroom objects the teacher may wish to use such sentence structures as:

Here is a pencil.

There is some chalk.

The children also become familiar with the question What is this (that)?

3. Language experience approach to reading

Make a record of what happened on tour. At this stage the children may only be capable of supplying single words when asked what they saw. It is the responsibility of the teacher to provide a model by putting the word in a sentence, recording it on the chalkboard or chart paper and then reading what has been written to and with the children.

To show that print is used as a means of communication, write thank-you notes to the librarian and the principal to show appreciation for their taking the time to talk with the children. An alternate suggestion would be to write a letter inviting the principal or librarian to visit the classroom.

By labeling items in the classroom, point out to children that print is used to represent objects. The children may also be presented with name tags to wear. They should also be made aware of exit signs and directions to follow in case of fire.

Children are told that all words are made up of letters. The teacher should have a wall chart of all the letters of the alphabet displayed in the classroom. It should be explained to children that these 26 letters are all that are needed for the words we write. At this point we introduce them to the letter Ss, while explaining that it is the first letter in the word school as well as such other things as swing, slide and see-saw. These words, as well as any others which children may suggest from viewing the labelled objects in the classroom, should be written on the chalkboard.

4. Children's literature

Students should be read to every day and provided with a variety of books which they are encouraged to look at and explore. Suggested books for this topic include:

(a) The School by John Burningham

(b) Morris Goes to School by B. Wiseman

(c) Shawn Goes to School by Petronella Breinburg

(d) Ernest Owl Starts a School by Jane Pilgrim

If a book is too difficult for second language students to comprehend, the teacher may simplify the vocabulary and structure, while at the same time placing a greater emphasis on the pictures to help the students gain a greater understanding of the story. However, the author's original text should be read to them at least once.

Nursery rhymes and poems may also be used in teaching language and reading skills. The nursery rhyme "Mary Had a Little Lamb" has valuable repetition and may be quickly learnt by the children. Two poems related to the topic which may also be used are "School" by Winnifred C. Marshall and "Back to School" by Aileen Fisher.

To help in reinforcing the letters Ss and Qq, children may be shown the books My S Sound Box and My Q Sound Box, both by Jane Belk Moncure.

Follow-up Activities

1. Categorization and problem solving

Children may be asked the following questions:

Where would these items be found? For example, soap and paper towels; slides and swings.

What are they used for?

2. Art

(a) Have each child draw a picture of the school, the playground, or any of the rooms. The teacher may then write the student's dictated caption for the picture. The completed pictures could be compiled in a book form, which would include a table of contents listing the pictures drawn and the children who drew them. This book would be the first step in building a classroom library containing books produced by the students.

(b) Make the letter S with plasticine. Children may also enjoy making S's outside in the soil using a stick.

Cultural Content

The children are aware that the teacher and the majority of the school personnel do not speak their language. Teacher aides or parent volunteers may be used initially to explain the school routine to the children. It is suggested that the teacher learn at least some key words and sentences in the children's language. This would serve two purposes. It would aid communication with the children but more importantly it would let the children know that the teacher accepts and respects their language and thus themselves.

It is also suggested that parent volunteers or

teacher aides be asked to help with story time. The story may be read first in one language and then in the other.

Approximate Time

This unit will take at least seven days to complete. The schedule of activities provided does not necessarily refer to consecutive days nor is it intended to be followed strictly. The teacher may rearrange the activities within each unit or move into the next unit before the previous one has been completed.

Each day the teacher should read either poetry or prose or both to the children. The teacher may select a new book or poem for each session or may reread a book or poem which the children have particularly enjoyed. Other daily activities include recording the students' dictated statements concerning school, home and community events. Every effort should be made to engage them in meaningful conversations in which their new vocabulary can naturally surface.

A schedule of activities may be outlined as follows:

Day One: The classroom

Day Two: The playground

Day Three: Library and Principal's Office

Day Four: Gym and Nursing Clinic

Day Five: Other rooms

Write letters of appreciation or an invitation

Day Six: Follow-up activities

Day Seven: Review and reinforcement of new vocabulary

Unit Theme: Fall

Focus. To discuss with children the changing world around them as summer turns to fall and what these changes mean to people, plants and animals.

Objectives

1. To help children think about the changes in nature

(a) the changing of the leaves from green to orange, yellow, red and brown

(b) the ripening of fruits and vegetables.

2. To show how things may be grouped according to colour, with special emphasis on the colours red and yellow.

3. To introduce the calendar--the months of the year, the days of the week and the date.

4. To introduce the letter Ll.

Skills

1. Language development

(a) vocabulary associated with fall: words such as trees, leaves and cool

(b) colour words with particular emphasis on red and yellow

(c) vocabulary necessary for categorization: words such as same, alike and different

(d) months of the year and days of the week

(e) sentence structures

(i) What colour is this?

It is _____ (colour).

It is a (colour) (object e.g. ball, leaf, car).

(ii) Are these the same?

Yes, they are the same.

No, they are different.

(iii) What day (month) is it?

Today is _____.

2. Pre-reading skills

(a) Knowledge of similarities and differences. Children learn to categorize items according to colour.

(b) Awareness of time in terms of seasons, months, and days

(c) Children are introduced to the letter Ll.

Activities

1. First hand experiences

Take the children on a nature hike to collect different types of leaves and note their colours. Once back in the classroom, mount the leaves on a large piece of bristol board which has been cut in the shapes of upper and lower case L's.

Take the children on a berry picking expedition. Children and teacher may then make a cake or muffins with the berries picked.

Children sort beads and blocks according to colour.

They may also learn to follow a pattern made with beads by re-creating one which is provided as an example.

2. Conversation

Conversations would center around comparison of objects as to their similarities and differences. Children will be encouraged to discuss their nature hike and their experiences with finding leaves and picking berries. Whenever possible, the colour of the object should be used when they are discussing it.

3. Language Experience Approach

Teachers should have a large classroom calendar for each month. Each day they should point out the date and write it on the chalk board as follows: Today is day (Tuesday), month (September), date (10). They may also write the year. The children then reread it with the teacher.

If the students are using their berries in baking, it would be a good idea to write out the recipe on a large chart, drawing pictures beside such words as measuring cup and eggs to illustrate what they are. If the children are successful in their baking attempts, it is suggested the class invite parents, friends and/or school personnel to share it with them. An invitation may be written and sent home with the children.

This would be the appropriate time to begin making the colour books--one for red and another for

yellow. The appropriate colour cover for each is made and the name of the colour written on it in very large print. These "books" should have at least ten blank pages and should be displayed where they are easily accessible. As children see pictures of things which are, for example, red, they may cut out the picture or draw and colour their own picture to paste in the Red Book. The teacher may also record comments which children make about the various colours. Teachers are reminded to write the date on all entries.

4. Children's Literature

The old folk tale "Chicken Little" or "Henny Penny" with the repetitive refrain "The sky is falling" could be read at this time. Note the colour of the chicken--yellow. The children may want to record this in their Yellow Book. Other books which may be used at this time include Blueberries for Sal by Robert McClosky and Let's Find Out About Fall by Martha and Charles Shapp. Poems suitable for this time are "In Autumn" and "Squirrels", both by Winnifred C. Marshall, and "Leaf Blankets" by Irene Crowfoot. To help reinforce the letter Ll, the book My Ll Sound Box by Jane Moncure may be added to the two books about Ss and Qq by the same author.

Follow-Up Activities

1. Children are given a sheet of paper which has been divided into squares and are requested to draw straight lines vertically within each square. They are given the opportunity to practice on the chalk board first; each child is given a turn. It is pointed out that this line l makes the lower case l.

2. Categorize leaves according to name. Children visit the school library with their teacher to find books showing the various types of leaves. They may then match the leaves they found with the ones shown in the book. The teacher may then attach one of each type of leaf to a large sheet of bristol board and write its name in big bold letters underneath.

Cultural Content

Prior to the arrival of the white man, native people discussed the passage of time with reference to the time between one new moon and the next. This closely corresponded to the months as we know them. September is known as the "Mating Moon". In the daily discussions of the days of the week and the months, the teacher should also use the Cree words for the months and days. The Cree words for the colours red and yellow may also be used here.

Long ago, before refrigeration, berries were dried in the sun to prevent them from spoiling. The children may want to do this with some of the berries they

picked. The berries are placed on a large piece of cloth and left out in the hot sun. When they are dried they are stored in birch bark baskets.

Approximate time

Day One: Nature hike--gather leaves
-- discuss colours

Day Two: Begin entries in the Colour Books

Day Three: Berry picking

Day Four: Baking and writing invitations

Day Five: Drying berries and entertaining visitors.

Day Six: Similarities and differences

Day Seven: Printing the letter l and categorizing leaves

Unit Theme: Books

Focus. To create an awareness of books and the pleasure they may bring to each child.

Objectives

1. To make children aware of types of books available for their level: (a) Wordless picture books
(b) Picture story books
(c) Informational books.

2. To illustrate to children that their simple stories may be recorded and assembled in book form.

3. To point out that stories may be told by pictures alone and that given a wordless picture book, they may create their own stories to go with the book.

4. To introduce the letter Bb.

Skills

1. Language development

(a) Vocabulary. The children learn that a book is made up of a cover and pages. They also become aware of the title and that it is found on the cover of the book. They are told that the person who wrote the book is called an author and the person who drew the pictures is called the illustrator. Other words associated with books include beginning, end, and open, close.

2. Pre-reading skills

(a) Children learn how to (i) hold a book

correctly; (ii) turn the pages from front to back and do so without damaging the book.

(b) Children become aware that print goes from left to right and from top to bottom.

(c) Children are introduced to the letter Bb.

Activities

1. First hand experiences

A library corner should be a part of every classroom and consist of at least 3 or 4 titles for each child. It should also cover the full range of books available--wordless picture books, picture story books and informational books. Children are given ample opportunity to explore the library and a period of time is set aside each day for them to do their own exploring in the world of books. No children should be forced to look at books if they have no desire to do so. The teacher may use subtle techniques for arousing their interest. For example, if some children continuously want to play with cars and trucks in the sandbox, then the teacher should attempt to find a book related to this activity and bring it to their attention.

2. Conversation

Children are encouraged to share with the other children a book which they have particularly enjoyed. They may begin by telling the title or explaining the picture which is found on the cover. The children are

encouraged to turn the pages of the book and to explain the story from memory and by 'reading' the pictures. In this way children show reading-like behavior.

3. Language experience approach

Children are asked to draw a picture telling about one of the books they have been looking at or have had read to them. If they wish they may illustrate a book or story which has been read or told to them at home. For those who wish, the teacher may write a caption or sentence as dictated by the child to go with the picture. At this time the teacher may begin helping children to write their names on the papers. When the pictures are completed, the teacher may compile them in book form. The children help to suggest a title for the book.

4. Children's literature

The books available for children of this age group are usually picture story books. The teacher may choose any from the wide variety available to be read to the children at this time. The almost wordless picture book A Kitten for a Day by Ezra Jack Keats is suggested to show children that a story may be told using pictures and very few words. Informational books which children may enjoy are the Talkabout books in the Lady Bird series, My B Sound Box by Jane Moncure, and The Great Canadian Alphabet Book by Philip Johnson. The poem "What Is a Book" by Lora Dunetz is very appropriate

for use at this time.

Follow-up Activities

1. Children make the letter Bb, using a paint brush and tempera paint. A stack of paper which has been divided into large squares should be readily available for those who wish to practice making their letters by staying within the lines of the squares. They would not be required to print on the line.

2. Children are reminded of the letters Oo, Ss, and Ll whenever the opportunity exists.

3. If possible, items are added to the colour books.

4. The teacher is reminded to discuss the day, month, and date with the class each day. This may be extended to include a discussion about the weather.

Cultural Content

The children are told that long ago, many of the Cree stories were not written down, but were simply passed on by word of mouth. Many have been forgotten. For this reason an effort is being made today to have them written down so that they will be preserved for future generations. It is suggested that elders from the reserve be invited to the class to tell the students some legends in their own language. In this way the teacher may be assured that the legends are told in the correct manner and at the appropriate time.

This would be an excellent opportunity to read them the picture story book Little Badger and the Fire Spirit by Maria Campbell. It tells about a young Cree girl who is visiting her grandparents on a reserve during the summer. While there, they tell her the legend of Little Badger and the Fire Spirit. It is actually a story within a story.

At this time, the teacher should be aware that while English has 24 consonants sounds, the Cree language has only eight. Also English differentiates between the voiceless p and the voiced b but Cree makes no such distinction. Instead the p sound is predominant, so that the children may have difficulty determining whether a word begins, or ends, with p or b.

Approximate Time

Day One: Exploring the library, selecting and looking at books which attract their attention

Day Two: Discussing different types of books, their proper care and handling

Day Three: Making illustrations and writing captions

Day Four: Legends by reserve elders
Painting the letter Bb

Day Five: Sharing with others the books they have read

Day Six: Review and reinforcement of the vocabulary and concepts presented.

Unit Theme: Self and Family

Focus. To make children more aware of themselves as individuals and their part in the family unit.

Objectives

1. To make children aware of family relationships and their own unique place in the social unit which is known as the family.
2. To introduce the numbers one through five.
3. To introduce the letters Ii and Mm.
4. To introduce the concept of measurement in terms of height and weight.

Skills

1. Language Development
   (a) Vocabulary development
      (i) Pronouns associated with self: me, my, I, mine, myself
      (ii) Names for family relationships such as brother, sister, aunt and uncle
      (iii) vocabulary for measurement such as ruler, scales, kilograms, and centimeters
   (b) Sentence structure
      I am _____ centimeters
      I weigh _____ kilograms
      I am a (boy, girl)
      I have _____ sisters and _____ brothers

(c) Numbers one through five.

2. Pre-reading skills

(a) Comprehension. An understanding of family relationships will enable the children to better understand stories in which such relationships are discussed or alluded to.

(b) Grouping and categorization according to gender. They become aware that brother, father, grandfather and uncles are male and are denoted by the pronoun he, while sister, mother, grandmother and aunt are female and are denoted by the pronoun she.

(c) Children are introduced to the letters Ii and Mm.

Activities

1. First hand experiences

(a) Have a "Family Day" in class. Students are to invite parents and/or other relatives. Arrangements may be made to take pictures of the students with the members of their individual families.

(b) Each child is weighed and measured and the height and weight recorded on a chart.

2. Conversation

Children are encouraged to talk about their families in terms of the number of brothers and sisters they have and which are older (bigger) or younger (smaller) than they are. They may also wish to tell about ways they help their parents or guardians and

what these people, in turn, do for them.

3. Language Experience Approach

Have children make books about themselves. These may be entitled "This is Me" or simply "Me". Individual children provide the central theme of each book. They should be encouraged to tell about themselves, their likes and dislikes, and their feelings. Information about each child's birth date, height and weight is included. Each child may also be encouraged to draw pictures of family members or family events to be used as part of the book. This book may have extra pages at the end so that entries may be made throughout the year. Such entries may be simply to record when a child learned to ice skate, went on a hunting trip, or had a birthday party.

4. Children's Literature

A Baby Sister for Francis by Russell Hoban and Boy in the Middle by Gladys Baker Bond help explain to children how others react to their brothers and sisters. The book A Boy from Taché by Ann Blades tells about a young boy who goes for help when his grandfather becomes ill. It is set on an Indian Reserve in British Columbia. The old fairy tales "Little Red Riding Hood" and "The Three Bears" also depict family relationships.

The following poems are written in the first person: "In the Mirror" by Merlin Millet, "When I'm Angry" by B. L. Lee and "Look at Me" by Ida M. Pardue. Throughout

this unit, the children have been learning to count to five. Fingerplays and other counting out rhymes are quite enjoyed by the children. One such fingerplay, whose author is unknown, reads as follows:

Five Little Froggies

Five little froggies sat on the shore

(Open hand, extend fingers. Push down one finger as each leaves)

One went for a swim and then there were four.
Four little froggies looked out to sea,
One went swimming and then there were three.
Three little froggies said, "What can we do?"
One jumped in the water and then there were two.
Two little froggies sat in the sun,
One swam off and then there was one.
One lonely froggie said, "This is no fun."
He dived into the water and then there were none.

Follow-up Activities

1. Children are taught the words I and me. This is an opportunity to point out that words are of varying sizes, that "I" has only one letter, me has two, while some have nine or ten.

2. Children may add to the colour books using items which may have been discussed when talking about their family, for example, We live in a yellow house or Dad has a black car.

3. Reinforce the numbers one to five. Children take part in counting rhymes and matching exercises.

4. Children practice making the letters Ii and Mm on the chalkboard as well as on paper.

Cultural Content

In discussing themselves, children are made aware of their unique heritage as Cree Indian children and that they are members of the reserve community. In discussions of family members and numbers, children are presented with both the English and Cree words. In this way the children become aware that the person or concept remains the same, even though different cultures and/or languages use different words for it.

In this unit, the children were introduced to the pronouns pertaining to self as well as the pronouns he and she. The Cree language does not differentiate between nouns in terms of masculine, feminine and neuter. Instead all Cree nouns are either animate or inanimate. For this reason Cree children often have difficulty with pronouns denoting gender and may refer to mother as he and brother as she. An awareness of such language differences will help the teacher understand why the errors are made and assist her in guiding children to make the necessary corrections.

Approximate Time

Day One: Discussing family relationships using both English and the Cree equivalent

Day Two: Discussing self

Obtain and record height and weight of each child

Day Three: Family Day

Introduce letters Ii and Mm

Day Four: Begin book about self

Rote counting one to five

Day Five: Pronouns he and she

Teach the words I and me

Day Six: Add to Colour Books if possible

Printing letters Ii and Mm

Day Seven: Review vocabulary, letters and numbers

Unit Theme: Clothing

Focus. To make children aware of the different types and names of the clothing items worn throughout the year.

Objectives

1. To expand the child's vocabulary for clothing items beyond the basic shirt, pants, dress, coat, socks, and shoes. This expansion would involve:

(a) Making the child aware that there are different types of coats, pants, etc. For example, when discussing coats we also use the words parka, raincoat, jacket, and fur coat.

(b) Showing the child that clothing items are made up of various parts. In discussing a shirt we may talk about the sleeves, collar, cuffs, and pockets.

(c) Pointing out that the kind of work being done, the time of year, and the occasion may determine the clothes worn.

2. To introduce the concept of size. Children become aware that something may be too big, too small, or 'just right'.

3. To introduce the letters Aa and Nn.

4. To introduce the concepts on, off; front, back; big, little, and middle size.

Skills

1. Language development

(a) Vocabulary--clothing items and their parts

(b) Positional concepts--on, off; front, back

(c) Concept of size--big, little, middle size

(d) Sentence structures

(i) I am (putting on, taking off) my coat.

(ii) This coat is (too big, too small, just right).

(iii) This is the (front, back) of the coat.

2. Pre-reading skills

(a) Matching. Given a picture clue and the printed word on a card, children learn to match the card with the appropriate clothing item or part of a clothing item.

(b) Recognizing parts of the whole. Children recognize that a sleeve belongs to a coat while a leg belongs to a pair of pants.

(c) Sequencing. Children learn to recognize the order in which clothes are put on. They usually know this already but have not begun to verbalize it.

(d) Children are introduced to the letters Aa and Nn.

Activities

1. First hand experiences

(a) A box of clothing of varying sizes is

provided in the classroom, to give the children the opportunity to dress up and role play. The children further develop their fine motor co-ordination as they button buttons, zip zippers and tie shoe laces.

(b) Dolls and doll clothes of varying sizes are also provided. Children dress these dolls choosing clothes which are the correct size for each.

2. Conversation

Children are given ample opportunity to describe what they are wearing plus the clothes they select to dress up in. They are also encouraged to talk about the clothes they use to dress the dolls. An effort is made to discuss them in terms of size and colour.

3. Language Experience Approach

Use a big book to help the children read along with the teacher. A big book is a regular story book which has been enlarged by the teacher so that it may be placed on a chart stand or easel. A suggested book for this time is "Goldilocks and the Three Bears". Children will enjoy the repetition and it will help to reinforce the words big, little and middle size.

4. Children's Literature.

The story <u>You'll Grow into Them</u> by Pat Hutchins depicts the very familiar situation in many families of children wearing clothes which had been previously owned by their older siblings. The youngest in this story is pleased when the new baby arrives, since now

he has someone who will wear his clothing. The book How Do I Put It On? by Shigeo Watanabe presents the problem of little bear getting dressed by himself. It provides humor, as children laugh at how he first puts his legs in his shirt sleeves. At the end he proudly announces "I got dressed all by myself". Poetry for this unit includes "My Raincoat" by Lois Lenski, "Winter Clothes" by Karla Kuskin and "New Shoes" by Alice Wilkins. The old nursery rhyme "The Three Little Kittens Have Lost Their Mittens" would also fit in here quite well.

Follow-up Activities

1. Matching. Given a clothes' line across one corner of the classroom, children are required to hang mittens, gloves and socks in correct pairs.

2. Problem solving. Students are shown an enlarged picture of a clothing item with a part missing, for example, a sweater with only one sleeve. They are required to point out the problem area or supply the name of the missing part.

3. Illustrate the poem "Winter Clothes" by using the flannel board. Cut out a figure of a child and all the clothes mentioned. Then add items of clothing according to the way they are listed in the poem.

4. Make cookies--roll out the dough and cut it out in shapes of Aa and Nn.

Cultural Content

Many traditional clothing items are still very popular today. Gloves, moccasins and beaded jackets are worn not only by native people but by many others who value the quality of workmanship which goes into each item. Native jewelry such as necklaces and ear rings are also widely worn.

The majority of the children may have watched their mothers, grandmothers or older sisters as they tanned the hides, cut out the pieces to be sewn together and then decorated them with fur, beading or both. Today many women use hides which have been tanned commercially rather than tanning them themselves.

Moccasins, gloves and other items may be made to order and this may explain why they are usually such a comfortable fit. People who wish to have a pair of moccasins made locally trace their feet on a piece of brown wrapping paper and give it to the lady to use as a pattern. Children may practice doing this and then be shown how a piece of material can be cut the same size.

A display of traditional native clothing items would be appropriate at this time. This should include not only items which are part of every day wear but also items which are no longer worn or worn only on special occasions.

Approximate Time

Day One: Vocabulary for clothing items

Day Two: Introduction to the letter Aa

Discussion of clothing items worn in different seasons

Day Three: Discussing clothing items in terms of their parts

Day Four: Introduction to the letter Nn

Introduction to positional concepts on, off, and front, back

Day Five: Sizing--big, little, middle size

Shared Book reading experience

Day Six: Discussing traditional native clothing and how it was made

Day Seven: Dressing up themselves and/or dolls

Practicing with buttons, zippers and shoe laces

Day Eight: Matching and problem solving

Day Nine: Review of vocabulary

Native clothing display

Unit Theme: Animals

Focus. To develop an understanding of animal life, where animals live and how they benefit people.

Objectives

1. To teach children that animals may be classified in four main groups, that is, pets, woodland, farm and zoo.

2. To make children aware that animals may provide us with food and clothing as well as companionship and enjoyment.

3. To introduce the letters Cc and Kk.

4. To introduce the colour brown.

5. To explain to children that in some story books and legends, animals may take on human characteristics.

Skills

1. Language development

(a) Vocabulary associated with animals

(i) Names of at least four or five animals from each of the four groups

(ii) Parts of animals, for example, elephant's trunk, cat's paws, duck's beak, and horse's hoof

(iii) Action words associated with animals, for example, lambs skip, kangaroos and rabbits hop, snakes wiggle, and ponies trot

(iv) Animal products, for example, wool, eggs, fur, milk.

2. Pre-reading skills

(a) Listening and following directions

(i) Auditory discrimination and listening skills are enhanced by having the children listen to the sounds made by a particular animal and then having them name that animal. Depending on the ability of the student, these sounds may be presented in isolation or with background noises.

(ii) Children learn to follow simple directions such as bend like a giraffe, stretch like a cat and fly like a bird.

(b) Children learn to differentiate between fantasy and reality when they read books in which animals take on human characteristics. They read about animals who talk, dress and act in much the same way as humans do. While these characters are only make-believe, children often come to identify with the things they do and the way they feel.

(c) Children are introduced to the letters Cc and Kk.

Activities

1. First hand experiences

(a) Plans may be made to visit a farm and/or a zoo.

(b) The children may have a pet day. An interesting variation would be to read Ezra Jack Keat's book Pet Show and then have the children bring the types of pets which the children in the story brought, for example, a fly, a mouse and a frog as well as the more conventional pets such as cats and goldfish.

(c) Vicarious experiences are a good substitute if things cannot be experienced first hand. There are many excellent films and filmstrips depicting animals in their natural habitat.

2. Conversation

Children are encouraged to discuss the various characteristics of the animals which they have met either first hand or vicariously. They may discuss them in terms of where they are found, their size and colour and how they move around. They may be asked which animal they like best or which one they would like to have for a pet. If possible, they should make an effort to give reasons for their choice.

3. Language Experience Approach

Children help to compile books on each of the four classifications of animals. There is a wide variety of wild life magazines available and children may use discarded copies to obtain pictures. These cut-outs are pasted on sheets of art paper so that they are of uniform size. The students dictate a caption, sentence or sentences for the teacher to

record on the same page as the picture. The pages are then assembled into four books. We must remember that there may be some overlapping of animals in these books.

4. Children's Literature

There is a wide variety of children's picture story books and informational books available about animals. Suggestions for reading include such books by Ezra Jaok Keats as Kitten for a Day and Pet Show, Animals on the Farm by Jerry Seibert and Eddie Couldn't Find the Elephants by Edith Battles. The old fairy tale "The Ugly Duckling" and W. C. Anderson's Billy and Blaze series are also suggested. Poetry items include "Jump and Jiggle" by Evelyn Beyer, "There Was a Little Turtle" by Vachel Lindsay and the traditional song "The Bear Went Over the Mountain".

Follow-up Activities

1. Children learn to categorize using miniature animals. Set up four table scenes using miniatures or cardboard cut-outs, for example, home, zoo, farm and wood land. Children then place the animals in the correct setting.

2. Children draw lines to match animals and their babies.

3. Begin a brown book. Add to the other books when applicable.

4. Make an animal parade of letters using all the

letters presented thus far. In this unit, particular attention is given to the letters Cc and Kk.

Cultural Content

Animal life was at one time the mainstay of the native people. They depended on animals not only for food, clothing and shelter, but also for their weapons and many of their cooking implements. Their ingenuity allowed them to make use of every part of the animal they had killed. They also practiced conservation in that they killed only to meet their needs, and only when unavoidable did they hunt in mating season.

Many children will already be aware of the animals found on their own reserve. These include deer, moose, beaver, rabbits and bears. Some may have already gone hunting with their fathers and may share their experiences with the class. The book Normie's Goose Hunt by Vi Cowell relates the story of a young native boy who goes hunting with his family. The film "Spring Beaver" produced by Alberta School Broadcasts shows the trapping of beaver, the skinning of the animal after the kill and the stretching of the pelt using the old methods.

Approximate Time

Day One: Vocabulary--pets

Introduce the letter Cc

Day Two:	Vocabulary--farm
	Introduce brown. Begin brown book
Day Three:	Vocabulary--woodland animals
	Introduce the letter Kk
Day Four:	Vocabulary--zoo
	Listening exercises
Day Five:	Field trip to a farm and/or zoo
	Discuss story book animals
Day Six:	Discuss what farm animals provide
	Discuss native use of woodland animals
Day Seven:	Hold a Pet Day
	Matching exercises--animals and their babies
Day Eight:	Categorization--grouping of animals
	Compile a book for each group
Day Nine:	Review vocabulary
	Make an animal parade of letters

Unit Theme: Plants

Focus. To point out to children that plants are living things that need food, water and sunshine to grow and they, in turn, provide us with many things.

Objectives

1. To introduce the vocabulary associated with plants.

2. To introduce the letter Pp.

3. To introduce the concepts high and low, short and tall.

4. To point out the beautiful scenery found in picture story books and magazines and show how plants help to enhance the beauty of all pictures.

Skills

1. Language development

(a) Vocabulary associated with plants

(i) Types of plants, for example, tree, flower, bush, cactus, vine

(ii) Parts of a tree, for example, trunk, branch, limb, roots, leaves and needles

(iii) Parts of a flower, for example, leaf, stem, root, blossom

(iv) Needs of a plant, for example, water, sunshine and good soil

(b) Concepts high and low, short and tall.

(c) Sentence structures

(i) A tree has (leaves, branches, bark).

(ii) A plant needs (water, sunshine).

(iii) This is a leaf.

(iv) These are branches.

2. Pre-reading Skills

(a) Picture or context clues. Children become aware that plants are different at different times of the year. By looking at pictures or by hearing a description of some scenery, they should be able to tell what time of year it is.

(b) Sequencing. Children follow the growth of a plant from its beginning as a tiny seed.

(c) Children are introduced to the letter Pp.

Activities

1. First hand experiences

(a) Have a classroom display of many different plants, for example, vines, cactus and flowering plants.

(b) Children are given seeds which they plant and care for themselves.

(c) Children carry out an experiment with plants to show that they need water and sunshine to grow. They are given three plants. One they place in the sunshine but do not give it any water, a second they water but place it in a dark cupboard where it doesn't get any sunlight and the third they give both water and sunlight.

They then can observe how the plant responds to the different conditions.

2. Conversation

While the children plant the seeds, water them and care for them, they are encouraged to talk about what they are doing and why. They should also be able to give the correct order of planting the seeds, covering them with soil and then watering them. They should be actively talking about leaves, roots and stem with regard to plants, and branches, trunk and bark when talking about trees.

3. Language Experience Approach

(a) Create a daily diary in which children may record the planting of the seeds, the care they give them each day and any daily progress regarding growth.

(b) They may write a short story on how to properly care for plants. Here they may record what happens to plants when they have been deprived of water or sunshine or both.

4. Children's Literature

There are many informational books available about trees and plants, for example, The Tree Book of Plants We Know by Irene Miner as well as the books in 'Let's Read and Find Out Book' series entitled How a Seed Grows by Helen J. Jordan. A Tree is Nice by Janice May Udry and The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss present information but in story form. The story "The

Little Red Hen" is an old favourite which presents the sequencing of events from seed to product with a great deal of excellent repetition. The story of "Jack and the Beanstalk" is also appropriate.

The poem "Tommy" by Gwendolyn Brooks is about a little boy who plants a seed and cares for it while waiting for it to grow. To reinforce the concepts high and low read the poem "Seesaw" by Ilo Orleans. In this poem these concepts are discussed in relation to going up and down on a seesaw.

Follow-up Activities

1. Make the letter Pp by pasting seeds along the outline of a large P which has been printed on a sheet of construction paper. The larger the seeds, the easier it will be for the children to manipulate them.

2. This is an excellent opportunity to add to the Green book pictures of plants, sample leaves from each of those in the classroom or leaves brought from home.

3. Children review the sense of smell as they are exposed to flowering plants.

Cultural Content

It has been pointed out in earlier units how native people made use of the leaves and fruits of plants, for example, berries for food, flavouring and dyes. We also discussed how the bark from the birch tree was used for making canoes and baskets. Plants were also

used for medicinal purposes. Chokecherries were dried and crushed; then fried in vegetable oil and eaten as a cure for the common cold. Peppermint herbs were boiled (both the leaves and the flowers) and used in the treatment of diabetes while the bark of trees was used for treating heart disease. The Labrador tea plant was boiled and used like a beverage much like we use tea today. Children may have accompanied parents or other adults as different plants were being gathered. They may be able to suggest additional uses for some plants. With the help of members of the community, make a bulletin board display of the plants found on the reserve and their uses.

Approximate Time

Day One: Introduce vocabulary for plants
Introduce the letter Pp

Day Two: Introduce vocabulary for trees
Introduce concepts high, low, short and tall

Day Three: Plant seeds
Begin a daily diary of their progress

Day Four: Discuss traditional native use of plants
Point out how plants enhance the beauty of scenery

Day Five: Begin Experiment with plants
Make the letter Pp using seeds

Day Six: Begin display of plants found on the reserve

Day Seven: Review vocabulary

Review sense of smell

Unit Theme: Heritage

Focus. Children become aware of their unique cultural heritage and the role they play in the larger Canadian society.

Objectives

1. To explain to students the significance of Treaty Day and what it means to native people. On this particular reserve, Treaty Day is usually held approximately the last week in May.

2. To bring together the cultural activities of the past year into a meaningful whole.

3. To review and display the work completed by the students during the year.

Skills

1. Language development

(a) Vocabulary related to Treaty Day, for example, land claims, treaty money, culture and heritage

(b) Review vocabulary relating to cultural activities in each unit. For example,

(i) Transportation, such as travois and canoe

(ii) Food, such as drying meat and berries, making pemmican

(c) Review months of the year and days of the week which have been presented in Cree as well as

English.

(d) Review positional concepts.

(e) Children should now be speaking in sentences and phrases where applicable rather than giving just one word answers.

2. Pre-reading Skills

(a) Review all letters of the alphabet.

(b) Review classification and matching skills.

(c) Given a picture, the children should now be able to answer questions relating to who, what, when, where and why.

(d) Children should be able to retell a simple story in their own words, placing events in proper sequence.

(e) Some of the high frequency words should now be a part of their sight vocabulary.

Activities

1. First hand experiences

(a) Host a cultural display of native handicrafts and artifacts.

(b) Invite reserve elders to tell the students the history of their own particular reserve and the significance of Treaty Day.

(c) Arrange to visit an equivalent age/grade classroom on a nearby reserve. Arrangements may be made to hold some sporting events followed by a picnic

or weiner roast.

2. Conversation

The cultural displays, activities and vocabulary discussed in this unit are primarily a review of the work carried out through the year. Treaty Day is an ideal way to bring all these ideas together since it is a day of special significance to native people. The day itself and the history behind it have not been discussed previously, but most of the children have attended Treaty Day celebrations. Since Treaty Day is a school holiday, the teacher or elders from the community may explain what will happen. Then after their return the day following, the children will be able to talk about the events which occurred. They will be able to talk about the distribution of money, the representatives from the Department of Indian Affairs and the Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman in his red uniform.

3. Language Experience Approach

(a) Write a story about what it may have been like to live when their parents or grandparents were little. Invite parents to visit the classroom to help them write the story.

(b) The children are asked to draw pictures showing what they did on Treaty Day. The teacher helps them to write captions for their picture. These may be compiled in a book entitled Treaty Day (followed by the

date).

(c) Throughout the year the children have been writing stories, keeping diaries, and compiling books. These have been reread periodically so that the children are now quite familiar with them and in many cases they are able to read them on their own. These books should be a central point of the classroom and the children will enjoy inviting a more senior class in to look at them. They may also enjoy reading these books to their older friends.

4. Children's Literature

In this unit, the main emphasis will be on the picture story books which depict Indian legends. How Summer Came to Canada by William Toye is a Micmac legend involving Glooscap and his efforts to bring summer to Canada to replace winter. Another book by the same author entitled The Fire Stealer tells the Ojibway legend of how Nanabozho, the magician, brought fire to the Indian people. Patricia Robins, in her book The Star Maiden, retells the Ojibway legend about the first water lily. How the Chipmunk Got Its Stripes by Nancy Cleaver is an Algonkian legend which will be enjoyed by all children.

Other books of a more informational nature which may be shared with the children include The Indians Knew by Tillie S. Pine and Indian Children of America by Margaret C. Farquhar. The following resource

books may be used by the teacher to aid in explanations regarding Treaty Day: Treaty-Six published by the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College and Indian Treaty Rights published by The Federation of Saskatchewan Indians.

Follow-up Activities

1. As the letters of the alphabet have been presented during the year, it had been suggested that the appropriate My ____ Sound Box by Jane B. Moncure be shown to the children. She has also written a book called My Sound Parade which contains all the letters of the alphabet. After the children have had the opportunity to look at this book, it is suggested that the children do something similar such as completing an alphabet chart of things which are found on the reserve or which are a part of native culture, for example, M is for moccasins, P is for Pow Wow, and T is for Treaty Day.

2. Finish colour and shape books.

3. Make final entries in the books they were writing about themselves. Record new height and weight as well as some new skill, academic or otherwise, which they have just acquired.

Cultural Content

The themes of many of the previous units were involved with celebrations which are primarily European

in origin. Many of these celebrations have over the years become part of the native culture. Today Christmas, Halloween and St. Valentine's Day are celebrated on reserves in much the same way as they are in other areas of Canada. Where applicable, an effort was made to find parallels within the traditional native culture. However, children should also be made aware of the many other cultures and religions that exist in the world today. It is suggested that since this unit is devoted to a special day for native people, a suitable cultural adaptation would be to make children aware of special celebrations in at least two other cultures. Suggestions would include the Jewish Hanukkah and the French Mardi Gras.

Approximate Time

Day One: Hold cultural display
Review vocabulary for cultural activities

Day Two: Explain significance of Treaty Day
Introduce related vocabulary

Day Three: Listen to history of the reserve
Write a story about what it was like to live here long ago.

Day Four: Visit nearby reserve

Day Five: Begin alphabet chart for reserve
Finish book about self

Day Six: Write story about Treaty Day

Finish colour and shape book

Day Seven: Discuss special days in other cultures

Day Eight: Book Display

SECTION TWO:: UNITS REQUIRING FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Unit Theme: Thanksgiving

Focus. Emphasis is placed on the heritage of the children as it pertains to their traditional ways of giving thanks.

Objectives

1. To make children aware of the background of this celebration and the vocabulary associated with it.

2. To emphasize Thanksgiving as an end of the growing season and a time of harvest.

3. To reinforce the politeness and mannerly behavior which has been taught in the home with particular emphasis on the words please and thank-you.

4. To introduce the letter Dd.

Children's Literature

Books

Thanksgiving at the Tappletons by Eileen Spinelli.

Hard Scrabble Harvest by Dahlov Ipcar.

Poems

The following simple untitled poem by Dorothy L. Molan would be appropriate to use as grace before dinner:

Thank you God, for food to eat;
Bread and fruit and milk and meat.
Good food helps us all to grow;
Thank you God, that this is so.

Cultural Content

Fish or meat such as moose, deer or grouse may be obtained from some of the people on the reserve to be served at a Thanksgiving dinner. Parents and elders may be invited to share this dinner with the class. It is suggested that the meal may begin with a traditional Cree prayer as grace. Following the dinner, visitors may be asked to speak to the children in their own language about early days on the reserve.

The children may also be told about the settlement of this country by the white man and the role which native people played in helping them survive. It was native people who acted as guides for the newcomers and showed them how to hunt, fish, and build shelters.

Unit Theme: Halloween

Focus. To explain to children the concept of Halloween and what is entailed in the celebration.

Objectives

1. To familiarize children with the vocabulary associated with Halloween.

2. To discuss feelings such as happy, sad, scared, and afraid.

3. To introduce the colours orange and black.

4. To introduce the letters Jj and Oo.

Children's Literature

Books

Georgie's Halloween by Robert Bright

Georgie by Robert Bright

That Terrible Halloween Night by James Stevenson

The Old Witch and the Crows by Ida Belage

The Witch Next Door by Norman Bridwell

Poems

"Unhappy Pumpkin" by Louisa J. Brooker

"Funny Fear" by Frances Gorman Risser

"Halloween" by Ruth Linsley Forman

Nursery Rhymes

"Little Miss Muffet"

"Peter, Peter Pumpkin Eater"

Cultural Content

Halloween is a celebration which was introduced to native people by the Europeans. They have adopted it and celebrate it just as other Canadians do. Children dress up in a variety of costumes, disguise their faces with paint or masks and go trick or treating on Halloween night. Because the homes on the reserve are often quite a distance apart, they usually go from house to house in a vehicle. They also call on homes on the nearby reserve and in town.

Unit Theme: Our Bodies

Focus. To assist children in acquiring a greater sense of self by acquainting them with the various parts of their bodies and the action words associated with each.

Objectives

1. To teach children the English vocabulary for the parts of the body and the corresponding action words.
2. To make children aware of the five senses.
3. To introduce the letter Xx.
4. To introduce children to the collective pronouns our, we and us.

Children's Literature

Fingerplays

"My Hands"

"Hands on Shoulders"

"This Is the Circle That Is My Head"

These were taken from the book Let's Do Fingerplays by Marion Grayson. Their authors were listed as unknown.

Poem

"Tommy's Five Senses" by Louise Binder Scott

Cultural Content

Since one of the primary concerns here is with actions and movements, this would be a suitable time to invite some native singers and drummers to visit the classroom. An effort may be made to teach the children one of the dances such as the round dance.

Unit Theme: The Community and Its Workers

Focus. To help children to develop a sense of community and gain knowledge of people within the community who work for the benefit of others.

Objectives

1. To make children aware of the component parts of a community, for example, its governing body, as well as the occupations and services available.

2. To explain that communities differ in size and that size often determines the services available.

3. To introduce the letter Rr.

4. To introduce the positional concepts around, next to, between, beside, near and far.

Children's Literature

Let's Find Out About the Community by Valerie Pitt The Community Helper Series published by C. P. Putnam's Sons

Real People at Work Series published by Educational Research Council of America

Cultural Content

The children who attend this school live on a reserve which has many of its own facilities, for example, laundromat, arena, fire truck and health clinic. Other services such as a supermarket, police station, post office and bank are found in the nearby

town. The reserve has its own governing body comprised of a chief and one councillor for every one hundred people. At the present time there are twelve councillors. Unlike the towns, the reserve has large fields for children to play in and lakes where they may swim in summer and skate in winter.

Many of the people working on the reserve serve as a role model for the children. A simplified version of a career day may be presented at the primary level. Community health workers, special constables with the native RCMP program, as well as the chief and some of the councillors, may be invited to visit the school and explain their jobs to the children in the Cree language.

While pointing out the present day careers, we must not forget that many people still earn their living in the traditional way, that is, hunting and trapping. Also many people are now earning money by producing native handicrafts. These are a very valuable part of the culture and not only provide an income for those making them but help to preserve these crafts for future generations.

Unit Theme: Christmas

Focus. To increase the children's awareness of the true meaning of Christmas and the importance of giving and sharing rather than only receiving.

Objectives

1. To give children an understanding of the religious significance of this celebration.

2. To introduce the letters Tt and Yy.

3. To introduce the colour green.

4. To introduce the positional concepts--top and bottom and up and down.

5. To introduce verb tenses--past, present, and future.

Children's Literature

Christmas in the Stable by Astrid Lindgren

The Night Before Christmas by Clement C. Moore

The Silver Christmas Tree by Pat Hutchins

Cultural Content

The Christian religion, and consequently the Christmas celebration, was not part of the native culture until the coming of the white man. In the traditional Cree culture, however, they had their own form of gift giving which was known as the Giveaway. People visiting other reserves to take part in the various dances such as the Pow Wows were presented

with gifts. These gifts included such things as beaded items, blankets and even horses. The sharing of food and feasting is also a very central part of these celebrations.

Unit Theme: Winter

Focus. To increase children's awareness of winter and the adjustments people make at this time of year.

Objectives

1. To make children aware of the English vocabulary associated with this time of year.
2. To introduce the colour white.
3. To introduce the letter Ww.
4. To introduce the comprehension question words who, what, when, where, why and how.

Children's Literature

Books

The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

Snow is Falling by Franlyn M. Branley

Happy Winter by Karen Gunderskeimer

Poems

"Planting Footprints" by Lee Blair

"First Snow" by Maria Lewis Allen

"I Wonder" by Francis Gorman Risser

Cultural Content

It is during the winter months that many native people tend their traplines as well as hunt and ice fish. It is also at this time of year that the women spend a great deal of time making handicrafts and

clothing items from hides and decorating them with beadwork. Today such items are still being produced but now they are usually sold to handicraft stores.

Many people still snare rabbits, with the meat being used for food and the fur to decorate or line moccasins, mitts, and gloves. Some of the children may have already watched their fathers or older brothers set rabbit snares. They may like to explain to the others how it is done. Maybe the entire class could go along with one of the parents to watch snares being set, returning the next day to see how successful it had been.

Unit Theme: St. Valentine's Day

Focus. To explain to children what is involved in the traditions surrounding St. Valentine's Day.

Objectives

1. To acquaint children with the English vocabulary associated with this particular occasion.
2. To introduce the letters Vv and Zz.
3. To introduce the shapes triangle and heart.
4. To introduce the numbers six through ten.

Children's Literature

Books

Valentine's Day Grump by Rose Greydanus

Bee My Valentine by Miriam Cohen

It's Valentine's Day by Jack Prelutsky

Poems

"Snowman's Valentine" by Leland B. Jacobs

"Will I Get a Valentine?" by B. J. Lee

"Larry's Valentine" by Rosillia Ewanchyna

Nursery Rhymes

"One, Two, Buckle My Shoe"

Cultural Content

The traditional St. Valentine's Day cards and pictures usually feature a cupid with a bow and arrow. Explain to the children that Cupid was the Greek god of love, who, according to mythology, used his bow and arrow, not to harm, but to cause the wounded people to love others. Discuss with the children the role of the bow and arrow in their own culture. Help them to understand the vital role it played in the lives of native people before the introduction of guns by the white man. It was their main weapon for hunting animals, as well as a means of defense against their enemies. The arrow heads were made from hard rock, bone tips or pieces of horn. Then strips of hides were used for the bow string. Today many young boys play with bows and arrows which they fashion themselves. The teacher may explain, or have one of the elders visit the classroom to explain, how bows and arrows were made and used in the past.

Unit Theme: Housing

Focus. To familiarize students with the various types of housing available.

Objectives

1. To expand the children's vocabulary for living accommodations to include the following:

(a) Types of shelters, for example, house, apartment

(b) Rooms of a house, for example, bedroom, living room

(c) Component parts of a house, for example, roof, windows

2. To introduce the letter Hh.

3. To introduce the colour blue.

4. To introduce the positional concepts up, down, in, out, inside and outside.

5. To introduce the shapes square and triangle.

Children's Literature

Books

The House that Jack Built by Paul Galdone

In a People House by Theo LeSieg

Little Runner of the Longhouse by Betty Baker

Fairy Tale

"The Three Little Pigs"

Fingerplay

"The House" -- author unknown

Cultural Content

While the plains Cree traditionally lived in teepees, the more northern Woodland Crees also made log houses. These houses primarily consisted of one large room. The logs were cut down, the bark peeled off and then the logs were allowed to dry before they were used. The cracks were filled with clay and mud to keep out the cold. The roof was made with logs which had been sawed into flat planks. These planks were covered with clay and grass.

Children may be interested in seeing how other Indian tribes lived. They may be shown pictures of the Ojibway Wigwam and the Iroquois Longhouse. The book Kawin by Lindsay Beaudry illustrates how these were constructed. These may be reproduced in miniature in the classroom using the directions given in Beaudry's book.

There are many teepee shaped structures on the reserve but, instead of the traditional hide coverings, they have wooden planks on the outside. These buildings are now used for smoking meat and fish or for tanning hides.

Unit Theme: Food

Focus. Children become familiar with the various types of food involved in the four main food groups and why these foods are important for good health and growth.

Objectives

1. To acquaint children with the English vocabulary used in discussing food. This would include the food groups, meals, cooking and preserving food, as well as where much of the food comes from.

2. To introduce the letter Ff.

3. To introduce the concepts more, less, full, empty and [illegible]f.

Children's Literature

Books

Bread and Jam for Frances by Russell Hoban

Blueberries for Sal by Robert McCloskey

Stone Soup by Ann McGovern

Fairy Tales

"The Gingerbread Man"

Nursery Rhyme

"Jack Spratt"

Poem

"Alligator Pie" by Dennis Lee

Cultural Content

While the majority of the food eaten today is bought at the supermarket, many items are still obtained, cooked, and preserved in the traditional way. These may easily be incorporated as we discuss each of the food groups. For example, bannock is a part of the bread and cereal group; moose and grouse, the meat and poultry group; and berries the fruit and vegetable group.

The traditional methods of preserving food, such as smoking and drying, are still being used today. Dried meat is made by cutting the meat into long thin strips, then placing these strips on a drying rack in the sun. A small smouldering fire is built beneath them. When suitably dried they are placed in bags made of hides for storage. Berries are also dried in the sun and stored in birch bark baskets.

Pemmican was a traditional favourite. It was made from the choice cuts of meat which were first dried then pounded to a powder. This powder was then mixed with the animal fat. Often dried crushed berries, usually chokecherries, were added to this meat and fat mixture to give added flavour. This was also stored in hide bags.

Unit Theme: Transportation

Focus. To increase the children's awareness of the various modes of transportation used within their own community as well as methods of long distance travel.

Objectives

1. To introduce the vocabulary associated with the various methods of transportation.

2. To introduce the letter Gg.

3. To introduce the concepts slow and fast and the comparatives slower, slowest and faster, fastest.

4. To help children understand that books and films may be a valuable source of knowledge and serve as a substitute when it is not possible to experience first hand such things as large ocean liners and space ships.

Children's Literature

Books

The Little Engine that Could by Wally Piper

The Little Airplane, The Little Sailboat, The Little Auto, The Little Train by Lois Lensky

The Little Red Caboose by Marian Polter

Little Toot Through the Golden Gate by Hardie Gramatky

Filmstrip

Little Toot Story by Hardie Gramatky

Fairy Tale

"The Three Billy Goats Gruff"

Cultural Content

Prior to the invention of the automobile, horses, dogs and canoes were the primary means of travel used by native people. When travelling overland, a travois was used to carry the family's personal effects. A travois consisted of two sticks attached to the horse or dog with rawhide strips. Approximately midway along these sticks was a platform made of rawhide straps and it was on this platform that the load was placed. When travelling along the lakes and rivers, the birch bark canoe was used.

The National Film Board film Paddle to the Sea was adapted from Holling C. Holling's book of the same name. It tells of the adventures of a little Indian canoe as it journeys to the sea. The film My Last Canoe, produced by the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College in cooperation with the University of Saskatchewan, shows Isaiah Roberts and his family assembling the materials and building a canoe. He explains each step in the process as he carries out his work. This film is available in both English and Cree.

Unit Theme: Easter

Focus. To explain to children the meaning behind this occasion as well as to acquaint them with some of the more commercial aspects of it.

Objectives

1. To give children an understanding of the religious significance of the celebration and the vocabulary associated with it.
2. To introduce the letter Ee.
3. To introduce the colour purple.
4. To introduce the shape oval.
5. To introduce opposites such as lost and found.

Children's Literature

Books

The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter

Easter Bunny's Lost Egg by Sharon Gordon

The Easter Bunny That Overslept by Priscilla and Otto Friedrick

Poem

"My New Rabbit" by Elizabeth Gould

Cultural Content

There are at least two types of baskets which are found in the Indian culture. One is made out of birch bark and the other is made out of sweet grass. The art

of making these baskets is quickly dying out. Only one or two older ladies on the reserve still continue this handicraft. If possible one of them may be invited to the class to show some of the baskets she had made and to explain how the work is done. Usually all the materials are natural substances including the dyes used in colouring all or parts of the baskets. Such dyes are obtained from the juice of berries and other plants.

Unit Theme: Spring

Focus. Children are reminded of the changing of the seasons. We have discussed fall and winter and now it is time to discuss the rebirth of nature in spring.

Objectives

1. To familiarize children with the activities and vocabulary associated with this particular time of the year.

2. To introduce the letter Uu.

3. To introduce the positional concepts under, over, above, and below.

Children's Literature

Books

Swamp Spring by Carol and Donald Carrick

First Day of Spring by Sharon Gordon

Poems

"It's Spring" by Jennifer J. Mott

"Mud" by Polly Chase Boyden

Cultural Content

The coming of spring is the traditional time for the renewal of old acquaintances and social gatherings such as the Pow Wows. Pow Wows are held on the various reserves throughout the province beginning sometime after the May 24th weekend. To attend these Pow Wows

people also travel to Alberta and Manitoba and into the United States.

The Pow Wow involves a day of singing, dancing, and feasting. It begins in the morning with a flag raising ceremony during which the drummers sing while the flag is being raised. The dancing is not restricted to any particular age group and the participants, especially the men and the boys, usually wear traditional costumes. Many of the children may have already taken part in or attended a Pow Wow and are able to share their experiences with the class. If not, members of the community may be invited to speak to the children about what is involved in this special event. Children may enjoy the film Shelly Whitebird's First Pow Wow. This is an Encyclopaedia Britannica Film about a young Indian girl, now living in the big city, who is about to attend her first Pow Wow. Other films on the same topic include Pow Wow produced by the Alberta Communication Society and Indian Pow Wow, a Canadian Production.

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