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## *Unit 4: (Exploring the Narrative)*

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Unit overview: The purpose of this unit is to provide the teacher a model of research-based strategies that will enable the English Language Learner to study and comprehend the genre of narratives.

Objectives: The objectives for the unit will provide students the experience of using cross-curricular expository material to comprehend narrative text, complete research related to topic, and understand forms of writing a narrative.

Skills attained: Students can apply information and strategies used in other curriculum areas to understand text, complete research related to the topic and understand the implications of research upon comprehension of text.

Topics:

Research Links to Text

Poetic Forms

Summarization

Drawing Conclusions

Building Imagery

Predictions

Vocabulary: In any book students will find many words that are unknown to them. This is due to cultural differences, language levels, and technical use of words. For the ELL student this can be frustrating especially if the word is used in a highly technical manner and the student is on the Basic Interpersonal Communication Level of language. (BICS) Therefore, it is important for the teacher to follow the research-based model when choosing vocabulary words for a specific genre. (J. Allen, 199)

1. Choose the words that most important to understanding the text. Choose no more than 10 for the ELL. Choose the vocabulary words by the language level of the students in your room. Example: If most of your students are on Level 1 on the Language Proficiency Chart then the words will be different than if your students are on Level 3 of the Language Proficiency Chart. Make the student's vocabulary comprehensible to them through visuals, charts, or graphics.
2. Will the student have prior knowledge about this word? If you feel they do not, then you must make preparations to build that prior knowledge. Have visuals, concrete materials, books, or other materials ready to build that prior knowledge.

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3. Will the word appear frequently in this story and others? Make sure that the word will appear frequently in all other areas of school. Many fun words are taught as vocabulary but the student never uses them.
4. Have students skim the assigned pages listing the words or phrases they do not understand. The teacher may collect the list or verbally ask students for the words and add them to the vocabulary list.
5. What strategies can I use to bring the word into the lives of the students? Think of what you can do in your classroom to make the word connect to the students' lives. Will they use it in everyday conversation? Is it connected to their language as in a cognate? Will they see the words in the books at their reading level?
6. How can I make learning the word enjoyable but productive? Learning words can be fun. Use visuals, concrete examples, let the students hear and see the word, allow conversation time for students to use the word.

### **Lesson 1:4 Day 1 Introduction: Narrative**

Objectives: Increase the level of listening comprehension of the students.

Skills Attained: Students become more proficient in listening comprehension.

Motivation: To introduce the book (which for this unit is "Absolutely Normal Chaos") by Sharon Creech, ask students if they have ever kept a journal. Ask them to explain the reasons for keeping a journal. The responses should be to write down secrets, things they want to remember, or record everyday events. Explain that the story they are going to read is a narrative that is written in daily journal form. What makes this story exciting for the Middle School English language learner is that it is written in authentic language which is what we normally use in speaking. Encourage students to begin using journaling, if not on a daily basis, on a weekly basis.

Homework: Assign students to practice reading passages orally from the book being used for this unit.

Vocabulary: Refer back to the opening pages of the unit when selecting vocabulary words. If using this book include words narrative, journaling.

Materials List: Student copies of book, Materials from the library such as fiction, non-fiction, magazines and resource books should be available on topics in the book read by the class. This is called "narrow reading" by Krashen. It gives the students an opportunity to read about the topic through many types of text.

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Methods: Oral reading by teacher.

Content Background: Explain to the students that “journaling” is a type of reflective writing that we can do anytime of the day or perhaps in the evening after school. It is fun and is a way of recording our thoughts and actions of the day or perhaps class. It is a personal way of writing and allows us to write as if we are speaking to someone. The students can hear their own “voice” when they read their journals aloud to themselves or to another classmate.

Suggested Teaching Strategies: Read a few lines of a book and ask students to listen to the rhythm of the language. Ask students if any have read other books that were written in journal or diary form. Did they notice something different about the way the language was written? Answers will vary but should include not rhyming, not complete sentences, easy words etc.

To give a contrast read from a book that is a content area book for a few lines and then change to the journal text. That will help students to see the difference.

During the lesson continue reading a few lines and then asking questions about what you have read concerning the language pattern. Allow time for students to read orally. Record student answers on the overhead or board so the students can see responses written in English. Put them in categories with the help of the class.

Contrast of Journal Text & Content Text

Journal Text Characteristics	Content Text Characteristics
Informal speech, intimate details of the activities,	Difficult vocabulary, structured text,

Discuss with the students the differences between the two types of text.

Application: Reading orally by the teacher will increase listening comprehension on the part of the student.

Assessment: Teacher listening for punctuation, reading fluency, and participation in discussion of the types of text.

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### **Lesson 1:4 Day 2 Research: Geography and history of setting.**

Objectives: Students will understand how knowing the geographical location of a story leads to greater comprehension of text.

Skills Attained: Research Skills

Materials List: Research materials such as technology, resources from library, paper available for illustrating

Methods: Small research groups, teacher modeling, illustrations,

Content Background: The ELL usually will have little experience with American geography. It is important to choose a selection that will give students this knowledge but be aware that prior knowledge must be built before reading the selection. Give the students time to explore the geography and history of the area where the selection takes place.

Suggested Teaching Strategies: The teacher will divide the students into language-level integrated research groups. In each group the teacher will make sure that every student has a task. The tasks could include: the researchers, illustrators and time keepers. All will take part in the presentation of the material. Each group will be responsible for researching a topic from the geography and history of the selection. Example: If using the model book, students can research the state of Ohio, design a map, or research historical figures from Ohio.

Application: Students will learn research techniques to carry over to other areas of study as well as American history and geography.

Assessment: Teacher observation of groups

### **Lesson 1:4 Day 3 Research: Geography and history of setting.**

Objectives: Students will understand how knowing the geography and history of a story leads to greater comprehension of text.

Skills Attained: Research Skills

Materials List: Research materials such as technology, resources from library, paper available for illustrating

Methods: Small research groups, teacher modeling, illustrations,

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**Suggested Teaching Strategies:** Students will continue their research of the geography and history of the setting in the selected story. The students will illustrate the geography in the form of maps, charts, and designate the history through illustration of historical figures or other historical facts.

**Application:** Students will learn research techniques to carry over to other areas of study.

**Assessment:** Teacher observation of group work during student presentations.

### **Lesson 1:4 Day 4 Conducting Interview**

**Objectives:** Students will use oral language skills to conduct interviews.

**Skills Attained:** Students will become more proficient in oral language skills.

**Homework:** Students will be assigned to conduct an interview with someone at their home. The questions could be, "Did you keep a journal when you were in school? Do you write in a journal now? Did you ever have a cousin or another member of your family come live with you?"

**Materials List:** Tapes for interviews

**Methods:** Teacher modeling of how to conduct an interview, students' role play conducting an interview.

**Suggested Teaching Strategies:** The teacher will model with the students how to conduct an interview followed by the students' role playing an interview. Make sure the students understand how to use a tape recorder. Allow time in class for practice speaking into tape recorder! If all students do not have access to a tape recorder then practice with the students how they can write down the interview.

**Application:** Students have opportunity to use technology, oral speaking skills and listening skills can be applied to any area of school or life connection.

**Assessment:** Assessment dependent upon language level of student.