

THE UTAH SPECIAL EDUCATOR

A young girl in traditional Native American regalia, including a feathered headdress and a colorful, fringed dress, is captured in a dance performance. She is the central focus of the image. In the background, several people are seated at a table, watching her. The setting appears to be an indoor event space with warm lighting.

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LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: The Key To School Success!

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Contents

3
Long, Long Ago in a Far Away Place and Time...

4
In Memoriam: Dr. H. Kenton (Ken) Reavis

5
Yoga: To Pretzel or Not?!

7
Language, Learning, Literacy and the Curriculum

10
Reaching Saturation

12
"Hello, How Are You Today, Lauren?"

14
Language Acquisition in Children With Autism

16
Ideas for Promoting Language Acquisition
for the Child with Autism

17
Do You Need to Speak Another Language
to Teach English Language Learners?

18
Setting the Stage: Second Language Acquisition
and the School Principal

20
Language Acquisition: It's Not As Hard As You May Think!

22
Language: One Light At A Time

24
What's The Big Deal?
Aren't All Of Our Students English Language Learners?

25-37
Resources, Monthly Updates, Service Directory and Calendar

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The purpose of *The Utah Special Educator* is to serve as a medium for the dissemination of information related to promising practices and other dimensions in the provision of a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. *The Utah Special Educator* is also available in alternative formats.

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Letters To the Editors

Controversy exists and opposing opinions or feelings are valued.

Therefore, the Editors of *The Utah Special Educator* are encouraging letters from readers related to your perspectives concerning the articles or topics in our publication.

Writers are encouraged to identify themselves, but letters will remain anonymous at the writer's request.

The Editors of *The Utah Special Educator* reserve the right to limit the number of the letters published.

Long Long Ago

in a Far Away Place and Time....

From The Editors.....

How quickly time flies! I feel as though my whole life has flashed before me and it is many, many years in the past (my closest friends know too well how long it really was) that I began the study of language. I was in the process of training to be a Speech and Language Pathologist and these were the days when that term was actually emerging and the term Speech Therapist was a thing of the past. My days were spent not only with the study of articulation, stuttering, and voice disorders but the fascinating emergence of language and the importance of acquisition from the ages of 0 to three. I was amazed that for a variety of reasons the long-term effects could have a multitude of learning and communication factors. Have I given you enough information to give you some insight into how long this topic has been a part of my life? If not just look at my picture on this page!

I began my actual practice at Franklin Elementary in Provo School District. At that time we also were a school for the preschool site for the Utah School for the Deaf. Not only was I a Speech/Language Pathologist for part of the day but also had a half-day Kindergarten class for children with a variety of disabilities. So as you can see the school was a wonderful melting pot for opportunities (thanks to Glenda and Cindie) to work in and learn about the acquisition of language.

My career has taken on many faces over the years. I am no longer a Speech and Language Pathologist by profession. Even so, the concept of language acquisition has always been the driving force for what I choose to be passionate and involved in. I credit this, in part, to the wonderful education I received from my

professors but also the opportunities I have taken to feed this fascination to acquire knowledge of language and its effects on learning and communication.

I appreciate your tolerating my reminiscing and ramblings of years gone by, but after reading and editing this month's publication on Language Acquisition the passion that I have had for so many years ago is still with me. I am excited and proud to share the work of many wonderful professionals in the field today who work on a daily basis to provide every student in Utah with the opportunity to acquire and develop this critical skill. Reading this edition of *The Utah Special Educator* will provide you with a variety of ways to work in the classrooms as well as hear how students feel and want their teachers to know what is going on inside them as they sometimes struggle with this complex skill called, LANGUAGE! ■
Enjoy! -Cheryl Hostetter



Cheryl Hostetter, Editor
Tracy Knickerbocker,
Co-Editor

On The Cover:

Merrill Todachiny (Dineh) of the Bitter Water Clan demonstrated traditional Grass Dance Technique for the December Consortium in Salt Lake City. The Grass Dance mirrors nature with the movements of the prairie grass flowing in the wind. The Todachiny family is available for school assemblies and functions. Contact the Utah Learning Resource Center for further information. Cover Photo: Jim Curtice

In Memoriam

Dr. H. Kenton (Ken) Reavis
February 27, 1942 • January 1, 2001

In every part of the United States Ken had connections. He was a master of connecting people, their lives and their stories. During his life he left all of us with many innovative educational projects and materials but for those of us who knew Ken, his presence moved deeper into the personal realm of food, friends, bonsai trees, high performance cars and making sure we all stayed "connected."

In honor of our great friend, teacher and mentor we at the ULRC would like to leave you with some of Ken's favorite quotes and maxims.

"No one, not even you, gives 100 percent perfect performance every time. The world belongs to the quick and the bold. Not the perfect. It's the struggle toward perfection that counts" (Richard Sloma)

"A mistake in judgment isn't fatal, but too much anxiety about judgment is." (Pauline Kael)

"I am not judged by the number of times I fail, but by the number of times I succeed. And the number of times I succeed is in direct proportion to the number of times I can fail and keep on trying." (Tom Hopkins)

"I claim not to have controlled events but confess plainly that events have controlled me." (Abraham Lincoln)

"No one can make me feel inferior but myself." (Eleanor Roosevelt)

A few maxims Ken used for dealing with tough kids:

- "The person in charge is not always the person in charge."
- "Don't let your ego write a check you can't cash."
- "It is not low self-esteem that causes antisocial behavior. It is social and academic failure that leads to low self-esteem."
- "It is my daily mood that determines the 'weather' in the classroom." Teacher attitude is everything. Remember, life is 10 percent what happens to you and 90 percent how you react to it.



- "90 percent of learning is from modeled behavior." The teacher is the role model 100 percent of the time. The teacher's behavior should model that which is expected of students.
- "As you go through life, you'll have many opportunities to keep your mouth shut. Take advantage of them."
- "Our job is to provide an education for the kids we have, not the ones we used to have or the ones we wish we had."
- "Empty threats are the most common way to loose power."
- "Say 'no' as lovingly as 'yes'."
- "Hold high student expectations."
- "Maintain a pervasive sense of caring for students."
- "Make more 'start' than 'stop' requests."
- "Failure is not an option."
- "Kids will not be ignored-if they're not recognized for doing it right, they'll get recognized for doing it wrong."

Those who would like to participate in a celebration of Ken's life can visit the following website: www.usu.edu/teachall/ken. or at www.ulrc.org ■



Hola everyone! Hope you all had a successful start to the New Year. Made any resolutions to take better care of yourself this year? To many, the thought of strapping on running shoes and braving the frigid temperatures just isn't an appealing vision. Might I suggest attending an evening of yoga instruction during these cold months?

Although the practice of yoga has been around for thousands of years, to most of us it represents a novel encounter. However, did you know that over 60% of gyms now offer yoga instruction and corporations like Time Inc. and American Express offer lunch break yoga classes to their employees?

Here you have the opportunity to stretch tired sore muscles at your own pace and level of difficulty. Usually the class is accompanied by soothing music and the company of like minds. Under the guidance of a qualified instructor you need not worry about twisting into positions usually seen only at the Barnum and Bailey Circus to enjoy its benefits.

Simple beginning postures can release stress and tension that have built up and settled into our bodies. Mats, blankets, straps and foam blocks are aids used in modern yoga classes to assist the novice in attaining postures aimed at building strength, flexibility, tranquility and energy. If you do not have a yoga class in your area there are some excellent beginning videos available in your local media store or library.

We hope you enjoy this month's TLC installment by yoga instructor Roz Newmark. Roz has presented at the last three Utah Mentor Teacher Academy Conferences to hundreds of grateful teachers. Namaste!

This month's recommended reading:

Freedman, Miriam and Hanks, Janice. (1996). *Yoga at Work: 10 minute yoga workout for busy people*. Element Books. This month's recommended website: <http://www.yogamusicvideo.com/>

Roz Newmark

I confess that I was curious enough to bend, fold and wad my body into positions I found in photographs from a Hatha Yoga book. The year was 1972, and I was halfway through high school in Lawrence, Kansas. For me, it seemed like a perfectly logical progression, to go from being a living room stunt girl to a yoga enthusiast. This was my first introduction to what, years later, has become a serious habit, (I'd like to think it's one of my better ones). Over time, I have studied with many different yoga teachers, and have combined what I've gleaned from them with my profession as a modern dancer. Now, I teach and take yoga classes on a regular basis. Yoga gives me a tool that I can use in all aspects of my life.

The word yoga means "to yoke" or to create union, by integrating the body, mind and spirit. Of the various branches of yoga, which originated in India over two thousand years ago, Hatha Yoga is the form most commonly practiced in the west. It is a form of physical exercise which uses the breath to help "open" the body, while one moves through various poses. During what is usually a ninety minute session, asanas, or poses can be structured to create energy, or to calm and restore, often a combination of the two. At the end of a yoga session, five to ten minutes are set aside for a silent relaxation time, or savasana, in order to help the body assimilate the full effect of the poses. I like to refer to this part of class as dessert. I think of my yoga practice as a refuge, a place where I can go to be inward and seek stillness. I especially need this after teaching, performing or engaging in situations that require me to extend myself outward. Yoga is a way of returning to balance.

As a result of living in a high-paced, sensory-overloaded culture, most of us have developed ear hugging shoulders and nervous systems that resemble an over cooked marshmallow. As educators, personal maintenance time is often at the bottom of our priority list. Because of the stressful nature of

Continued pg. 6

YOGA: to Pretzel or Not?!



Generally speaking, in the beginning it's helpful to think of using an exhalation when folding or closing the body, and an inhalation when opening. Remember to allow time for savasana (dessert)!

Roz Newmark teaches dance, yoga, photography and operates as an independent artist in Salt Lake City, Utah. ■

Locations for Yoga Classes:

The First Unitarian Church
569 S. 1300 East
Charlotte Bell 355-2617
Roz Newmark 328-4456

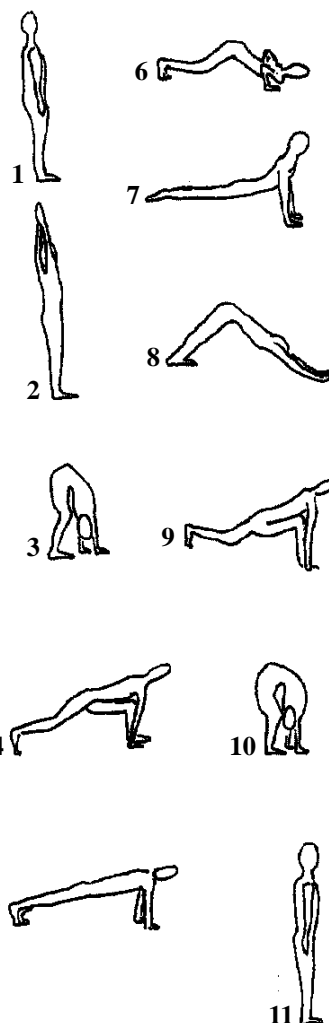
Yoga Central 1
550 E. 3300 South
466-8324

The Yoga Center
4689 S. Holladay Blvd.
277-9166

Soma Yoga Studio
625 S State St.
461-0083

Sun Salutation

1. Stand with feet and hips wide apart, vertically align yourself, shoulders over hips, weight evenly distributed through your feet.
2. On an inhalation bring your arms over your head. Focus goes up to the ceiling.
3. Exhale release the torso forward softening the knees so your hands can touch the floor.
4. On an inhalation step the right foot back keeping the left shin on a vertical plane.
5. Exhaling as you step your left foot back, slightly activating your lower abdominal muscles, extend the crown of your head and heels, lengthening through the spine.
6. & 7. Connecting these two poses together with an inhalation, gliding the chest forward through the arms keeping the elbows close to the ribs, moving up diagonally as to elongate the lower back, abdominal muscles are slightly flexed.
8. Exhale, extend the hips towards the ceiling, arms extended long, release the crown of the head towards the floor, eyes looking at your feet.
9. Soften the knees, inhaling as you step your right foot forward.
10. Exhale, release the torso forward, step the left foot up to meet the right, relax your neck.
11. On an inhalation, slowly return to vertical alignment.



the profession, teachers desperately need down time to restore their life force. When every moment of life appears booked, even considering adding something new to one's schedule can feel stressful. This is when breathing comes in handy. Breathe deep.... inhale....exhale....and reflect back, just for a moment, to one of those New Year's resolutions about doing something to help reduce stress in your life. Does this sound even remotely familiar? If so, maybe now is a good time to consider yoga as an option. There are probably a few slots of time that you can mark off on your calendar and guard with the ferocity of an irritated badger, as "your" time. This can be as little as fifteen to twenty minutes every other day. Then, finding a "structure" from which you can begin learning shouldn't be a problem, as there are a number of yoga books at the local library. Often in these books there are sections demonstrating exercises one can follow from ten to sixty minutes. If you can set aside more time, take a class, or use a video to progress your learning one step further. Finding an appropriate class and teacher that will fit your schedule shouldn't be too difficult. There are a number of early morning and evening classes going on through out the Salt Lake valley (names and addresses of a few are listed at the bottom of this article). I find if I commit to going to a class, chances are greater that I will be more consistent with my practice. Getting to "take" a class from a really good teacher always feels like a luxury, especially after hours of teaching and "putting out" for others. It's nice to be on the receiving end once in a while.

The following "exercises" are divided into two groups. The first is a classic progression of poses called Sun Salutation. This is a great series for warming up and energizing. Use the breath to link the poses together with fluid movement. The second group of poses (at the bottom of the page) has a more calming effect.



Savasana

Language, Learning, Literacy And The Curriculum



A key focus in our nation's schools is on how to successfully prepare our student's to become independent, productive members of society. Among those skills necessary for all students to be independent and productive are literacy and the ability to communicate ideas. With the emphasis on teaching students to read, write, speak/communicate, and think critically, public attention is on effective practices in the classroom.

For successful learning and literacy skill development, students must have prerequisite language skills. Educators are often unclear about the connection between language, learning, and literacy. How does building a foundation with language lead to successful learning and literacy skill development and to developing the required competencies for becoming a productive citizen?

This article will discuss the prerequisite language elements for learning, the general progression of skills from language to literacy, and outline a format for developing the language prerequisites for learning and literacy in the curriculum for all students including students at-risk and with disabilities.

Prerequisite Language Elements for Learning and Literacy

In order to have a clear understanding of the prerequisite language elements necessary for learning, let us first review the processes involved with learning, and then those involved with language. *Learning* is the process of *acquiring information* through observation, listening, or reading; *comprehending* information received; and *processing or thinking* about what one has learned. Learning is then reinforced and expanded by *communicating and sharing* oral and written ideas with others. Thus, successful, independent learning necessitates the ability to read, write, think critically, and communicate ideas.

The prerequisite language elements-form, content, and use-provide an essential foundation for learning to occur. The processes involved with *language* include the ability to understand and express ideas using spoken and written forms of communication. It also involves the ability to process ideas and to engage in critical thinking. A student with competence using language form has the ability to use and understand sounds, vocabulary and concepts, and sentence structure. Using language content, a student has the ability to use and understand word meaning. A student with competence in language use (or social communication), has the ability to appropriately use social greetings, give information, make

requests, ask questions, maintain an appropriate conversation, and communicate intelligibly.

Competence with language form, content, and use is requisite for learning across all curriculum areas and provides the foundation for content teaching. Following are a few examples of how language provides the basic tools necessary for learning and developing skills in reading, writing, speaking/communicating, and thinking across the curriculum (Montgomery, Ferguson, & Hoskins, April 1999):

Reading: Language skills are required for comprehending vocabulary, abstract concepts, complex sentences, and the sequencing of directions (e.g., homework assignments, textbook chapters, math story problems, rules for scoring a volleyball game).

Writing: Language skills are required for using specific vocabulary, complex sentences, sequencing ideas, detailed and descriptive paragraphs, choosing formal vs. informal language (e.g., daily class journal, essay test questions, homework assignments, reports, notes to friends).

Speaking/Communicating: Language skills are required for participating in class discussions, expressing concerns, maintaining appropriate conversations with teachers and peers, understanding rules for games or activities, making requests, social greetings, giving information, communicating intelligibly, appropriate responses to social cues, responding promptly.

Thinking: Language skills are required for processing math story problems, following oral directions, organizing thoughts and ideas, finding the right words to express an idea, organizing assignments and materials, critical thinking and problem solving activities.

When students demonstrate problems with these and other basic language skills, it can result in poor academic performance, and/or inappropriate social communication. This can result in behavior problems from high levels of frustration and frequent misunderstandings and can be manifested as arguments with peers and/or teachers, and even withdrawal from interactions in the classroom and with peers.

Continued pg. 8

Progression from Language to Literacy

The normal progression for acquiring general language skills follows the sequence of development of a typical child through the basic stages of learning. Consider the following general scenario for a young child in acquiring language prerequisites for learning and literacy:

As a very young child begins experiencing the world, she uses all her senses. At home, sitting on the kitchen floor near the backdoor, the young girl sees children running across the street, and watches her bottle of juice as she lets it fall to the floor. She hears a dog barking, the sounds of horns honking, and of pots and pans crashing down as she reaches into the lower cabinet. She can smell the moisture in the air as the rain begins to pour outside; she tastes a salty cracker crumb found in the corner; and, she feels the cold, hard touch of the aluminum pan lid as she puts it to her mouth.

As the young girl's five senses record information around her, she learns about cause and effect while thinking about how to open the cabinet door, and about what happens when her juice is thrown to the floor. She listens to words and sentences spoken by her mother. She begins speaking by experimenting with sounds, then words, and puts words together into phrases and sentences to communicate meaning. She begins writing when she picks up a crayon to scribble and later learns to form letters to represent words. She learns to read words on the box of cereal, the word "stop" on the sign at the corner, and her name embossed on her drinking cup. She learns the sounds of individual letters and, finally, to read words in a storybook. Her many experiences provide the conceptual understanding for the abstract concepts and the visualization for the descriptive passages within the story.

Language and Literacy in the Curriculum

This normal progression for acquiring language skills provides the basis for the following format for teaching language and literacy through

the school curriculum. The format develops essential language skills by following the sequence of typical language development which provides the framework for literacy development.

The teaching sequence begins by building experiences with the most powerful method for learning through direct experiences. When direct experiences are not possible, the next most powerful method for learning is through role-play and dramatization. And lastly, providing learning experiences with activities using the student's imagination to recall the "sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feel" of the experience.

The learning and teaching sequence then continues with the development of oral language skills with activities in listening, critical thinking, and speaking/communicating. Finally, written language is developed with writing and reading activities. The following curriculum planning outline for teaching through the content curriculum is based on the normal sequence for learning:

Curriculum Planning Outline - Language and Literacy

1. Choose the topic and curriculum area. Identify the language/literacy skills targeted.
2. Experience and learn about the topic (engaging in experiencing and reading stories about the topic, developing ideas and thinking).
3. Communicate about the topic (expanding ideas, concepts, and thinking through discussions, sharing, and writing activities).
4. Improve language and communication (polishing or revising oral and written products).
5. Share the topic with others (orally presenting it to others, reading it to others).

General examples for teaching using this format are provided below in Figure 1. In Figures 2, 3, and 4, are three sample curriculum plans for science, language arts, and social studies content subjects.

FIGURE 1 LANGUAGE & LITERACY IN THE CURRICULUM Speaking - Writing - Thinking - Reading

1. Choose a topic and skills for students to learn.

Topic/Curriculum:

Skills:

2. Experience the Topic - experiencing, reading about the topic, developing ideas and thinking.

Exploring	Role-playing (acting)	Art activities
Observing	Illustrating (drawing)	Nature walk
Collecting	Reading	Remembering
Discussing	Cooking	

3. Communicate About It - expanding ideas, concepts, and thinking by discussing, sharing, & writing.

- Create: word lists, sentences, paragraphs.

(Students can create lists orally, while teacher writes them on the board.)

- Write word lists on large paper. Illustrate the words.

- Create: poetry plays short stories directions
letters recipes reports

Write a story:

- Create a story with no words (pictures only). Tell the story from pictures.
- OR, as a student tells the story in the pictures, the teacher writes student's words. Student can then read/tell his or her own story to others.

- Use patterns (fill-in-the-blank) in familiar stories, poems, or songs to write a new story or poem.
 - Students write their own stories. Combine stories to make a class book.
 - Do not worry about correcting words or sentences until later. You want to encourage speaking and writing.
- #### 4. Improve Language & Communication-revising oral/written products
- Learn new vocabulary
 - Practice sentence structure skills
 - Practice speaking and writing in various activities
 - Select appropriate vocabulary for sentences
 - Students read what they have written
 - Rearrange words
 - Add or eliminate ideas
- #### 5. Share the Topic With Others-orally presenting it, reading it
- Talk about it with others
 - Hang it on the wall for others to see
 - Tape record a story
 - Make it into a book
 - Read it to a class
 - Write a letter and mail it to real people
 - Perform a simple "play"
 - Wrap it up and give it as a present
 - Make a class cook book. Illustrate it
 - Write it on a tee shirt

FIGURE 2

CURRICULUM PLANS: LANGUAGE & LITERACY
Speaking - Writing - Thinking - Reading

1. Choose the topic and the skills for students to learn.

Topic/Curriculum: **FALL SEASON (Science)**

Skills: vocabulary, describing seasonal changes (differences), descriptive sentences.

2. Experience the Topic-experiencing, reading about the topic, developing ideas and thinking

- Take a walk outdoors in the “fall” season.
- Discuss observations of the trees, plants, weather, etc.
- Gather items on the walk: leaves, flowers, etc.
- Touch, look at, and describe the items gathered.

3. Communicate About It-expanding ideas, concepts, and thinking by discussing, sharing, & writing

- List words to describe the items gathered on a large paper. Illustrate the words.
- Use the words in sentences to describe the walk. Illustrate them for a class book.
- Keep a journal of seasonal observations
- Pretend you are a plant. Describe seasonal changes from the plant’s point of view.

4. Improve Language & Communication-revising oral/written products

- Describe objects using the new words.
- Practice writing sentences or paragraphs.

5. Share the Topic With Others-orally presenting it, reading it

- Hang the words on the wall
- Illustrate the sentences and make a book.
- Perform a “play” pretending you are a plant.

FIGURE 3

CURRICULUM PLANS: LANGUAGE & LITERACY
Speaking - Writing - Thinking - Reading

1. Choose the topic and the skills for students to learn.

Topic/Curriculum: **FOODS (Language Arts)**

Skills: vocabulary, following and giving directions

2. Experience the Topic-experiencing, reading, developing ideas and thinking

- Students bring a piece of fruit to class. Use senses to describe the fruit (sight, touch, smell, taste). Cut it open and taste it. Talk about it.
- Or, make a fruit salad. Eat it for snack.

3. Communicate About It-expanding ideas, concepts, and thinking by discussing, sharing, & writing

- List all the words the students and teacher can think of to describe the fruit on large paper. Draw pictures of the fruit around the words.
- Or, write the recipe for the fruit salad.

4. Improve Language & Communication-revising oral/written products

- Find other foods or objects that match the new “describing” words (rough, orange, juicy, etc.).
- Use the words in sentences the students create.
- Or, practice following directions.

5. Share the Topic With Others-orally presenting it, reading it

- Hang the list on the wall. Use words in other speaking/writing activities.
- Or, read or tell the recipe to another class.

FIGURE 4

CURRICULUM PLANS: LANGUAGE & LITERACY
Speaking - Writing - Thinking - Reading

1. Choose the topic and the skills for students to learn.

Topic/Curriculum: **A RECENT EVENT**-party, celebration, trip (**Social Studies**)

Skills: giving information, sequencing events, asking/answering questions

2. Experience the Topic-experiencing, reading, developing ideas and thinking

- Look at photos or draw pictures of the event
- Discuss what happened and the sequence of events with the class.
- Have other students ask questions.

3. Communicate About It-expanding ideas, concepts, and thinking by discussing, sharing, & writing

- Looking at the illustrations of the event, students write sentences to describe the event.(or teacher writes student’s words)

4. Improve Language & Communication -revising oral/written products

- Practice describing event in more detail.
- Practice sequencing the order of activities in an event. (first, middle, last)
- Practice asking and answering questions. (who, what, where, when, why)

5. Share the Topic With Others-orally presenting it, reading it

- Hang it on the wall.
- Or, make a class book with each student’s event.
- Read it to another class. ■

Reaching Saturation

Saralinda Werner Bell • Hearing Specialist • Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind



I'll never forget the day my high school chemistry teacher taught our class about the principle of saturation. Placing a large beaker of liquid on the front lab counter he proceeded to place particles into the liquid. Despite the steady introduction of new matter, the liquid in the beaker remained unchanged. My chemistry teacher paused a moment while he placed just one more grain into the liquid. Almost immediately, the liquid transformed into a crystallized state. What a difference one particle can make!

For children who are deaf or hearing-impaired the principle of saturation is a revealing metaphor for the development of language. Many particles of experience and direction are required before dynamic meaning takes form.

Oftentime teachers and parents may feel that nothing "sinks in" regardless of the variety of instructional input, when almost at once-voila! – meaning and comprehension are achieved.

Although there is much research describing how children acquire language and every theory of cognition attempts to explain it, there remains little information about the actual process of language development which is universally accepted (Caim, 1986; Pinker, 1990). Two aspects of language acquisition which are generally accepted are first, the intrinsic ability for children to grasp linguistic complexities and second, the integrally social nature of language. Language is the great tool for communication and communication is a primary need.

What is the difference between the language development of hearing and deaf children?

The essential difference between hearing and deaf children is not cognitive ability or inherent drive for acquiring language but rather the ability to completely access linguistic information. As the auditory channel is the primary pathway to verbal language, the need for accurate and stimulating input stretches forth as a wide chasm between the child's desire for complete communication and his ability to gather sufficient information to create a full linguistic system.

While children with normal hearing are exposed to auditory stimulation from birth (if not before) and are actively processing the abundant language in their environment, children with hearing impairments are at an obvious disadvantage due to lack of adequate stimulation, whether auditory or visual. Further, many of the tools for appropriate social use of language are processed not only through direct but also indirect (peripheral) listening. Similar to peripheral vision, peripheral hearing ability completes the whole information from which we develop an understanding of the pragmatic social uses of language. Peripheral listening is the comprehensive listening that occurs all around the direct signal. It is an extremely difficult process for even the most adept hearing-impaired listeners to grasp.

Despite this immense challenge, deaf children can and do acquire language. As the chemistry metaphor suggests, language development in deaf children requires thoughtful and concentrated input in order to reach a linguistic "saturation" point; that is, meaningful, dynamic communication in all its forms. Fortunately, there are some universal theories that assist in developing language with deaf children whether they utilize sign or verbal language. Three fundamentals of language development with deaf students are highlighted followed by a sampling of practical application strategies.

What are the “particles” that are fundamental in reaching a linguistic “saturation” point?

Engagement in language learning

Children are naturally inquisitive and earnestly seek to understand the amazing world in which they live. As teachers, our responsibility is tapping that intrinsic process and providing the language that bridges the cognitive learning activity to the child’s interaction with his world. After all, language learning is fundamentally a process of social connection (Bouvet, 1990), especially when one considers the multiplying force of concepts, words, and experiences. The average hearing child enters school with approximately 5,000 words and increases to a lexicon of 20,000 words by the end of 6th grade which can be read and understood (Nagy & Herman, 1987). The task of word “saturation” is urgent.

Another vital characteristic of engagement for deaf children is the discussion of information occurring around the child, regardless of how obvious it may appear. A classic example of this is the case of a colleague’s middle-school student and his shocked and confused response to the question, “How do you feel about your mother having a new baby?” He did not realize that his mother was pregnant, although she was definitely indicating her status at 8 months. Most likely the family had discussed this pertinent information yet the language and understanding was lost in background or group conversations.

Strategies:

- Talk explicitly about the activity in which the child is engaged.
- Concentrate on a small set of words or a specific phrase to introduce to the child during each activity. Use targeted vocabulary in interesting and varied ways or forms.
- Engage in conversation and discuss information that is occurring in the child’s environment regardless of how obvious it’s presence appears.

Arrange the conversational environment to enhance the student’s ability to use all forms of information: visual, auditory, nonverbal (i.e., body language).

Meaningful repetition

Prior knowledge or experience greatly enhances the ability to develop novel structures in language. Many deaf students lack linguistic connections to their life experiences and need to be exposed to experiences with the appropriate language attached. For young children, this may involve reviewing the experience and the targeted language several times in various ways; for older children, allow the child to literally experience concepts (to the extent possible) before utilizing them in classroom discussions or curricular development. In addition, it may be appropriate to review and teach new or unfamiliar vocabulary prior to a classroom lesson, activity, or assignment.

Strategies:

- Review pictures of an event or activity and talk about the process or people involved.
- Develop an individual “experience book” for each activity or routine and utilize it for further practice and rehearsal of targeted language.

- Use pattern books with predictable repetitive phrases, words, or refrains.
- Preview new vocabulary for a specific unit of study. Relate new vocabulary to known vocabulary through connections to synonym, antonym, or categorical information.
- Experience or discuss a concept as tangibly or concretely as possible before proceeding to the more abstract use of new terminology. Relate information directly to the child’s life.
- When approaching the comprehension of figurative language (e.g., idiomatic expressions), always discuss the concrete meaning behind the descriptive abstract language.
- Engage the child in utilizing targeted language throughout her day in reading, writing, and conversation.

Direct teaching integrated with meaningful and expansive practice.

Lack of appropriate experience with language, whether directly or incidentally, can also be overcome through the use of direct instruction coupled with meaningful practice. Many times we seek to teach concepts without acknowledging that our deaf or hard-of-hearing students need explicit instruction on how to approach the learning task.

Strategies:

- Use “mini-lessons” (e.g., five-ten minutes) throughout the day as a method in teaching language targets which can be immediately and purposefully used.
- Model your own processes of learning new information or vocabulary and guide the child through the process.
- Ask comprehension questions that require a response indicating the student’s actual understanding. Avoid “yes/no” questions.
- Discuss specific language and role-play, its use in a variety of scenarios allowing the child to practice and understand the real-life utilization. Role-playing realistic scenarios is invaluable in developing the verbal and nonverbal aspects of language that are essential in appropriate social skills.

Reaching a “language saturation point” is a rigorous and exciting process. It is easy to become discouraged by the need for constant and stimulating input when the output seems never to change or grow. One never knows which marvelous seed of instruction will make the difference. As you continue seeding your students’ inherent capacities with meaningful repetitions and experiences, there will occur a wondrous and essential transformation-**language!**

Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind have hearing specialists throughout the state who are available for teacher consultation.

For more information please contact:

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The essential difference between hearing and deaf children is not cognitive ability or inherent drive for acquiring language but rather the ability to completely access linguistic information.

"Hello, How Are You Today Lauren?"



The beautiful, blue-eyed seven-year old stood there looking down at her feet.

Her face completely devoid of any emotion as though she were completely alone in the Speech Room looking at a spot on the carpet. Lauren suffers from an anxiety disorder known as

Selective Mutism which results in her inability to speak except in most familiar and comfortable environments. She has been attending school for three years now, and the times she has spoken in a whisper could be counted on one hand. Now, as a second grader, her teachers and parents are becoming more alarmed. Lauren communicates the same as other children her age when at home with her parents, but won't even speak to her mother at church or at school if anyone else is nearby. In the beginning, her lack of speaking was just attributed to shyness and everyone assumed that as she adjusted to kindergarten, she would "get over it." But that never happened. During recess, Lauren usually stands alone, watching the other children with no emotion but perhaps a touch of sadness in her usually blank eyes. Her parents tell us that she never speaks to anyone outside the family. It took years before she would even talk to her grandparents who live nearby. But at home, she is bubbly and speaks in well-formed and perfectly articulated sentences. This would not generally be the kind of student I would work with as the school speech-language pathologist. But after all, was Lauren able to communicate enough to meet the expectations of a normal second-grade classroom? Definitely not! Her classroom teacher became increasingly concerned about her inability to measure Lauren's progress with reading and other tasks that require some sort of oral response. Even her peers have come to accept Lauren's mutism, and if a stranger asks Lauren a question, the other students reply, "Oh, she doesn't talk at all."

So where do you begin working with a child with perfectly developed communication skills who is too anxious to speak in almost all environments? You start the same as you do with any child requiring special education. Begin with what the child can do, and build to where you want to go by designing an individual plan that takes the child through the benchmarks needed to meet the long-term goal.

I began by trying to build a relationship with Lauren. I knew that if she didn't trust me, I would never be able to bridge that gap that teachers and peers had already tried to do since kindergarten. She started coming to my room 15 minutes every day. The first few times she sat there with no response or eye contact or emotion on her face. But I discovered she likes to play games, and I found several that required no talking. Later I introduced her to Picture Exchange Communication (PECS) that I use with autistic students. Using PECS gave Lauren the opportunity to choose an activity in a non-threatening communication mode that she could initiate. During this time, I began to observe things that had not been seen in school—smiles and even silent laughter. Lauren loved to play with balls and frequently handed me the ball symbol as soon as she came to my room. I soon realized that this bright child had much to offer. She would creatively invent new games with the ball and would impishly tease me. It was delightful to see her personality emerging. But there was still no change in the classroom, and there were days when Lauren even came to my room with the old stone-face lacking any response. I needed much more than to develop a relationship with this student. I needed to move her towards the long-range goal of talking at school.

I certainly had experience with developing language in non-verbal children, but this was new territory. I had never worked with a student like Lauren before, and I felt I needed help. The special education team in the school brain-stormed, and with the help of Lauren's



teacher, we searched the Internet and talked to local authorities on behavior including professors at University of Utah and the BEST Conference. We were given suggestions and encouragement, even though Selective Mutism is a topic of limited research. We began to develop a plan of intervention using the suggestions and research that we had available. But it came down to doing what we must do with any child with special needs. We had to develop an individualized educational plan that included everyone in her world working together toward the same long-range goal-Lauren would talk in school.

There are two basic standards that I turn to when working with students with disabilities:

1. If a child is not understanding the targeted skill, find a way to bring more modalities into the task by adding a visual or tactile component to what you are teaching.
2. When the ratio of correct/incorrect responses is too low, analyze the targeted task and break it down into smaller steps until the student experiences success.

Lauren's needs required the creative efforts of a whole team of people from our school staff, her family, and many beyond the walls of our school.

Because of these two guidelines, after more than 20 years experience as a Speech-Language Pathologist, I am constantly making new materials that help me to teach a particular skill in a particular way to a particular student. My learning never stops because potential combinations of the uniqueness of my students and their individual educational and communicative needs are infinite. Lauren's needs required the creative efforts of a whole team of people from our school staff, her family, and many beyond the walls of our school.

Dr. William Jensen from the University of Utah gave us some valuable research and the go-ahead to provide Lauren with alternative methods of communication while working toward talking. We began with notebooks and pencils. She used these readily in my room but seldom in the classroom. Next she was given a whiteboard and markers to keep on her desk. By setting daily goals she began to use it occasionally. Her classroom teacher was encouraged to relate to Lauren in the same way that she does to her other students, asking Lauren questions and casually accepting her written responses. There have been ups and downs in her classroom participation. On good days she will write her responses hesitantly but only occasionally. Some days she returns to the blank stare and unwillingness to participate in even the simplest activities. These days are frustrating. When I see that kind of unwillingness to respond, I draw a "thermometer" on the whiteboard and label the top with feeling good, and the bottom with feeling unhappy and ask Lauren to show me on the thermometer where she is feeling in an effort to help her to "talk about" her feelings. This was the beginning of my first rule of using visual and tactile modalities to

facilitate learning. Now I needed to break down the task of talking at school into baby steps.

As I pondered what it takes to speak, I drew the baby steps on the white board for Lauren every day so that eventually she could draw them herself. I wanted to show her that talking is something that our body does in three simple steps, and not an anxiety promoting event to be feared. I explained the act of talking in a simple backward chain of events:

- 1) moving your mouth to shape the words
- 2) adding air that comes from your lungs
- 3) adding voice to the air.

I drew a stairway and placed each short-term goal on the ascending steps adding her long-range goal (Lauren talks at school) at the top. I continued to affirm with her daily that she wanted to get to that step and she never hesitated to agree.

We began with reading books. I let Lauren select a book, and I read a sentence pausing when I came to the last word and waited for Lauren to mouth the word. At first she barely moved her lips but in time she would do it naturally and worked up to "reading" whole books herself this way. We played games that gave her the opportunity to mouth her requests or responses. Each day I also would review for her where we were going next-adding air to her mouth movements.

We started practicing moving air in general by blowing bubbles, paper, and candles. I kept explaining that talking begins with moving your mouth. When you add air, you get a whisper and then adding voice would take her to her goal of talking in school. I started to teach her about unvoiced sounds such as s, p, t, k, f, ch and sh. Some days she would say these sounds for me, but when the "feelings thermometer" was low she would only mouth words. One day I selected a book in which various characters hushed Santa saying "Shhhhhh." I pointed out that it was a word she could say by mouthing and by adding air. She "read" the whole book mouthing the words and whenever she came to the word "shhh," she actually whispered that sound with much volume. It was an exciting day. So far she has worked on moving her mouth and adding air but is still not ready for adding voice. I am pleased with these baby steps, but more importantly, so is Lauren.

Lauren's individualized educational plan has consisted of adding visual and tactile components to her understanding of the act of "talking" broken down into very small measured steps. She can see and measure her progress toward her over-all goal of talking in school. We are not there yet but with all the people in her life who are trying to help Lauren to feel safe enough to speak at school, we will hopefully make that last step of adding voice to her efforts to communicate.

"Lauren" is a fictitious name to protect the confidentiality of the student. ■

Language Acquisition In Children With Autism

By definition, children with autism have deficits in communication. Often, when parents notice that something is “different” about their child, it is that he does not acquire language at the same rate as his peers, that the child uses what language he has in an idiosyncratic fashion (e.g., repeating phrases from videos, using pronouns incorrectly), or that the child appears to understand only that language which might be reinforcing to him (e.g., not responding to “Look at Mommy,” but responding to “Do you want a cookie?”) When these “red flags” are apparent, parents should beware of misguided advice such as “Don’t worry. He’ll grow out of it.” Patterns of communicative behavior are developed early, and if left to chance, the child is not likely to “grow” out of delayed or deviant patterns. The child must be specifically taught to become a successful communicator.

Another factor that impedes the acquisition of language in children with autism is their social skill deficits. Successful communication requires not only transmission and reception of an intended message, but social skills to assist in the communicative interaction. For example, a child who has learned to say, “I want a drink,” but has not learned to direct the request to another person, is not engaging in successful communication.

Communication is a “transactional” process because it requires give-and-take between both communicative partners. That is, the child responds to the adult’s communication, who in turn, responds to the child’s communicative response. When the interaction is shared between the partners (e.g., each is able to send and receive the intended messages) then they both are reinforced for their communication. However, when one partner does not share in the interaction

(e.g., the child is unable to adequately respond to the adult’s request, or the adult does not respond to the child’s non-specific communicative attempt), future attempts to communicate are likely to be avoided. This pattern of avoidance leads to further delays or deviancies in the communicative process. Communicative partners must learn not to give up when the interaction is not successful, for this is the time when children with autism need help the most.

Many people unfamiliar with children with autism wonder if language acquisition is possible for these children. The most commonly reported statistic is that approximately 50% of children with autism remain primarily non-verbal. However, these data are based upon a narrower definition of autism, which does not include many individuals with high-functioning autism or Asperger’s Disorder. It is likely that if a more current statistic were available, it would report more than 50% of those who are functionally verbal, given the wider band of functioning levels in the autism spectrum and the wide-spread provision of early intervention services. Professionals should approach treatment with young children with autism as if they should be included in the verbal group. Prognosis for those with language is substantially more positive than for those who do not use language. If a child does not acquire a symbolic form of communication after many good-faith instructional efforts have been proven unsuccessful, then alternative methods can be taught. Such alternative methods will not be discussed in this article, as the purpose is to provide strategies for parents and professionals working with children who might acquire language.

Several skills must be present in order to acquire language. Not all of these prerequisite skills will be discussed, but the skills that are typically difficult for young



Tina Taylor Dyches • Utah Subdivision on Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

children with autism will be discussed briefly, with suggestions for facilitating the acquisition of each skill.

1. Imitation. Many young children with autism do not learn to imitate naturally. This skill must be specifically taught. One approach to teach imitation is for the adult to imitate the behavior of the child and reinforce the child when he “accidentally” imitates the adult when he engages in the same behavior. A more direct approach is to model a gross or fine motor action while stating, “Do this!” then reinforcing successive approximations to the desired action. When a child can imitate gross motor actions, fine motor actions, and actions on objects, then he can be taught to imitate oral-motor movements and eventually speech sounds or words.

2. Attending skills. Children with autism often appear to be inattentive to the social world around them. If not directly taught, many children will selectively attend to only that which is reinforcing to them. Formal programs (such as the Behavioral Attending Program developed by Children’s Behavior Therapy Unit) are often used to teach a child to sit quietly and attend to a teacher. One informal method includes the systematic reinforcement of attending behaviors while the child engages in learning activities. Children with autism should also be taught to establish and maintain joint attention on an object or action. This means that a child should be taught to get the attention of a communicative partner (e.g., by pointing, verbalizing, gesturing) to look at something or engage in an activity together.

3. Establishing interactive turn-taking routines. Because communication involves give-and-take, children with autism need to be taught how to take turns. Simple activities can be directed for such learning, for example, while a child plays with a toy, the teacher says “My turn” and starts to play with the toy. She then directs the child to say or gesture “My turn” and gives him the toy. This interaction continues until the activity is still desirable, but nearing a point of boredom.

4. Having a desire and reason to communicate.

Adults who live or work with children with autism become astute mind-readers, that is, they see a need in the child with autism and immediately fulfill it. This is a valuable skill to possess, but it may inhibit the development of higher-level communication. Communicative partners must provide opportunities for children to communicate. A child who is allowed to fulfill his needs by himself will often learn that being independent is easier than communicating with others to fulfill his needs. One strategy to decrease the level of dependence on others (to facilitate communication) is to set up an activity and not providing an item necessary for the completion of an activity (e.g., providing all ingredients to make toast except for the bread). The child then has a reason, and if motivated, a desire to communicate for the missing item.

When the young child with autism becomes an intentional communicator, then his communicative partners can further enhance language acquisition by using the following facilitative strategies:

- 1. Responding to apparent intent of communicative behaviors, including maladaptive and self-stimulating behaviors,**
- 2. Talking about the here and now,**
- 3. Using simplified language forms,**
- 4. Expanding and emending the child’s utterances, and**
- 5. Encouraging and rewarding the child’s efforts at talking (McLean & Snyder-McLean, 1999).**

Early, effective communication training is essential for the success of any child with autism. With proper training, most children with autism will learn to communicate their wants and needs, and many others will be able to engage in “normal” or “near-normal” communicative interactions. When able to communicate effectively, children with autism have no need to resort to maladaptive behaviors to express themselves. Can we expect early language acquisition in autism? Yes! Is it essential to their success? Absolutely! ■



The Utah Federation Council for Exceptional Children

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I D E A S

For Promoting Language Acquisition for the Child With Autism

Jocelyn Taylor • Specialist • Utah State Office of Education

Children with autism can be helped to acquire language. The following are general ideas to shape daily communicative interactions between the child and the caregiver. It is suggested that these techniques be consistently integrated into the context of the child's life. Generalization takes place faster when these strategies are utilized in a variety of contexts and by a variety of adults.

Minimize direct questions as they tend to constrain developing language. Typically overused questions are: What's this? What do you want? What are you doing? What do you call this?

Make comments as they tend to promote language development. Follow the child's lead and make comments on what he is doing.

Wait with visible anticipation and **expect** the child to take a turn. Look expectantly at the child and reward turn-taking behavior. The expectant look includes: eye contact, lips slightly apart, eyebrows raised and head and body slightly leaning toward the child.

Set up communicative situations. Do not anticipate the child's every need; create moments where he will have to talk to get what he needs.

Use gesture and facial expressions. Capture the child's attention and support the meaning of your words with visual illustrations.

Model appropriate language rather than correct mistakes.

Reduce language complexity in order to maximize comprehension. Model what you expect and encourage the child to imitate.

Use exaggerated intonation, volume, and rate of speech to capture the attention of children who have difficulty communicating spontaneously.

Use eye contact and use the simple directive, "Look at me" to promote this crucial part of communicating.

Reinforce the child's spontaneous productions. Do not ignore verbal or non-verbal attempts to communicate. Teach the child that there is a payoff for talking.

Use expansion to help the child move on to the next level of linguistic complexity. Add a word to advance the grammatical complexity then wait and expect him to repeat what you have said. Try a friendly "You say" if necessary.

Make it fun; smile a lot and talk in a pleasant voice. Help the child associate communicating with warmth, affection, and joy. ■

Do You Need To Speak Another Language To Teach English Language Learners ?

Nancy L. Giraldo • Alternative Language Services Specialist • Utah State Office of Education

People often ask: “Do you need to speak many languages to teach English Language Learners (ELLs)?” The answer is Not Really! In order to teach English as a Second Language, teachers need to know, like teaching any other subject; “What is the student mastery level on the subject? How does the learner learn best, and what are the best practices for effective teaching?”

The first step is to be able to understand the learners’ background, to be able to identify the characteristics of each stage of language acquisition, and understand the students’ behavior at each stage of acquisition. The second step is to apply best teaching practices based on research to facilitate language develop-

ment and academic achievement, so ELLs can become productive citizens in our society. The third step is to make a conscious effort to promote language acquisition and content development in every lesson taught.

An illustration of these steps is based on widely known theory on language acquisition. Terrel and Krashen proposed that the process of language acquisition takes place in a manner similar to the natural way in which we acquire our first language. The natural stages of language development, student behaviors and teacher strategies are outlined in the table below:

STAGES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION • Adapted from California Credential Training Notes and Ballard & Tighe, Publishers

Preproduction (Silent Stage)	Characteristics	Student Behavior	Teacher Strategy	Length of Time (May Vary)
	Only physical response No speech Production Minimal Comprehension up to 500 words	Produces no speech Response by gesturing or drawing Says only Yes, No, or names of other students	Use commands Asks students to show/draw answers to questions Ask yes/no questions Use manipulatives and props Show/write key words during/after oral presentations	2 weeks to two months (it may vary on the individual exposure to the language and other variables)
Early Production (Telegraphic Stage)	One or two word responses Disconnected speech Very limited comprehension Up to 1000 receptive/active word-vocabulary	Produces words in isolation Indicates comprehension physically Verbalizes key words “heard” Depends heavily on context Responds with one or two words Makes “errors of omission” Mispronounces words	Continue to expand vocabulary by the use of visuals Encourage all attempts to respond Ask information questions such as who? What? when? Which one? Use concrete objects Display print to support oral presentation	2-4 months
Speech Emergence (Simple Sentence Stage)	Simple sentences responses Connected speech Fairly good comprehension Up to 3000 receptive/active word vocabulary	Produces whole sentences Makes some pronunciation and basic grammatical errors Hears smaller elements of speech Shows good comprehension (given rich context) Functions on a social level Uses limited vocabulary	Expands students’ vocabulary by providing opportunities for individual/group practice Engages student in producing language such as describing, retelling, comparing, contrasting, defining, summarizing, reporting Ask application questions: What do you do when? How do you react when? Incorporates more writing.	1-2 years
Intermediate Fluency (Bridging Stage)	Simple/complex sentences responses Extended speech (discourse) Increased comprehension Beyond 3000 receptive/active-word vocabulary	Produces whole narration Makes complex grammatical errors Shows good comprehension Functions somewhat on an academic level Uses an expanded vocabulary	Develop cognitive academic language: oral and written Asks “why” questions soliciting opinion, judgement, prediction, hypothesis, inference, creation Engages students in problem solving situations, critical reading	Varies within the individuals background knowledge

As educators become more familiar in identifying the stages of language acquisition, and the characteristics of the students’ behavior, teachers will have some background information to develop an instructional plan for ELLs. Part of the instructional plan should include visuals, group work, hands-on, and vocabulary for all stages in addition to the strategies outlined for each language acquisition stage. I understand that these strategies are recognized as good teaching practices; however, the inclusion of these strategies in your daily teaching is

critical for ELLs. As teachers include these strategies in their lesson plans, gains in language development and academic achievement will be evident.

The exciting part of teaching English Language Learners is that we participate in creating an environment to help ELLs share your world and become productive citizens for the society. ■



Sharon Neyme • Utah SIGNAL Project

Many regions of the United States today, including Utah, are experiencing a demographic revolution. Nation-wide, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are the fastest growing group of students. The number of LEP students has grown by 104% over the past 10 years (Menken and Look, 2000),

while total student enrollment has increased by only 9.5% (Echevarria and Short, 2000). Currently, one in 11 students is identified as LEP, and that number will exceed four million this year (Menken and Look, 2000). What do these changing demographics mean? We have always been a

(ELL) program. We know from the literature that development of a second language is a function of the student's proficiency in the first language. If a student's first language acquisition is disrupted at an early age, when it is not yet fully developed, the student will suffer cognitive deficits (Cummins, 1979). This is important information for the principal. It is not uncommon for our LEP students who are new immigrants to have had little formal schooling in their native countries. They may have spent long periods of time in refugee camps or in transit and not had access to a consistent, continuous educational experience. As a result, they may begin the process of language acquisition at a disadvantage.

Setting the Stage: **Second Language and the School Principal**

nation of immigrants. Is the situation today any different? How do these trends affect the role of educators and the public school principal in particular?

The significance of these trends lies in the widening achievement gap between English and non-English proficient student populations. While the number of LEP students is growing faster than the student population as a whole, the academic achievement of limited English students is not keeping pace with their language proficient peers (Bennici and Strang, 1995). Drop-out rates between the two groups are alarmingly disparate. Research indicates that students who have difficulty speaking English have a 44% dropout rate compared to 12% for English speakers without difficulty (Young and Smith, 1997). For the school principal, this information is alarming. Faced with such a critical gap in student achievement, school principals must take action. As the instructional leader for all students in his or her building, it is the principal's responsibility to ensure an instructional program and school climate that will promote English language acquisition and maximize learning for all students. The following suggestions may help school administrators set the stage for English language acquisition of LEP students.

1. Develop an understanding of the process of second language acquisition.

Knowledge of second language acquisition issues and processes can help the principal and faculty build an effective English Language Learner

Language acquisition programs vary in their effectiveness. Bilingual education programs emphasizing first language development are generally more effective than English-only programs in the instruction of LEP students (August and Hakuta, 1997). Extended enrollment in bilingual education programs closes the achievement gap for Hispanic students (Ramirez et al., 1990). Yet in Utah, most LEP students are placed in classes where English is the only language of instruction.

Second language acquisition is a lengthy process. Conversational fluency can often be attained in 2 years, but cognitive, academic language skills take 5-7 years to acquire (Cummins, 1992). In our state, students typically receive only one to three years of language support services. An understanding of the stages and process of second language acquisition can help the principal as he or she works with faculty to develop effective language programs.

2. Be the instructional leader.

Nationally, only 2.5% of teachers who instruct LEP students have English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) or language degrees. This means that the great majority of teachers interacting with LEP students have had little formal training in instruction and assessment techniques that can facilitate learning for LEP students. As the instructional leader, the principal might assist faculty in promoting English language acquisition in the following ways:

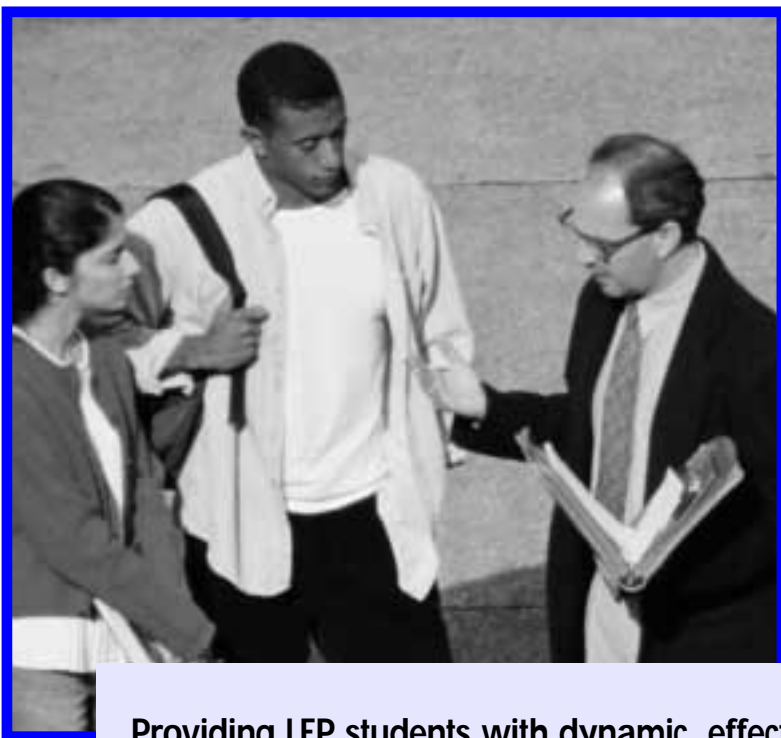
- Plan and carry out appropriate staff development. Encourage teachers to use new classroom structures and instructional delivery methods that meet the needs of diverse students. Promising strategies include sheltered instruction, alternative assessment, scaffolding, layered curriculum and other instructional practices.
- Seek additional funding, write for grants, tap into alternative funding sources. Don't wait for help to come to you. It has been my experience that there is no school funding "good fairy." Creativity and persistence can result in additional funding for alternative language and staff development programs.
- Pay attention to scheduling. Many LEP students may be unable to access content instruction because of scheduling conflicts.
- Continually examine measures of student achievement. Collect and disaggregate data to see if language minority students are experiencing success.

- Reach out to the ethnic communities in your school. Parents of diverse cultures may be unaccustomed to participating in school decisions or activities. Past experiences or current attitudes may make them feel unwelcome and hinder their participation. Efforts by the building administrator to help all families and community groups feel welcome and included will be enthusiastically rewarded.
- Enlist the help of parent and community volunteers. By actively soliciting the participation of diverse populations within the larger community, valuable alliances are formed that benefit all students.
- Work with the school media specialist to provide school information materials printed in both English and native languages. It is the responsibility of the school, not the student, to communicate with parents.
- Assign an advocate for students. This person may be a counselor, a teacher, a para-educator, parent volunteer or other committed individual who will specifically monitor the needs and progress of language minority students.

- Create an international or multicultural club. When the school recognizes and values the participation of students of diverse backgrounds, student confidence and learning increases.
- Establish student and parent support groups. Be sure to include English-speaking non-minority parents as well. As neighborhoods and communities change demographically, long-time residents may be frightened or unsure of their response to these changes. Schools can provide a non-threatening forum for diverse community members to share ideas and work together for the benefit of all students.
- Adorn the school lobby with visual representations of all cultures represented in a school. Schools that visually reflect the diversity of their students, promote community involvement and encourage learning.
- Regularly celebrate cultural differences and student individuality. By celebrating aspects of diverse cultures, the school sends a message that not only is each culture valued, but each student is important. When students feel valued, learning soars.

- Recruit language minority staff and faculty. Not only will the students benefit from positive role models, but the school will gain valuable links with parents and the larger community.

The principal today faces many challenges. Providing the instructional leadership necessary for school faculties and staff to address the specific needs of Limited English Proficient students takes careful planning, hard work and creative budgeting. As we reflect on the basic value of equality upon which this country was founded, however, we are reminded that there can be no more important role for the school principal, than to be the instructional leader for all students. Providing LEP students with dynamic, effective instruction and a school climate that embraces cultural diversity, promotes English language acquisition and benefits our nation. ■



Providing LEP students with dynamic, effective instruction and a school climate that embraces cultural diversity, promotes English language acquisition and benefits our nation.

3. Promote a school climate that encourages faculty and students to overcome language barriers.

All learning is a social activity, with both the teacher and student actively participating in the process. Efforts to create an accepting, supporting school climate for linguistic and cultural differences will promote student confidence and facilitate the language acquisition process.

- Plan to serve language minority students and families. Successful programs to address cultural and linguistic diversity do not happen by accident.

Language Acquisition

It's Not As Hard As You May Think

Have you ever listened to a two or three year old chatter away effortlessly in Chinese? Maybe you were in a line at Disneyland, or perhaps walking down the aisle at your local WalMart. The child was probably accompanied by a parent and from your perspective, they both spoke perfect jibberish! Was that parent a certified Chinese instructor? Did the child attend daily language classes to learn nouns, verbs, and basic Chinese sentence structure? Do you remember how you learned English?

Steven Krashen (1982), a leading researcher in the field of language acquisition, points out that there are some things that *all* humans do the same throughout the world. For example, the human digestion system works the same in Texas as it does in India. The same is true of language acquisition. Children naturally acquire the language they hear around them. Krashen believes that we are all born with a “language acquisition devise” that works just as automatically as our pancreas. When properly stimulated, it will work. *It is that fundamental!* Krashen has observed that as a person is exposed to massive amounts of meaningful interaction and comprehensible input, language will inevitably be acquired.

I found this to be very true in my own experience in learning Spanish as a second language. I was sure that in order to be able to speak to the people of Argentina where I lived for 16 months, I would have to study vocabulary lists, memorize verbs and their proper conjugations, and learn word-for-word



translations. It took only a few months of being completely immersed in the language to realize that I was learning Spanish just by listening and interacting with the native speakers. It was a totally incredible experience!

My complete fascination of this miracle of language acquisition prompted me to obtain my ESL endorsement. From the endorsement classes, I learned many practical applications of language acquisition to the regular and special education classroom. Here are some of the highlights:

- Language acquisition is not a linear process such as building one math skill upon another. You can start in lots of different places. Drills and grammatical explanations don't teach assimilation of the language-usage makes it happen! Massive exposure and usage coupled with lots of interaction is the best way to learn a second language-just as it was in learning the first.

Jim Cummins's research (1986) differentiates between two levels of language mastery. The first is Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS). This is considered the social language of communication. It takes two to four years to achieve enough fluency to get along comfortably in day to day living. BICS is acquired by nearly all humans. The second is Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency or CALPS. This is the more eloquent use of a language. It takes seven to ten years to become academically proficient in the new language. CALPS is needed to excel in an educational or professional setting-particularly in high school and college. Another important acronym to know is English Language Learners (ELL). This is a person in the process of learning English.

- Some of the best learning strategies for ELL students include: 1) hands on experiences, 2) the use of plentiful visual aids, 3) adhering to the more concrete concepts before advancing to the abstract, 4) providing numerous opportunities for cooperative learning and group work, 5) the use of repetition and more repetition, 6) the creative use of language chunks such as music and rhymes, 7) incorporating storytelling in many areas of the curriculum, and 8) making good use of enjoyable, highly predictable books.

The goal in the classroom is to provide lots and lots of comprehensible input. This can be accomplished in many ways such as slowing down and simplifying your presentations, using pictures, simple drawings, or real objects, using gestures to convey meaning, and activating prior knowledge whenever possible. Incomprehensible input is just *NOISE* to an ELL student.

- When a non-English speaking student enters your class, he or she will initially pass through a "silent period." This is completely normal and should be respected.



In time, the student will begin to comprehend more and more. As comprehension grows, productive vocabulary in the new language will increase. Receptive vocabulary always develops more quickly than productive vocabulary. The first few weeks will seem to be the slowest and most difficult. Once the ball gets rolling, the language momentum goes faster and faster each day. It is truly a remarkable process!

A major factor in determining how to begin teaching your ELL student is: How well prepared is the student to begin with? For example, a fourth grade Spanish speaking student moves to your school. This student can read and write on a fourth grade level in Spanish but knows little or no English. Learning to read and write in English will be much easier than for a student with little educational background in their native language. Students with mild to moderate disabilities should not be excluded from special education services because of a language barrier. On the other hand, students who do not have disabilities should not be placed in special education just because of a language barrier. The notion that ELL students need at least two years of instruction in English prior to referral is false. Language should not be the determining factor.

Utah is experiencing a tremendous influx of ELL students. In my school, for example, we have seen a 150% increase over the last five years. The need for quality educational opportunities for English Language Learners (ELL) has never been greater. Teachers all across the state must be prepared to welcome these students into their classrooms and provide comprehensible access to the core curriculum. An understanding of this magnificent human ability to acquire language will bring hope, confidence and enthusiasm as teachers take on the challenge of teaching English to speakers of other languages. Learning English as a second language may not be easy but, *it's not as hard as you may think!* ■

Language—One Light At A Time

In the recent Ron Howard movie *Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas*, movie goers meet the Grinch and some other interesting characters. Betty, (Molly Shannon) is totally immersed in her determination to out-do her neighbor, Martha May (Christine Baranski) in the town Christmas lighting competition. But Martha May owns a remarkable machine gun for Christmas lights. All she has to do is aim, press the trigger, and the Christmas lights are placed precisely where she wants them and in the quantity desired. On the other hand, Betty is painstakingly positioning her outdoor Christmas lights one-by-one. In her competitive spirit, she even takes the indoor lamp out on the roof.

Just as Martha May has a machine gun for lights, some children seem to acquire language skills as rapidly as we can fire new words at them. On the other hand there are children who are more like Betty. They work tenaciously to understand and express every single word in their limited vocabulary. To compound the problem, a small percentage of these children who struggle with language are also non-verbal. Their lack of speech may be due to cerebral palsy, autism, a traumatic brain injury, or some other type of disability. Not only do they have trouble understanding language, but they find it very difficult, if not impossible, to talk. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices may help these non-verbal students with both receptive and expressive language skills.

What are AAC devices and how can they help students who are limited in their ability to speak and understand language. AAC devices vary from free or inexpensive, low tech picture communication boards to very expensive (\$1,000 to \$9,000), high tech portable electronic communication tools. The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), is a good example of a low tech AAC system. Using pictures and symbols, the student makes choices and expresses needs through pointing at, or presenting a picture to their communication partner. For example, a non-verbal student may take a printed picture of a glass of water to his teacher to express his desire to get a drink

of water. To clarify the student's intent, the teacher may ask, "Would you like to get a drink?" The student may nod or point to another symbol that shows the word "YES." Without one word being spoken, the non-verbal student has completed a request.



Other AAC systems such as the SuperHawk Plus (\$1,275 from AdamLab), the DynaMyte (\$6,395 from Sentient Systems) and the PathFinder (\$7,995 from the Prentke Romich Company) are examples of high tech electronic AAC devices. These products produce speech through digital recording playback systems or through synthesized computer voices. For example, a non-verbal student using a SuperHawk Plus may have a button or square with a picture of a glass of water. Prior to the student using the SuperHawk Plus, a support person with clear speech would have recorded their voice into the device. When the student presses the square with the picture of a glass of water, the SuperHawk Plus says in a clear human voice, "May I please get a drink of water?" Again, a child with limited or no speech was able to complete a request through the use of their AAC system.

Craig Boogaard • The Computer Center for Citizens With Disabilities

Fortunately, not everyone needs to know the details of programming and using these AAC devices. There are 120 special educators in Utah who are willing to share this information. These special educators are part of the Utah Augmentative Alternative Assistive Communication and Technology (UAAACT) teams. UAAACT teams can evaluate students who have serious expressive language deficits and help determine the appropriate AAC device for that student.

Some recent software products from AAC vendors, *Gateway to Language and Learning* by Joan Bruno and *Word Power* by Nancy Inman, are language packages that offer tremendous support to AAC users. These packages take advantage of the fact that 100 words account for approximately 50 percent of the spoken English language. By helping a child learn to understand and express themselves through a small “core” vocabulary, we can empower them with the basics of language. Once this core vocabulary is established, speech-language pathologists (SLPs), teachers, and parents can continue to build on this language foundation. *The Gateway to Language and Learning* and *Word Power* software programs work only with AAC devices and special software from the Prentke Romich Company and DynaVox Systems.

In many respects, but only figuratively speaking, students who use AAC devices not only have their “tongues tied,” but their hands are tied too! Almost all AAC users are unable to add vocabulary to their communication tool. They either do not have the cognitive ability or they lack the physical ability to program their device. They are *totally* dependent on someone else for this service! Please think about this! What if your mind was reprogrammed today and you had to say everything you wanted to express with 100 words. Plan for 50 words in your new vocabulary to be words like iceminus, natrolite, or seropurulent words you don’t even understand. Could you teach your class or therapy group? Could you discipline a student? Could you debate an issue with your principal? Could you tell your doctor the purpose of your visit? Probably not!

AAC users desperately need a support system to add vocabulary to their device. Vocabulary selection may be the single most important factor in whether or not a student actually uses his or her device. If the words and phrases a child needs for his communication are not on their AAC device, they will eventually refuse to use their device. The ideal support system might include a peer-tutor, aide, teacher, SLP, siblings, parents, friends and grandparents. But the composition of the students’ support system is not as important as the result. The end result must be a method of selecting appropriate new vocabulary *and* programming that vocabulary into the AAC device in a timely fashion.

Regular updates of vocabulary in an AAC device are critical because the student’s communication needs change frequently. In February, Valentines Day can be a momentous occasion for a student. Wouldn’t it be nice if the child could say, “Happy Valentines!” Just before President’s Day a student may want a

phrase such as, “I can’t wait for President’s Day. I’m going sledding instead of to school.” And please consider curriculum changes. The curriculum in February may be different than what the student was studying in January. Is the vocabulary associated with the new curriculum in the child’s device or will they be talking about colors and shapes (curriculum from January) when the rest of the class is learning to count from one to ten? With each event change (curriculum, holidays, current events, seasons), specific language may be required for the student to be included in a conversation relative to that change.

Whenever possible, students who use symbols or pictures with their AAC system should also have text to supplement the picture and help the child build literacy skills. If a non-verbal student sees the word “drink” above the picture of a glass of water on his device, he may begin to associate the picture of drink with the word “drink.” This may be the student’s introduction to reading. Just as a very young, non-reading child learns that the golden arches represent the McDonalds restaurant chain, an AAC user can learn that the letter combination **d r i n k** can represent a drink of water.

In addition to using technology to communicate, students with language deficiencies may also benefit from computer software to supplement and support their language development. Computer and software provide *repetition and practice* in a friendly engaging environment. Repetition is the key to learning for many children with serious language delays. Some of my favorite software programs that help build language skills are: *Words Around Me* and *Bailey’s Book House* from Edmark, *First Words* and *First Verbs* from Laureate, *Teach Me to Talk* and *Teach Me Phonemics* from SoftTouch, *IntelliTalk II* and *IntelliPics* from IntelliTools, *Storytime Songbook* from Creative Communicating, *Language Explorer* from Nordic Software, and *all* of the “Living Books” from Broderbund.

During the month of December, electrical power companies in Utah suggested we conserve power by waiting until 8:00 p.m. to turn on outdoor Christmas lights. That may have been an appropriate energy conservation request. But let’s not limit the “language lights” of our students with disabilities by restricting their access to the tools that will empower them with communication skills. If you are aware of a child with serious language delays, you may request help from your local UAAACT team or the speech-language pathologist who serves your school. Be the one to turn on the language lights as early as possible.

For further information on the UAAACT project, using AAC devices or computer software to enhance language learning, please feel free to contact:

The Computer Center for Citizens With Disabilities
1595 West 500 South • Salt Lake City, UT 84104
Phone 801-887-9380 • Fax 801-887-9382
E-mail: cboogaar@usor.state.ut.us ■

What's the Big Deal?

Aren't All Of Our Students English Language Learners?!

Carol Harrington • Teacher Specialist • Ogden School District

I frequently hear educators utter these words. Along with the phrase, “good teaching is good teaching, these English as a Second Language (ESL) strategies are no different.” Well, there is some truth to these statements, but the whole issue deserves a closer look. In *Language, Culture and Schooling*, Denise McKeon tells us “Questions of language, culture and schooling have existed as long as there have been immigrant children entering schools in their new countries of residence (Crawford, 1989). In fact, in almost every instance where a minority group interacts with a majority school system, the relationship of language, culture and schooling merits discussion. The reason? In every country, certain groups of minority students have experienced what Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi (1986) refer to as ‘persistent disproportionate school failure.’”

Disproportionate school failure. That is the big deal. Anyone can see by examining our test scores that we have an abundance of students who aren't doing well in school. However, Second Language Acquisition is different than learning to read and write in English, when English is your native language. If you know the basics of effective instruction practices, but haven't had the experience of applying these practices to students who don't speak a word of English, then you are in for a whole new experience. Certain important issues must be considered. First, a standardized assessment of the child's English Language Proficiency is necessary. There are numerous assessment tools that can be used. One of the most commonly used throughout Utah school districts is the IPT (Idea Proficiency Test). It measures oral proficiency including listening skills, reading and writing in English. In addition to a standardized measure, it is important to be aware of the student's “stage” of language development. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Terrell (1983) developed the Natural Approach to language learning. He defined several stages of developing language skills. These stages are: preproduction, early production, speech emergence, intermediate

fluency, and fluency. Knowing which stage a learner is in, and applying strategies known to be effective with students in that stage, is an important concept.

Too often educators believe that if we (the adults) don't speak the student's language, or there isn't someone readily available who does speak the language, there is nothing we can do. There are indeed things teachers can do to achieve linguistic and academic



proficiency. To again quote McKeon, there are five basic things any teacher can do:

“First, examine and recognize your own perceptions and behaviors toward children from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As Heath (1986) states, ‘Teachers must be culturally and linguistically sensitive to the kinds of language uses they are offering students and the cognitive and academic, as well as linguistic, demands they are making of students.’ Recognize that many of the types of language skills and patterns of language usage taught in the home may be quite appropriate for inclusion in the classroom; these skills and usage patterns become the scaffolding upon which school language skills and uses are built.

Second, teachers can make their classrooms authentic. Promoting authentic communication means that language will be used in meaningful and purposeful ways. Instead of the question-answer interchanges that are so common in conventional school settings, Urzua (1989) refers to ‘milieu teaching’. Milieu teaching assumes a more conversational tone between teacher and student.

Third, integrate language teaching with content learning. Content objectives and language skills compatible with those objectives are taught concurrently, providing students with the opportunity for continued academic growth while they are learning the language.

Fourth, realize that not all second language learners are alike. They come not only with different languages, academic experiences, and cultural backgrounds but also with different expectations about the nature and purpose of school. Approaches such as cooperative learning have been shown to exhibit potential for improving the academic achievement of culturally and linguistically different students, as well improving intergroup relations (Kagan, 1986).

Finally, find someone to help you acquire the skills and knowledge that will allow you to facilitate learning. It could be that some formal training such as a workshop or course might be helpful to you. It might also be that talking with a colleague you respect who seems to have good success with students might be a source of inspiration and insight. However you choose to learn, you can be sure that you won't be in this alone. The number of second language students grows larger ever day.”

A great variety of instructional strategies and techniques, which will help teachers, have been developed. These strategies make school more rewarding for both second language students and those who teach them. And that is a big deal! ■

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Resources

Websites:

Second Language Learning: www.carta.acad.umn.edu

Growth and Development: www.keepkidshealth.com • www.kidsource.com • www.ourkids.org

Developmental Delays–Autism: www.conradsimon.org • www.autism.org

Cognitive Concepts: www.cogcon.com • www.WestEd.org • www.thearc.org

Hearing Impaired/Deaf: www.nad.org • www.indiana.edu • www.deafchildren.org

General Disabilities: www.eka.com • www.nichcy.org

Parent and Families: www.php.com • www.hpnd.org

Books:

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USOE Update



Mae Taylor
Director
At Risk and Special
Education Programs

The real new Millennium, beginning with 2001 (not a space odyssey), brings additional changes, refinements and improvements to USOE staff activities. Outlined are some of the newest major activities.

USOE Staff Changes

Karen Kowalski, formerly Assistant Superintendent and Director of Special Education in North Sanpete School District, joined the staff November 1, 2000, as the new special education specialist for programs for the emotionally disturbed and mental health issues. She brings to our staff a wealth of experience as Special Education Director, Title 1 Director, elementary principal, school psychologist, and long-time school district office administrator. One of Karen's first major activities is making revisions to the Least Restrictive Behavioral Interventions (LRBI) document which, when drafted and public comment is received, will be included as an addendum to the USOE Special Education Rules. She is further involved as the liaison between the Division of Mental Health and the Children's Mental Health section in the State Department of Human Services and public school issues involving mental health. This includes serving as a liaison with the local mental health organizations and the State Hospital Youth Center programs for students with emotional disturbance.

Susan Loving began employment on January 8, 2001, as the new special education specialist for transition programs. Susan comes to us from Tooele County School District where she worked for almost twenty years as a speech/language pathologist, and has been the district's transition coordinator for the past nine years. She brings a rich experience as a speech/language pathologist in several other states, prior to settling in the great state of Utah.

Nancy Giraldo is the new specialist for Alternative Language Services (ALS) within our At Risk Services Unit, coordinated by Patricia Bradley. Nancy comes to us especially well qualified, having formerly worked for USOE in time-limited contracts for Alternative Language Services. She worked in the Office of Education in Rhode Island as a program consultant for elementary ESL programs and directed an ESL program at Bryant College in Rhode Island. She has most recently been an ALS Specialist in Granite School District. Nancy was born and raised in Columbia and came to the United States as a young college student at BYU. She is busy revamping the state ALS rule and procedures, developing inservice training materials and reorganizing the ALS program functions.

Federal IDEA Funding for Special Education

As you know, school districts received a sizable increase in IDEA Part B funds for the current school year in the school-age flow-through, the preschool flow-through and local capacity building discretionary monies. This increase in funds has proved beneficial to school districts. Preliminary information from the federal government indicates that a significant increase will also be authorized for the coming fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2001 (FY '02). When we have definitive data to share with school districts we will make preliminary funding estimates available.

Other Activities of USOE

Inservice training in the new *USOE Special Education Rules* continues with Brenda Broadbent, our State and Federal Compliance Specialist, providing inservice throughout the state, with other state office staff members assisting in this process when possible. Brenda, as well as the USOE technical assistants for special education for each district, is available to provide inservice on the new Rules by request. USOE's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) efforts continue under the leadership of Bruce Schroeder, who is the USOE Specialist for CSPD as well as director of Utah's SIGNAL (State Improvement Grant) Project. Under the leadership of Bruce and Nan Gray, Coordinator of the Special Education Services Unit, work will continue throughout the spring to coordinate and collaborate between all personnel development activities of USOE and our related projects.

IDEA Reauthorization

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is scheduled to be reauthorized by Congress in year 2002. Although Part B of the Act is permanently authorized, amendments are periodically proposed as Congress looks at the reenactment of existing laws, and examines parts of the law that are not permanently authorized, such as Part C (Early Intervention). The federal (OSEP) office and professional and advocacy organizations are beginning immediately to consider changes or modifications that need to be made in the course of reauthorization. The National CEC organization is already working on this as is NASDSE (The National Association of State Directors of Special Education). Since I was elected to the Board of Directors of NASDSE this past fall, the Board has begun gathering information regarding areas of IDEA that appear to need modification or reconsideration in the reauthorization process. I will welcome input from anyone regarding recommendations for additions, modifications or deletions as you have seen the need emerge during the past years since IDEA was last reauthorized and modified in 1997. The ideas must be developed quickly, with the intent of having all recommendations prepared by late spring. Parties interested in submitting suggestions to me may either phone, write or e-mail me at the number listed in the back of this publication. ■

FAQ's:

Your Questions...Our Answers

Q: Do children that have a clinical diagnosis of autism automatically qualify for services, and if they come to us with a diagnosis, do we still have to conduct further evaluations?

A: There are no automatic qualifiers for special education and related services, in autism, or any of the other categories. There are three standards that must be met in order for a student to qualify as a student with a disability.

- The student must have one of the identified disabilities as outlined in our state rules beginning on page 18.
- That disability must adversely affect the educational performance of the student.
- The student, because of the disability, and the adverse affect on educational performance, must require special education and related services.

Remember that a diagnosis is not required to qualify for the educational classification of autism. Evaluation teams must follow the outlined eligibility and evaluation requirements in the state rules, and then determine if that student meets the criteria for classification, and services. As a word of caution, remember to be very clear with parents that school teams do not diagnose; rather, teams determine educational eligibility and classification for special education and related services.

Part two of the question deals with what, if any, evaluation must be conducted when the student comes to the team with evaluations from other sources. The evaluation team is to use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant, functional and developmental information about the student, including considering information provided to the team by the parent. The evaluation team must evaluate in all areas of suspected disability. The team must review all of the evaluation data that exists for that student, determine if all needed data are there, and if not conduct those needed assessments, observations etc. If all of the data that are needed to either determine that a student is,

or is not a student with a disability are present, no further evaluation is needed. Refer to the evaluation section of the State Rules beginning on page 14.

Q: Must the related servers attend the IEP meetings?

A: The standard special education answer-It depends. If your district

policies and procedures dictate that related service providers attend IEP meetings, then follow that policy. If not, use the following to make that decision. If a student with a disability has an identified need for related services, it would be appropriate for the related service personnel to attend the meeting, or otherwise be involved in developing the IEP. This could be through written recommendation concerning the nature, frequency, and amount of service to be provided. This written recommendation could become part of the evaluation report. The State Rules do not specifically say that related service providers must attend the meeting, but are included in the rule regarding-"At least one special education teacher of the student or, if appropriate, at least one special education provider of the student" (III.E.3. - page 41) and also in the rule outlining "individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student." (III.E.6-page 42) As always, it is a team decision as to who attends the IEP meeting.

As a side note, the Federal Committee Reports on the IDEA Amendments of 1997 say "related services personnel should be included on the team when a particular related service will be discussed at the request of the child's parents or the school". Committee Reports often reflect the intent of implementing the federal regulations.

Q: Does the IEP have to specify the exact amount of service, or can it simply list the services that will be provided? Also, can the amount of time be listed as a range?

A: The amount of service to be provided must be written on the IEP, so the parents and all who are involved in the development and implementation of the IEP have a clear understanding of what will be provided. The IEP must clearly state what the district's commitment of resources will be. The services to be provided can be listed as a range, only if the IEP team determines that stating the amount of services as a range is necessary to meet the unique needs of the child. For example, services that are needed only under certain circumstances, such as the occurrence of a seizure, or of a particular behavior. A statement of why the range of time is used should also be on the IEP. A range of services cannot be used because of personnel shortages, or uncertainty regarding the availability of services. If in doubt, state the amount of time, as the team anticipates will be needed, then if the needs of the student changes, reconvene the IEP team to adjust the time to reflect the student needs. ■



Brenda Broadbent • Specialist • Utah State Office of Education

Language Acquisition



lan·guage (lang_gwij) n. *Abbr.* lang.
1.a. The aspect of human behavior that involves the use of vocal sounds in meaningful patterns and, when they exist, corresponding written symbols to form, express, and communicate thoughts and feelings...
3. Any method of communicating ideas, as by a system of signs, symbols, gestures, or the like...

Key to human relationships is the ability to use language to communicate ideas, what we think and feel. But developing the tools for communication—speech and language—are not entirely the same thing. Communication challenges can be very demoralizing, making you feel diminished as a person when it is difficult to connect with others in this very basic way.

Anne:

I was served in the early intervention, preschool and elementary programs of the extension programs of the Utah School for the Deaf (USD). In junior high, I was enrolled as a student of USD but attended general education classes almost all day. During my junior high years at Churchill Junior High, I received recognition for my academic accomplishments. My teacher from the USD asked me, “Have you ever thought of going to your neighborhood school?” I didn’t think this was a choice that was available to me! I had to ask myself, “Do I want to do this? Can I do it? What do I need to be able to do to be successful?” Because I’m deaf, I felt that there could be lots of barriers. I would be on my own without a teacher of the deaf to

pave the way for me. I would have to communicate with teachers, specialists, and administrators. I would have to make new friends and would not have the support of my deaf friends. I thought I would be okay because I had learned to use my “residual hearing” and to use my voice to speak and communicate. All of my life my parents, family, teachers and others had encouraged me to try anything that I wanted to do. I believed (and still do!) that I can do just about anything if I’m willing to work hard enough at it.

I realized that I was ready for more challenging academic classes. I also recognized that how successful I would be would depend a great deal on how successfully I could communicate my needs, what I know and what I need to learn. I knew I was missing a lot of information by lip-reading. I needed to consider other ways for me to overcome this barrier. I needed to consider using the tool of sign language to receive information and also to communicate. At first, I didn’t want to use sign, but, thanks to my mom’s encouragement and the support and help of school personnel, I realized that this was an important communication tool for me. Looking back to that time, I realize what a tremendous language tool sign was for me. My vocabulary grew dramatically and my understanding of more complex academics increased. I worried that it would adversely affect my interactions with other students. I’m grateful for the skill and confidence to use my voice to communicate—even though my speech is hard to understand sometimes. I’m also grateful to have the invaluable ability to communicate more easily through an interpreter. I appreciate those who challenged my opinions about sign language. Sometimes it was hard (and still is) to be the “special” one—to be “different.” I also used my oral skills to try to show ability, capability and to share an awareness of deafness with others. As my language skills developed, my understanding obviously improved. I had more confidence. My relationships improved. I was very determined and had a great desire to do this because I received so much positive support.

Now as an adult who uses American Sign Language more and more, I find that I have to work hard at maintaining good English language skills. I try to always improve my written English skills. I realize how important it is to be proficient in the English language.

Anne Post Fife with Helen W. Post • Utah Parent Center

What helped me:

- Patience, patience, patience! Acquiring language required a great deal of patience!...Infinite patience from me, my parents, teachers, therapists, interpreters, administrators, etc...
- People who weren't afraid to try different ways of communicating information to me – repeating information, using all of my senses – speech, hearing, sight, touch, written word, rephrasing or restating...whatever it took to help me understand!
- Being surrounded by people who were supportive and positive, who gave me lots of encouragement and positive reinforcement. I really appreciated anyone who helped me recognize and celebrate progress as well as the accomplishment of speech and language goals.
- Teachers and other professionals who recognized how individualized needs are and how hard it can be to develop language and communication skills – articulation, expression, etc. Every child with language and communication needs is different.
- Teachers and professionals with the interest, expertise, and experience to specialize in the language development needs that I have. I really appreciate willing teachers and professionals who didn't have the specific training to address my language development needs, but were willing to find out who the specialists were in the school and in the district who could help them. I needed every one of my teachers to become more aware of my language needs and to be willing to learn some basic skills that would help me. Remember to ask kids what helps them!
- People around me who challenged me to do what they didn't think I could do!

Helen:

We remember wondering if Anne would ever have words or sentences – whether expressed verbally, in the written word or through sign. We truly couldn't understand how she could acquire language and/or speech when she couldn't hear – her profound hearing loss seemed to be too significant!

What helped us:

- We really appreciated professionals who provided information, training and support to us so that as parents of a young daughter with language and communication needs, we could acquire the knowledge and skills needed to help our child learn to communicate. They recognized how important it was that we understood all of the information and repeated it until we understood and engaged in the process. They were demanding of our time and required a real commitment. But they also demonstrated infinite patience as they tried to make it as easy as possible for us to understand what we needed to do. They held us accountable for our role of practicing, monitoring and encouraging Anne as her language developed and milestones were accomplished. We really believe that parent training is effective because it takes advantage of the way that children naturally learn to communicate, through interaction with their parents. By



giving us information on how to create enriched, interactive language learning environments, professionals helped us meet the challenges presented by Anne. This would help any parent help their child who is a reluctant communicator, as well as those who are language delayed, hearing impaired or deaf.

- Regular and consistent communication with professionals. I remember receiving a note from her teacher – followed by a phone call – explaining that “Anne learned ___ sound today! Mom, do you know what a significant accomplishment this is? She cannot hear the sound...but she has learned to say it and recognizes it in different positions in words!” We didn't understand a great deal about language development...but we learned! We appreciated the gentle, persistent tutoring by professionals! We appreciated that we celebrated progress and didn't just focus on what she couldn't do!

Anne and Helen - What helped us all:

Our understanding of and commitment to language development and communication is captured in this favorite quote:

“The heart of communication is not words but understanding and understanding is a joint process. It takes two to complete it. Effective communication moves freely in both directions. It implies not only to be understood, but to understand.”

–Source Unknown ■

And the winner is...



Imagine with me for a minute that you are a commentator, not just any commentator but the commentator for a very special sport. Your team consists of 3 to 5 year olds, who are very involved in the game and love having fun. While on a business trip I notice several of the teams are present and, for the most part, all the teams seem to be the same; laughing, having fun and talking a great deal. There is one team that is of concern to you – they are laughing, and seem to be having fun but something is a little different. They are not talking; oh a few words here and there, but mainly they use gestures. After having worked in the field for such a long time you know this team needs a little help or they might struggle in this big game. Being the great commentator you are, you know just what they and their coach need. You decide to approach the coach and offer some advice and some techniques.

You first begin by explaining that language is an essential part of this game, the game of life. You explain there are many theories on how players learn language; from the empiricist theory that language is acquired through the pairing of verbal behavior with positive situations, thus language is learned only through experiences; to the nativist theory that believes that language acquisition is innate and physiologically predetermined. Your personal belief is that it is something of a mixture. It takes both the physiological structures and experiences to acquire language and make a good player.

Given the above information you now give the coach some techniques to help his players acquire language. It is well thought that children who have delayed language will still use the same process to learn language as a young child without delays. We speak to children from the time they are born. Infants learn early in life how to communicate their wants and needs to those around them. Many times they use gestures and vocalizations. As the infant grows it is through repeated routines, and being exposed over and over again to labels for objects and actions that they begin to replace those gestures and vocalizations with simple words. You explain next there are 5 indirect language stimulation techniques that can be used to help children learn language. Those five techniques are:

- **Description:** Description is describing for the child the object or what the object is doing that they are playing with. For example: “The dog is barking.” Description is very much object centered.
- **Parallel talk:** Parallel talk is very similar to description but is much more child centered. In parallel talk you are describing what

the child is doing, seeing or hearing as the child does it. For example: “You have a car. You rolled the car.”

- **Self talk:** Self talk is where you talk about what you are doing while the child is watching. For example: “I’m washing my hands. Put soap on hands. Wash, wash, wash.”
- **Expansion:** Expansion is adding more information to what the child has already said, without direct correction. For example: If the child is playing with a ball and says “ball,” the adult can say: “Yes, it is a ball,” or the adult could say “It is a yellow ball.”
- **Expansion-plus** which is used after the child begins to make their own baby sentences. The adult adds one or more short sentences to what the child said. For example: If the child says “green shoe,” the adult can say: “Yes, you have your green shoe,” “It’s a new shoe.”

You remind that coach that children use language to request objects, reject objects, label objects, declare or make a statement about an object, or as greetings. It is very important to give children many opportunities to practice using language in many of the above ways. The more time they have seeing others use language and the more practice they have in natural, non-threatening situations the easier it will be for them to acquire language. When giving children experiences at using language don’t make it demanding on them, make it fun, exciting and rewarding. You also go over with the coach how language development is “made possible by the presence of an interpreting adult who operates as a provider, and expander and idealizer of utterances while interacting with the child” (Bruner, 1975). It is important for the child to feel heard.

Being a good commentator you remind that coach of a few key points while using these techniques and promoting language in general. You remind the coach that children love repetition; you as the coach might get bored saying the same things over and over and labeling things time and time again but children need that to learn language. You also remind that coach that it is important to remember that it is natural for us to ask questions, but to ask lots of questions of a child learning language can be confusing and intimidating for that child. You know at this point the coach realizes his team still has a chance of acquiring language and succeeding in this BIG game.

“You could say that the adult acts like a sports announcer, “calling the action,” describing what’s going on, without interfering in the game, by asking questions” (Glenn Weybright, 1985). ■

winner is...

A Collaborative, Literature-Based Preschool Classroom

The Preschool Program for Children with Developmental Delays in Logan District is twelve years old this year. Much like the children we serve, our program has gone through growing pains and several stages of development. For the past five years, the special-education teacher and speech-language pathologist (SLP) have worked collaboratively to develop a literature-based curriculum. This collaboration has created a fun, language-rich classroom in which children and teaching staff alike enjoy participating.

We begin each week by meeting together and selecting the book we will use in the classroom the following week. When selecting a book for the week we ask:

- Will it hold the children's interest?
- Does it emphasize language concepts consistent with the children's I.E.P. goals?
- Will it be easy for the children to understand?
- Is it repetitive?
- Is it a good read-aloud book?

After selecting a book, we brainstorm fun activities which correspond with the story and address the children's needs and specific I.E.P. objectives.

For each of our preschool days, we plan three small-group activities that focus on the development areas of: articulation, language, academics, cognition, fine and gross motor skills, and social-self-help skills.

A typical classroom day begins with the children coming in, hanging up their coats and backpacks, and

finding their names on a bulletin board. The teacher waits on the rug, getting ready to begin the opening large-group activity. The "teacher" role alternates between the special-education teacher and the SLP. Both engage the children in language-enhancing activities such as having the children:

- Sing the "Hello" song, to be able to say, sign or augmentally communicate their name;
- Sing the "If This Is Your Name Stand-Up" song in order to recognize their names and the letters from them; and
- Answer questions about their ages, gender, parents' names, phone numbers, and addresses, and respond to 2-3 step directions.

Continued pg. 32



Judy Straquadine, Speech/Language Pathologist • Jan Jarrett • Logan School District

Following the opening activity we read the story selected for the week. After reading the story, the children identify pictures in the book; name some of the characters, objects, and actions in the story; and role play using props and pictures. The teacher then introduces the three small-group activities that relate to the story. Each of the activities is modeled by the teacher using language-building techniques such as self and parallel talk, expansions and cloze procedures. Large group is completed as the children choose small-group activity in which they would like to start.

As each child completes an activity, they excitedly move to the next. The teacher, SLP, or a classroom aide is there to guide the children through the activities. During each of the activities, language development is fostered by talking about what the child is doing, what materials are being used, introducing new vocabulary, and listening to and expanding the sentences the child says.

After the children have completed all three of the small-group activities, they line up for large motor time. Whenever possible, this activity is related to the story as well.

As the week progresses, each of the days begin in much the same way, with a large-group time where the SLP or special-education teacher reads the chosen book of the week. A variety of small-group activities are planned throughout the week which relate to the story in order for the children in the classroom with reduced speech and language skills to learn multiple language concepts throughout their preschool day.

By the end of the school day each child has had the opportunity to learn new vocabulary, use words in sentences, respond to questions, follow a variety of directions, and interact with peers—all meaningful integrated context related to a storybook that he or she enjoyed.

Our literature-based curriculum and our collaborative approach continues to evolve for the benefit of the children and the teaching staff. We believe that this approach is a great way to meet the needs of the children and lots of fun for the staff working in the program. ■



TEACHER MENTORING: The Principal and Trust

Steve Barkley • Performance Learning Systems, Inc.



Steven Barkley has been involved in education as a teacher, consultant, program designer, and facilitator for the last 28 years, and is currently Executive Vice-President of Performance Learning Systems, Inc. Steve is an energetic and motivating speaker, as those of you who attended the January 2000 Mentor Conference can attest to. We are pleased to bring Steve back to the Utah Teacher Mentor Academy this month to present to the current mentors on Mentoring and Leadership.

Experienced teachers remember those first months of their first teaching assignment. The excitement, the fear; the challenge, the confusion; the wish for wise counsel. With this in mind, more and more schools are implementing mentor programs that pair beginning teachers with experienced colleagues. Principals realize that mentors are crucial to the survival, effectiveness, and satisfaction of beginning teachers and that they help to quickly create a trusting environment. Even Odysseus, the wisest of the Greek heroes, needed counsel from his trusted friend, Mentor.

Principals should initiate the mentoring process by clearly stating how the mentoring relationship will operate. While the building of a relationship between the mentor and the beginning teacher is vital, I want to focus on the role of the principal in the mentoring dynamic. It is essential that the principal promote the development of trust based on “confidentiality, consistency, risk-taking, honesty, sincerity, and a climate of mutual exchange” (McBride and Skeu, 1995). Trust is built when people are true to their word. Trust is broken when someone feels that actions do not match the promises. In such an environment, risk-taking is reduced and opportunities for growth in performance are missed.

The novice teacher naturally looks to the principal for guidance, “but this changes as the question of formal

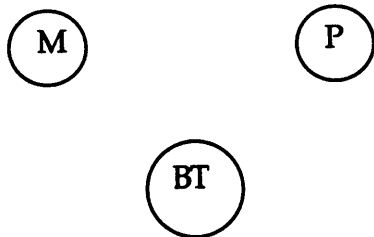
evaluation occurs” (Bercik, 1994). Principals can avoid this confusion and uncertainty by appointing an experienced teacher to serve as an ongoing mentor. “A mentor becomes a source of support only when not seen as threatening or evaluative” (Bercik, 1994).

Continued pg. 34



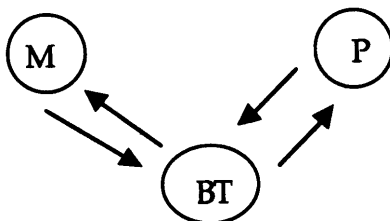


When setting up a mentor program, I recommend that the mentor, beginning teacher, and their principal meet to identify how they will work with each other, how they will communicate. I ask them to draw a diagram showing the flow of communication between the three of them



Here are some responses that I received.

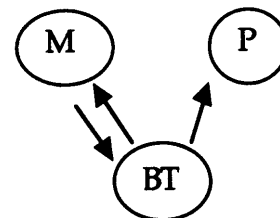
MODEL NUMBER ONE



In this diagram there is two way communication between the mentor and beginning teacher, and between the principal and beginning teacher. There is no discussion between the mentor and the principal. This assures the beginning teacher that nothing he or she shares with the mentor will get back to the principal. Some beginning teachers feel more open to share weaknesses, and

to ask the mentor for help knowing that no information is shared with the principal who will do the evaluation. For example, a principal might tell a beginning teacher to address different learning styles in his or her lessons. The teacher who has no idea how to accomplish this directive would turn to the mentor for insights and the principal would be unaware of this gap in his/her knowledge.

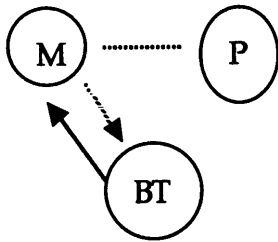
MODEL NUMBER TWO



This structure provides the same safeguards for the beginning teacher-the freedom to be open and yet secure that no information is being passed to the principal. The beginning teacher is free to discuss whatever he/she chooses with the principal but the mentor does not share information about the beginning teacher. Some mentoring teams feel that this model allows the principal to share with the mentor areas of concern about the performance of the beginning teacher. This could give greater clarity to the mentor's work because the mentor would hear first hand the principal's concerns rather than hearing them through the filter of the beginning teacher. It would be permissible for the principal to say to the mentor, "Joe really needs to tighten his planning.

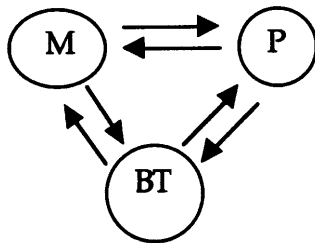
I'm not sure he is connecting the learning activities to the district assessments." For the principal to ask, "How's it going?" is considered a foul.

MODEL NUMBER THREE



This model was recently introduced to me by a mentor team in one of my workshops. They called it the broken arrow model. Similar to model #2 it has the mentor discussing instances of positive growth on the part of the beginning teacher with the principal. If the principal asks, "How's it going?" only positive points are shared. The mentor would say, "Jan has just completed a great unit on the environment. You should ask to see it."

MODEL NUMBER FOUR



Many mentoring teams feel that this model is crucial for a truly valuable mentoring experience — full communication among all three. This model works when everyone is convinced that the beginning teacher's success is everyone's goal. In this model the beginning teacher might say to both the principal and the mentor, "I know you are both interested in my success. Where do you think my focus for growth should be?"

I strongly believe that full communication should be the ultimate goal of all mentoring relationships. Yet, I know that people's backgrounds, experiences, confidence levels, skill levels, and the constraints of time often make that very difficult. It is better to work with Model One (no communication between mentor and principal) with trust than with model four (full communication) with no trust.

The key to initial trust building is to select a model (or develop your own) and then follow the model you have chosen by being true to your word. The team could meet at any time to add lines of communication to their

model as trust is built. By clearly following what we have agreed to we demonstrate that trust is warranted.

As an additional return for this effort principals and mentors will be modeling for the beginning teacher how building trust is key to creating a learning environment—an important skill for the teacher to implement in his/her classroom.

Positive team building among beginning teacher, mentor, and principal can have an equally positive impact on the entire school climate. ■

Steve Barkley
Performance Learning Systems, Inc.
466 Old Hook Rd., 25-26
Emerson NJ-07630
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UMTA Mentors:

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Provide personnel development training to other educators which support validated educational practices.

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Promote student success for students with disabilities.

Focus on educational models that reflect teacher and student accountability.

Maintain a knowledge base of information on current educational research that can be applied to the mentor's setting.

Share knowledge with others to achieve the goal of success for all.

FREE

Teen Art Workshops



**Julie Newland • Programming Coordinator
VSA Arts of Utah (Art Access)**

Art Access/VSA arts of Utah offers free Teen Art Workshops. Six 12-hour workshops with professional artists will be held from March through August 2001 in the Art Access Gallery. The workshops are open to teens with and without disabilities. Please call 328-0703 for more information and registration forms.

For more information, please contact:

Julie Newland
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339 West Pierpont Avenue
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julie@accessart.org ■



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- Mishele Carroll • Project Specialist, BEST.....mishelec@provo.K12.ut.us
- Danelle Keith • Project Specialist, UPI.....danellek@provo.k12.ut.us
- Loydene Hubbard-Berg • Project Specialist, UPI.....loydeneh@provo.k12.ut.us

Utah Parent Center

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- Helen Post, Director.....upc@inconnect.com

Back Cover Photo:

Mentor site visit to Book Cliff Elementary in Green River, Utah. J.R. Jones (mentor) staffs with Principal Larry Rowley, Diane Chandler and her dog, Hope, and Nancy Bentley, a member of the Active Re-entry Program. J.R. will be using Hope to accomplish personal goals of eight students, ie., OT/PT, self-esteem, listening and writing skills and empathy.

Utah

Professional Development

Calendar 2000-2001*

February 2001

- 1 LEAD Meeting. Location to be announced.
Contact Tom Walker (435) 586-2804.
- 2 Consortium, Salt Lake Airport Hilton.
Contact Ted Kelly (801) 374-4934 or Jerry Christensen (801) 272-3431.
- 7 Southern Regional Transition Conference,
Dixie Conference Center, St. George.
Contact Don Olsen 435-743-5680.
- 15-16 Inclusion Network Support Teams.
Contact Danelle Keith (801) 274-5285.
- 21 State Transition Roundtable. Location to be announced.
Contact Susan Loving (801) 538-7645.
- 22-23 Mentor Training, West Coast Hotel at Salt Lake.
Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.
- 22-23 BEST, Sheraton Hotel at the International Center.
Contact Natalie Allen (801) 274-5285.
- 30 Student Assistance Conference, Ogden, UT

March 2001

- 7-9 Instructional Leadership...in the 21st Century,
Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City.
Contact (800) 531-0082.
- 15-16 BEST, Ogden Marriott.
Contact Natalie Allen (801) 274-5285.
- 16 Northern Region Transition Conference, Ogden Eccles
Conference Center, Ogden, UT.
Contact Sue Loving (435) 830-6577.
- 22-23 Mentor Training, West Coast Hotel at Salt Lake.
Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.
- 26-30 SARS Week
- 29-31 21st Annual National Conference American Council
on Rural Special Education, Town and Country Resort
Hotel, San Diego, California.
Contact ACRES Headquarters, (785) 532-2737.
- 30 Utah CEC Fund Raiser Golf Scrambler. Dixie Red Hills
Golf Course, St. George, Utah.
Contact Karen Medlin 801-567-8294.
- 30 Teacher Recruitment Fair. Ramada Conference Center,
St. George. Contact Tracy Knickerbocker
801-272-3431.
- 31 Educator Wellness Fair, sponsored by Utah CEC ,
Snow Canyon Middle School, St. George, Utah.
Contact Tracy Knickerbocker 801-272-3431.

April 2001

- 17-22 CEC Annual Convention & Expo. Kansas City, MO.
Contact CEC (888) 232-7733.
- 19-20 Suicide Conference
- 31 Inclusion Network Support Teams.
Contact Danelle Keith (801) 274-5285.

- 27 Color Country Regional Transition Conference,
College of Eastern Utah, Price, Utah.
Contact Tony Done (435) 678-1222.

May 2001

- 3 LEAD meeting. Jones Center, Salt Lake City.
Contact Tom Walker (435) 586-2804.
- 4 Consortium, Salt Lake Airport Hilton.
Contact Ted Kelly (801) 374-4934 or
Jerry Christensen (801) 272-3431.
- 9-11 Troubled Youth Conference
- 17-18 Mentor Training, West Coast Hotel at Salt Lake.
Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.
- 17-18 BEST, Prospector Square, Park City.
Contact Natalie Allen (801) 274-5285.

*This information is provided as a service. We believe it to be accurate, but it is important to confirm with the contact listed. To obtain additional information and to supply important upcoming dates, please contact us at the number below. Current information is also available at the ULRC web site www.ulrc.org.

Letter to the Editor

“Thank you for the new look, and improved content of the Special Educator. Not only does it look more professional, but there are great practical classroom ideas for those in the trenches. I often find myself tearing out articles to share with colleagues when we need ideas for classrooms. I appreciate how you have made a good publication even better, and I look forward to receiving the magazine every month. Keep up the good work!”

*Barbara Graves
Provo School District*

Call For Articles

The Utah Special Educator publishes articles and announcements that are of interest to our readers by special education oriented organizations and educational institutions within the State of Utah. Announcements are limited to one half page in length. Articles and announcements must be received by the following dates for publication:

March: Reading • Due February 9th

May: Math • Due March 30th

Contact Cheryl Hostetter, Editor, *The Utah Special Educator*, 2290 E. 4500 S., #220, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117
(801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624 in Utah.

The Utah Special Educator is a symbol of the leadership of Dr. R. Elwood Pace
Whose vision made the Consortium, the ULRC and this journal possible.

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The Utah Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children serves, represents, strengthens, and leads professional, and others to empower individuals with exceptionalities.

For additional information contact Dr. Steve Hirase
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Stories from the Road!

See Pg.37



L-R: J.R. Jones (Teacher/Mentor),
Larry Rowley (Principal),
Diane Chandler and her dog, Hope,
Nancy Bently, Book Cliff
Elementary, Green River, Utah

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

