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Introduction

Teaching English Language Learners
by Kathryn H. Au, Gilbert G. Garcia, Claude N. Goldenberg, and MaryEllen Vogt

The Challenge Faced by Teachers

Today’s classrooms include an increasing number of English Language Learners (ELL), or students who speak a home language other than English and who have limited knowledge of English. Nearly two-thirds of English language learners, over 2.1 million, are in the age range from preschool through grade 6, and this ELL population is extremely diverse. Even among Spanish speakers, who make up more than three-fourths of the English language learners in the United States, there is great diversity in terms of birthplace, country of family origin, rural/urban background, socio-economic status, parent and grandparent education, and reasons for immigration to the United States. When we consider that other ELL groups come from Asian, Middle Eastern, Caribbean, and European countries, we can see how complex and diverse the school-age population is in many parts of the country.

Teachers face the challenge of bringing all students, including English language learners, to high levels of literacy. The task is made difficult by several factors. One is the sheer complexity of learning to write and read in a language one does not yet understand. In many situations teaching reading in the native language is not an option, so teachers of English language learners must confront the dual challenge of helping children learn to read and write English while learning to speak and understand it.

Research with English learners suggests that they need high-quality, direct instruction from the start. That includes authentic encounters with written texts that focus on meaning and communication. But they also need explicit teaching and guidance in those aspects of English oral and written language with which they might not be familiar—word identification skills, vocabulary and idiomatic expressions, syntax, and English spelling patterns and the sounds represented by English spellings. Such instruction will prevent English language learners from falling farther and farther behind their mainstream peers.

Testing, Placement, and Teaching

School personnel often test English language learners for proficiency both in English and in their primary language before placing them in classes. Many schools use at least one of several different English proficiency tests that are commercially available (e.g., Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM), Language Assessment Scales (LAS), Idea Proficiency Test).

In addition to proficiency in English, teachers should pay particular attention to students’ literacy levels in their home language. English learners who can read and write in their first language present different instructional needs than English learners who have little or no literacy in their home language.
Here are some profiles of English language learners:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of ELL</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sole speaker of a foreign language at the school</td>
<td>Assessing primary language skills or teaching in the primary language is probably not an option.</td>
<td>Teachers will need to adapt their teaching style, using “sheltered” techniques to make lessons more accessible. (Echevarria &amp; Graves, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student who is literate and well-educated in home language but has been in the U.S. a relatively short time</td>
<td>This student is certain to have skills and understanding that will facilitate English language development and English literacy.</td>
<td>Maintaining and drawing upon the student’s native language literacy competencies is likely to promote the student’s academic development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student who was born in the U.S. and hears English and another language at home</td>
<td>Some students in this group may need much encouragement to achieve their potential.</td>
<td>As with most students, these learners will respond positively to a caring teacher who shows interest in their cultural background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-English-speaking beginning reader</td>
<td>Young child in an “English immersion” class where beginning reading skills are being taught.</td>
<td>Studies have suggested that non-English-speaking children can learn beginning reading skills as well as or almost as well as their native English-speaking peers. (Geva, Mack, Merbaum, Lam, &amp; Wade-Woolley, 1998; Siegel, 1999)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How Students Acquire a Second Language**

Teachers often observe that it does not take long for English language learners to gain the everyday language needed to communicate with peers at recess or in the lunchroom. Most students gain this kind of proficiency in about two years. However, students may require five years or more to learn the **academic language** necessary to keep up with the demands of school (Cummins, 1979; Collier, 1989). Academic language includes the terms associated with literature and language arts (character, vowel, punctuation, exclamation, context clues, etc.), as well as the vocabulary needed to learn the content-area subjects. Relatively little time and effort are required when students already know a concept through their primary language. In this case, their task is simply to attach new English words to that concept. But it is much more difficult for a student to learn a concept through the medium of English rather than their primary language.
The Role of Students’ Primary Language

Research suggests that English language learners who can already read and write in their first language will have a relatively easy time learning to read and write in a second language. In essence, students need to learn to read and write only once, because many concepts are readily transferred from one language to another (Snow, 1990). This includes literacy concepts, such as letter-sound correspondences and reading strategies, as well as concepts in the content areas.

But not all concepts transfer, particularly those related to the specifics of the language. For example, although many letters have similar sounds in Spanish and English, some do not, and students must “unlearn” the sound in the primary language when reading in English. Similarly, syntax differs in languages. In English, an adjective typically goes before the noun it modifies. This is not so in many other languages. Direct instruction is important in helping English learners understand important differences between speaking, writing, and reading in their home language as opposed to English.

Here are three ways teachers can support students’ primary languages:

- Ensure that environmental print reflects students’ first languages.
- Encourage bilingual students to publish books and share their stories in languages other than English.
- Have bilingual students read and write with aides, parents, or other students who speak their first language.

Second Language Acquisition: Instruction and Interaction

English language learners need instruction and interaction. Much language learning can and does take place through naturally occurring conversation; this is true of the classroom as well as of the home.

We acquire language when we receive what Krashen calls “comprehensible input,” or understandable messages, either oral or written. As long as we understand most of what we read or hear, we will continue to gain in language proficiency. The best opportunities for language development occur when most, but not all, of the language is familiar to us. Because most of the input is familiar, we can understand the content of the message. Being challenged by a few new features at a time (e.g., some new vocabulary or a new sentence structure) gives us the opportunity to grow as language users without feeling overwhelmed.

However, English language learners need to be explicitly taught the structure of English. At the same time, they need to know that they are in a safe environment in which their efforts to speak, read, and write will be positively received. Students will learn English more quickly if they are willing to take risks by engaging in conversation and by sharing their reading and writing. Allowing English language
learners to work with their classmates and to use English in non-threatening situa-
tions will do more to promote language learning than calling on students to
respond in front of the whole class, having them read individually, or giving tests.

Research-Based Guidelines for Instruction

Provide explicit instruction in the structure of English. (August and Hakuta, 1997; Goldenberg, 1994)

- Lessons should include the sounds of English, grammar, writing, and phonics
  and structural analysis. (See the Guide to Language Transfer Support in the
  back of this Handbook for a listing of English structures that may present
  problems for speakers of other languages.)

Build students’ background knowledge for texts to be read. (Garcia & Pearson, 1995)

- Use photos, illustrations, examples, demonstrations, videos, and modeling
to develop students’ background.
- Incorporate a variety of instructional techniques to develop background,
such as brainstorming, KWL charts, quick writes, and discussion.
- Help students survey the text prior to reading. In the text, preview the
photos, illustrations, graphs, charts, key vocabulary, and so on.
- Explicitly connect new learning to previously learned concepts and
vocabulary (“Yesterday, we learned …; today, we’ll learn about . . . ”).


- Select key terms that are critical to understanding the lesson’s most impor-
tant concepts. Introduce and teach key vocabulary words only.
- Introduce key vocabulary orally and in writing. Define the words, using
examples, illustrations, modeling, demonstrations, context clues, and so forth.
Link the words directly to the key content concepts as you teach.
- Use Vocabulary Self-Selection (VSS). After reading a text, students may select
vocabulary words essential to understanding key concepts. Students discuss
their words and enter them in a word study notebook.
- Use a variety of vocabulary building approaches, such as Word Walls
(Cunningham, 1995), personal dictionaries, cloze sentences, word sorts
(Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000), and graphic organizers.
- Develop English learners’ academic language. This vocabulary includes
words related to processes (predict, categorize), following directions (pass
papers to your right), and routines (morning message, recess).

Students will learn English more quickly if they are willing to take risks by engaging in conversation and by sharing their reading and writing.

- Have students talk frequently with each other and with the teacher. Decrease the amount of “teacher talk.”
- Have students use English in conversation groups and discussion circles. Have them share ideas with buddies or small groups.
- Encourage elaborated responses about lesson concepts. Use phrases such as “Tell me more about that…;” “What else?”
- Overcome the temptation to speak for English learners or to complete their sentences. Be patient; let the students formulate what they want to say. Have students report back after a cooperative activity to allow for language use.

If students are already literate in another language, encourage them to transfer existing strategies to English. (Jimenez, et. al, 1995, 1996; Nagy, et. al, 1993)

- Help students who have had schooling in their home country make connections; compare English terms with terms in their primary language.
- Incorporate cognates whenever possible, especially if students’ first language has a Latin base. For example, the English term calculate has a Spanish cognate: calcular.

Provide comprehensible input, which means that you will include speech appropriate for the student’s proficiency level as well as give clear explanations of academic tasks. (Krashen, 1985; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000)

- Try to adjust your speech for students’ proficiency rates (such as speaking at a reasonable rate; clearly enunciating). Speak naturally, but pause often so that English learners can process what you are saying.
- Provide clear explanations of academic tasks (explain what is meant by terms like discuss, share with your partner, summarize). Model how to do routine classroom procedures such as turning in homework or completed assignments, sharing ideas with a partner, and so on.
- Use a variety of techniques to make concepts clear: modeling, visuals, hands-on activities, real objects, gestures, body language, and so forth.
- Rather than repeat what you’ve said, paraphrase, using clear language and vocabulary.

The best opportunities for language development occur when most, but not all, of the language is familiar to us.
In essence, students need to learn to read and write only once, because many concepts are readily transferred from one language to another.

[Snow, 1990]

- Use the overhead, white board, or chart paper to illustrate (in words and in pictures) what you’re saying and explaining.
- As often as possible, encourage students to share concepts, ideas, and directions with each other; circulate to check for accuracy of information.
- For students in early stages of English acquisition, ask an aide or other student who speaks the same language to reinforce key concepts and to check for understanding.
- Avoid jargon and idiomatic speech as much as possible.

Regularly assess and monitor student progress.


- Honor students’ levels of English proficiency, encouraging responses that tell you how well they are learning the key concepts. For example, an emergent speaker may be able to point to pictures to show you he or she understands rather than tell you an answer in a complete sentence.
- Support students’ oral approximations, allowing them to experiment with English in a risk-free environment.
- Use authentic, multidimensional assessment measures such as observation, teacher-to-student and student-to-student conversations, written pieces, oral responses, and so on.

References


Encourage wide and free reading in English for language and literacy development. (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983)

- Have a wide variety of books, articles, stories, and poetry available for self-selected reading.
- Model how to select free reading materials according to interests and reading levels.
- Encourage students to share what they are reading on a regular basis.
- Use language experience (dictated stories) to build confidence and fluency in English.
- Read aloud to students every day from a variety of texts.

In many situations, teaching reading in the native language is not an option, so teachers of English language learners must confront the dual challenge of helping children learn to read and write English while learning to speak and understand it.


Gibbons, Pauline. (1993), Learning to learn in a second language. Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH.


Overview

The lessons in this handbook provide teachers with materials and approaches designed to help English language learners develop English proficiency and fluency, while supporting instruction in Houghton Mifflin Reading. A more detailed walkthrough (pages 10–15) of these lessons follows this introduction.

Preteach/Reteach

Skills and literature taught in Houghton Mifflin Reading are previewed and reviewed in this handbook, giving children exposure to informal English and instruction in patterns of formal academic English. Comprehension of the program’s literature is supported by the preteaching of vocabulary and language patterns. Additional key skills are previewed and reviewed throughout the week. Specific lesson language is planned for the teacher to maximize language learning.

Language Development

A variety of original songs, poems, and chants function as openers for each week’s lessons. Songs and poems activate prior knowledge, create a common experiential base, and generate interest in the topic presented. The accompanying lessons help prepare children by concretely illustrating the topics through movement, visual aids, realia, role-play, drawing, and so on. Oral language development techniques include total physical response, songs and dialogues, shared storytelling, role-plays, language experience stories, use of realia, environmental print, visual aids, and simulations.

Skill Focus Lessons

Targeted language skills are directly taught and practiced in a series of preview and review lessons. Activities cover the range of proficiencies and desired outcomes from a focus on sounds and letters, through word-level skills to sentence level proficiency. Academic language is explicitly identified and used as a component of reading comprehension. Instruction includes previews and reviews of Phonics and Phonemic Awareness, High-Frequency Words, Structural Analysis, Vocabulary, Grammar, and Writing skills.

Literature Focus Lessons

These lessons allow children to orally develop literary response, analysis, and comprehension strategies through the use of picture-walks and guided literature previews and reviews. Children practice retelling stories, engage in shared and guided reading activities, and develop listening and speaking strategies.

If Needed . . . Lessons

Children at the Beginning/Preproduction level will benefit from rhythmic and rhyming language development activities designed for them. These lessons draw from the selection-opener songs and chants and provide opportunities for children at this level to engage in low-risk, high-interest activities. Simple texts provide repetition, while accompanying lessons allow children to perform gestures and movements that help them internalize vocabulary, language structures, and English language patterns.

Proficiency Levels

English language learners typically pass through a series of predictable stages as they acquire English and progress toward fluency in the language. This handbook supplies comprehensive guidance for teachers providing differentiated instruction to children at the following stages of English language proficiency:

Beginning/Preproduction  Children at the Beginning/Preproduction stage may comprehend limited amounts of English instruction, such as simple repeated sentences, but will rely on visual and other clues for understanding. They can be expected to respond non-verbally, by pointing, gesturing, and by imitating sounds and actions. Children will follow shared readings and will rely on illustrations and graphic clues to attach meaning to printed material. Children may illustrate characters, objects, and actions to convey meaning.
Teachers should

- provide opportunities for active listening, incorporating props, visual aids, and real objects into presentations
- pair or group children with more proficient speakers of English
- conduct shared and guided readings that incorporate prior knowledge and involve the use of visual and graphic supports
- use and involve children in physical movement and expression
- involve children in literacy activities and provide children with exposure to written English
- have children label and manipulate real objects and photographs or illustrations

**Early Production/Speech Emergent** Children at the Early Production/Speech Emergent stage are actively developing receptive vocabulary, but are ready to voluntarily produce from one- and two-word answers to short phrases or short sentences, and can recite and repeat poems, songs, and chants. They can also retell simple stories using pictures and objects, and can engage in dialogues, interviews, or role-plays. They comprehend simple passages and can follow text during group reading. They are able to use simple sentences and details in their writing, write from dictation, and write using a variety of genres.

Teachers should

- continue to provide opportunities for contextually supported active listening
- model processes expected of children while verbally guiding children through tasks
- use scaffolding techniques throughout lessons, assisting and supporting student comprehension
- expose children to patterned or predictable books
- provide opportunities for expression in speech and print for a variety of purposes and audiences

- ask open-ended questions
- model, restate, and extend language for children

**Intermediate/Advanced** Children at the Intermediate/Advanced stage continue to build receptive vocabulary, but are able to respond to prompts and questions in more extended form. They speak fluently in conversations and group discussions, and appropriately use English idioms. These children may engage in independent reading according to their level of oral fluency and prior experiences with print. They are able to write in greater detail, in a wide variety of genres, and for a wide variety of purposes, including creative and analytical writing.

Teachers should

- structure group discussion
- provide real texts such as trade books, magazines, newspapers, and reference materials for conceptual development
- provide opportunities for children to create oral and written narratives
- structure a variety of realistic writing experiences and include opportunities for journal writing, child-authored stories and newsletters, and language experience activities

**Resources**

Blackline Masters and additional resources for assessment and language transfer support appear at the back of this handbook. Assessment resources include ideas for ongoing assessment of children’s progress, a student profile matrix, and a Student Assessment Checklist to help monitor each child’s transition from level to level. Resources for language transfer include a guide to some common problem areas as well as charts showing where specific sounds and features of the English language are taught and reinforced.
Lesson Walkthrough

To the Teacher

This sample lesson walkthrough will familiarize you with the five-day lesson plan for English language development that is provided for each major selection in this level of Houghton Mifflin Reading. Annotations in this walkthrough introduce the major parts of each lesson and explain some of the strategies and activities that are most helpful to English language learners.

Preteach/Reteach; Time

These labels suggest when to use each section of the day’s lessons and an approximate amount of time to spend on each one.

Language Development

This section introduces background information and vocabulary and supports children’s acquisition of basic English vocabulary. The lessons draw on children’s prior experiences and provide opportunities for student participation as well as teacher-directed instruction. The lessons are appropriate for all levels of English language proficiency.

Blackline Master

A Blackline Master accompanies the first Language Development lesson of the week. Each Master contains a poem or chant that introduces related vocabulary. A full-size copy of the master can be found in the Resources section of this book.

Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers provide visual reinforcement of language and concepts. They promote active student involvement. Various graphic organizers, such as charts and word webs, are included in the lessons and can be enhanced with pictures, sketches, and Picture Cards when appropriate.

Additional Resources

Children can log on to www.eduplace.com for more activities related to the theme and use the audio CD to improve their listening and comprehension skills.

Making a Color Chart

Display the rhyme “What Is Blue?”

Draw a circle around each color word with a marker of the same color. Stress each color word as you read the rhyme aloud. Ask children to listen to the rhyme again and to jump up each time they hear a color word.

Start a color chart based on the rhyme. As the children repeat the rhyme slowly with you, write the color words in the first column (blue, red, green, brown, pink). Use markers of the same color for the words.

Assign a color to each child. SAY: Name your color. Then find or draw and cut out pictures of something that is your color. Children can paste their pictures in the second column beside the matching color word in the first column. Save this chart for later use.

What is blue? A ___ is ___. The ___ is ___.

Red

Color Match

Assign a color to each child. SAY: Name your color. Then find or draw and cut out pictures of something that is your color. Children can paste their pictures in the second column beside the matching color word in the first column. Save this chart for later use.

Beginning/Preproduction

Cut paper “color tickets” in the chart colors. SAY: Choose a color ticket. Match it to things in the room. Say the color name.

Early Production/ Speech Emergent

Have children name a color, name two things that are that color, and draw a picture with a crayon of that color.

Intermediate/Advanced

Have partners add to the list of colors on the chart. Have them draw small pictures of their answers to add to the chart.
Literature Focus
This section provides opportunities for children to preview or review the literature for the week or for the theme overall (in Week 3). The previews on Days 1 through 4 involve a picture walk with questions geared toward all proficiency levels. In Week 3, Days 2 and 4 provide opportunities to review and compare the Big Books and the Links for the theme.

Skill Focus
This section provides preview and/or review of selected skills taught each week in the core instruction. The skill areas include Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, High-Frequency Words, Concepts of Print, and Comprehension.

Phonemic Awareness/Phonics
Beginning Sounds
Tell children to listen carefully and then to repeat these two words: map/men. Say: Listen for the beginning sound of each word. Map and men begin with the same sound. Let's say that beginning sound together, /m/. Repeat the sound several times. Repeat the words together, stretching out the beginning /m/.

Repeat, using the word pair: map/sap. Ask: Do map and sap begin with the same sound? Which word begins with /m/? Continue with these pairs:
- mug/moose
- man/ten
- much/mop
- six/mix

Display, in mixed order, pictures for map, mat, mule, salt, seal, six, sun and initial /m/ and initial /s/ words. Help children name the pictures. Then have them sort the cards into two piles by beginning sounds.

Initial Consonant /m/
Introduce Alphafriend Mimi Mouse. Repeat her name, stretching out the initial /m/. Say: Mimi Mouse. Then have children do the same. Ask: Do the words Mimi and Mouse begin with the same sound? What sound is that? Stand up if your name begins with /m/. Say your name. Write the names on the board, pointing to each capital M.

The letter M stands for the /m/ you hear at the beginning of Mimi and Mouse, and (a child’s name).

Show several initial /m/ and /s/ pictures in mixed order beside the picture of Mimi Mouse. Help children name each picture. Write the name on the board. Ask: Find a picture that does not begin with /m/. Take it out of the pile. Point to the name on the board and cross it out. When only /m/ pictures remain, have the group chant the picture names as you point.

Skill Objectives
Children
• identify words that begin with the same sound
• begin to associate /m/ with m

Materials
• Picture Cards: mat, mop, mule, salt, seal, six, sun
• Letter Cards: M, m, s
• ELL Picture Cards: cap, Alphafriend Mimi Mouse
(See Master ELL 2–4.)

Sample Lesson Walkthrough
Suggestions for grouping and classroom management, including planning and managing small-group instruction, can be found in the Classroom Management Handbook that accompanies Houghton Mifflin Reading.
We have read and talked about different colors. Today we will look again at fish that are different colors.

Display the chart from Day 1. Help children name the colors listed so far. Then page through In the Big Blue Sea. Have children identify the colors of the fish. As each color is named, point to it on the chart. When you come to orange, white, purple, and black, add these color names in the first column. Quick-draw or have children add pictures of orange, white, purple, and black objects to the chart. Be sure to include fish shapes in those colors.

Play a guessing game, using vocabulary from the color chart. Provide a model such as the following. Point to the words on the rhyme as you use them.

I'm thinking of a fish.
It is the color of the sky.
Which fish is it?

After a few practice tries, children can make up their own clues. Provide prompts as needed.

### Vocabulary and Materials

This is a brief list of vocabulary that children will use in the language development lesson.

Materials are sometimes suggested for the lessons, since real-life objects are useful and helpful for English language learners. The Picture Cards (see example in Materials list on Day 1) are found in the Resources section of this book.

### If Needed . . .

This section gives additional support targeted to English language learners at beginning levels. It focuses on repetition and enhancement of the language and vocabulary on the Language Development Blackline Master.

### Multi-Level Response

The Multi-Level Response feature gives each child an opportunity to respond to the lesson according to his or her English proficiency level. This section includes oral exercises aimed at assessing children’s listening and speaking comprehension. Drawings or other responses produced here may be saved and reviewed as part of ongoing assessment.
Skill Objectives and Academic Language
The skill objectives summarize the language objectives and purpose of the lessons. The academic language used in the lessons is listed, since these terms are often unfamiliar to English language learners. Writing the objectives and academic language on the board will reinforce children’s recognition and comprehension of these words.

Language Transfer Support
The Language Transfer Support notes help identify areas where attempts to transfer knowledge from one language to another may lead to errors in English or difficulties in comprehension. For a more comprehensive list of language transfer errors, see the charts in the Resources section of this book.

Multi-Level Practice
This feature gives each child an opportunity to practice the skill according to his or her own English proficiency level.

These practice opportunities involve children in a variety of individual, partner, and small-group situations. You may want to save children’s work to assess their progress.
Taking Color Pictures

We have been reading and talking about colors. We saw photos of real fish that are different colors. Let’s practice taking our own photos of different things around our room.

Hold up a toy camera or a replica of one. Demonstrate how to take a picture or photo by aiming the camera at an object and saying, \textit{Click}.

What did I take a picture of? What sound did I make for the camera sound? What color will the photo show that the \textit{(object)} is?

Give the camera to a child and whisper a color name to him or her. Have the child choose an object of the whispered color that is visible in the classroom and snap a picture of it, making the sound \textit{Click}. Tell the child to ask the group \textit{What did I take a picture of?} Then have the group name the object and its color. Continue until all children have had a chance to take a photo.

Take the group outside and repeat the activity with the toy camera. Upon returning to class, have the group contribute to a list of things they photographed and the colors of those things.

\textbf{Vocabulary}

- toy, man, picture, camera, click

\textbf{Materials}

- a toy camera or simple box replica of one
- ELL Picture Cards
  (See Master ELL 2–4.)

\textbf{Beginning/Preproduction}

Display the rhyme “What Is Blue?” and have children follow along as you read it. Say: Listen as I say the rhyme again. After I say, What is blue? you say the answer: The sky is blue. Point to and indicate that they should give the answer. Prompt if necessary. Repeat for the remaining questions and answers in the rhyme.

\textbf{Early Production/Speech Emergent}

Tell about a magazine picture you have seen in a magazine or book. Tell about the colors in the picture.

\textbf{Intermediate/Advanced}

Tell about a picture you would like to take with a camera. Draw a picture of your ideas.
Big Book Science Link

“What Do You Do, Norbert Wu?” pages 21–26

Explain that this selection tells about Norbert Wu, the man who took the photographs for In the Big Blue Sea. Where is Mr. Wu? He is holding a camera. What does Mr. Wu do with his camera? What sea animals is Mr. Wu taking pictures of? Turn back into In the Deep Blue Sea. Show your favorite photo. Would you like to be a photographer? Tell why.

Comprehension

Making Predictions

Display page T119. I see some animals. Let’s name them. Where are these animals? Tell children that a picture like this is often on the cover of a book. The picture has clues that can help them figure out what a book is about. Who will be in this story? Where will the story take place?

Tell children the title of the story: How the Birds Got Their Colors. What color are the birds? What will the animals do? What will happen to them?

Point out to children that even though they have not yet heard this story, they can figure out a lot about it. Tell them that thinking ahead about what will happen in a story will help them better understand and enjoy it.

Skill Objective

Children make predictions about a story.

Materials

• Teacher’s Edition, page T119
• a variety of picture storybooks

MULTI-LEVEL PRACTICE

Beginning/Preproduction

Draw a dark gray cloud and a fluffy white one. Clouds sometimes mean it will rain. Which cloud will bring rain? Look outside. Will it rain today? You made a prediction.

Early Production/Speech Emergent

Choose a picture book, and display it for children. Read the title. What will this book be about? Use the title and the picture on the cover to decide. Share your predictions.

Intermediate/Advanced

Distribute several picture books from the classroom library. Have partners take turns choosing a book and predicting from the cover illustration what it will be about.

Literature Focus

Children preview the Big Book Link on Day 4, which is often a nonfiction piece. Previews usually take the form of a picture walk, with children offering information and ideas from their own experiences whenever possible. In Week 3 of each theme, questions and discussion focus on comparing the two Links from Weeks 1 and 2.

Other pieces of literature previewed or reviewed during the week and the theme include the Read Aloud books, the Teacher Read Alouds from the Teacher’s Editions, the Phonics Library selections, and the Big Book selections.