Listening Centers

Listening centers, when paired with technology, become very ESOL friendly! It’s easy to differentiate them and they can be easily paired with other curricular objectives to lend extra background support in other subjects. You will notice that each center uses all four WIDA domains, listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Here are some examples:

**Kindergarten: Refrigerator Stories**

These “stories” were written to reinforce key sight words or spelling patterns. They feature short, predictable sentences with lots of visual support, which are perfect for students that need extra support when reading. It allows kindergarten and level 1 ESOL students at any grade level the independence to read text on their own while allowing them to practice sight words and spelling patterns.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to a video of the teacher reading the story aloud, pointing to each word as it is being read. The directions for the rest of the activity are then read aloud and the sight word is shown to the students. (LISTENING)
2. Students are given a laminated copy of the story with the sight word replaced by lines. Students then write in the sight word onto the blank lines in the story. (WRITING)
3. Students then practice reading the story with the sight words in it. (READING)
4. Students sign in to SeeSaw and make a video journal post of themselves reading their paper. Special attention will be made to them pointing to each word as they read. (SPEAKING)

   - *To make this a blended learning activity, teachers project one person’s SeeSaw post on the Smart Board each day during the week and listen to it as a class. This allows students to be the “teachers” for a while, and gives our ELL students the chance to read aloud in front of the class without the fear of having to read on the spot.*

**First Grade: Rebuilding Poems**

Much like the Kindergarten refrigerator story, the poems are meant to be read aloud and then rebuilt by students. But, unlike refrigerator stories, these poems feature a word family.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to a video of the teacher reading the poem aloud. The directions for the rest of the activity are shown to the students and the word bank is read aloud. (LISTENING)
2. All the word family words in the poem have been replaced by lines and the students are given a laminated copy of the poem with those blanks. Students then replace each line by writing the missing word family word directly on their poem page. (READING/WRITING)
3. Students then make a list of all the words that fit that word family and write 2-3 additional words that also fit the pattern but were not in the original poem. (WRITING)
4. Students then practice reading their rebuilt poem. They can go back and listen to the poem again to check that they have the correct words on the lines. (READING)
5. Students sign in to SeeSaw and make a video journal post of themselves reading their poem and their word list. (SPEAKING)

   - *To make this a blended learning activity, students add their additional word family words to a class word cloud. A QR code to this word family is then posted in the room so that students looking for words with that word ending can use it as reference.*
Listening Centers, Continued

Second Grade: Listening to a story

Students listen to a story read aloud that their teacher has pre-recorded. Students should be able to see the text as it is being read so that what they are hearing is being reinforced by what they are reading. Students will be working with a partner.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to a video of the story being read aloud...but, the teacher will stop reading at a key point in the story. The remaining directions are also read aloud. (LISTENING)
2. Students will make a prediction about what they think will happen next in the story by writing a sentence or paragraph (depending on level) and tell that prediction to their partner. (SPEAKING)
3. Students will then write independently to explain what they think will happen next in the story. (WRITING)
4. Students read their paper to their partner and make changes as needed. (READING/SPEAKING/LISTENING)
5. Students will then independently record themselves reading their paper as a video journal post in SeeSaw. (SPEAKING)
   - To make this a blended learning activity, students listen to other people’s responses in SeeSaw and leave a verbal response to that person’s post.

Upper Elementary: Author’s Purpose

Students listen to a story recorded in an online program (e.g. ReadWorks, RAZ Kids, PebbleGo, Storyline Online) and reflect upon the author’s purpose.

1. Students use QR code to listen to an online story with audio entitled “Recycling and Conservation: Why Recycle?.” (LISTENING)
2. Students are given a laminated copy of the passage to follow along. Students will then use the recording function in SeeSaw to read the first paragraph with expression (READING/SPEAKING).
3. Students will explain the author’s purpose using evidence from the text. Students will write their response using the journal function in SeeSaw (WRITING)
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Writing Centers

Writing centers, when paired with technology, become multi-dimensional and allow students the ability to practice all 4 WIDA domains wherein a typical writing center may usually focus on only 2. Here are some examples:

Kindergarten: Sort and Draw

Kindergarteners can be at very different levels in writing. Some may draw full picture stories, while others scribble, and still others may be ready to write a short sentence. Using open centers like this make it easy for teachers to differentiate for each student by allowing them to work up to their own level without limiting them.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to a video to build background. (LISTENING)
2. Students are given a paper that they need to sort based on one attribute, in this case, things that you would find at the grocery store. Students open the “secret” answer sheet and connect via QR code to listen as the teacher reads the words aloud for students to build background vocabulary. The “secret” paper becomes a “word wall” that students can use for writing. (READING)
3. Students are then asked to “write” to show something else they would find at the store. Keep in mind, this might be a sentence, a word, or a drawing. They might even choose to copy a word or letter from the “word wall” page. (WRITING)
4. Students then practice reading their “writing”. (READING)
5. Students sign in to SeeSaw and make a video journal post of themselves reading (or explaining) what they have written on their paper. Special attention will be made to them pointing to each word they wrote as they read. (SPEAKING)

• To make this a blended learning activity, teachers project one person’s SeeSaw post on the Smart Board each day during the week and listen to it as a class. This allows students to be the “teachers” for a while, and gives our ELL students the chance to read aloud in front of the class without the fear of having to read on the spot. Any new words that students come up with could be added to the class anchor chart for those category words.

First Grade: My Favorite

Writing about their favorite things allows students to tap into their own background knowledge while building vocabulary for written words. This activity allows students to choose what they will write about while guiding them to using related vocabulary words. It also incorporates all 4 WIDA domains so that it is not a piece of writing that lives only in their writing journal, but instead becomes a meaningful, blended learning activity.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to an online background video. The directions for the rest of the activity are read aloud. (LISTENING)
2. Students draw something(s) that would fit in with the category shown. Pictures should be labeled with the vocabulary word(s). Then, students write a sentence or paragraph (depending on their level of skill) to say what their favorite thing (or things) would be. A sentence frame can be included for scaffolded support. (WRITING)
3. Students practice reading their writing until they are confident reading it. (READING)
4. Students sign in to SeeSaw and make a video journal post of themselves showing their drawing and explaining why they included it. Then they read their paper. (SPEAKING)

• To make this a blended learning activity, students add their drawings to a class anchor chart/word wall. All pictures should be labeled. The teacher can work with the student individually to make corrections so that posted words/pictures can serve as a word wall for all students and students should be encouraged to use these word walls/anchor charts when writing.
Second Grade: My Plate

Students have free choice in this activity and will write to explain. Again, this center is easily adapted to the level of the student’s writing ability. Students who need challenging can write a paragraph explaining each of the things they chose and why. Students who need more support might choose to use a paragraph with sentence stems. And, those who need a lot of support, might be writing a sentence or list. An example of each are included here. At this level, it is good to have students work with a partner so that they can work out the words and support each other in talking out what they intend to write before trying to put it on paper.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to a video to build background about food. It is assumed that this would be something students have been learning about in science/health. (LISTENING)
2. Students will make their own healthy plate by choosing things from the picture pages that they would want to include and putting those things on their “plate”. Students then show their partner their plate and explain why they picked those things. (SPEAKING)
3. Students write independently to say what things they would include on their plate and why. They can write a list, a sentence, a paragraph with sentence stems, or a paragraph...depending on their level. (WRITING)
4. Students then read their paper to their partner and make changes as needed. (READING/SPEAKING/LISTENING)
5. Students independently record themselves reading their paper as a video journal post in SeeSaw. (SPEAKING)

• *To make this a blended learning activity, students listen to other people’s responses in SeeSaw and leave a verbal response to that person’s post.*

Upper Elementary: Writing Prompts

In the upper grades, students are often given writing prompts and then left to independently complete the writing process. When students are given the opportunity to peer edit and then meet with their teacher for a writer’s conference, they can build confidence and writing skills.

1. Using a QR code, students listen to directions for the writing prompt and graphic organizer. Using a graphic organizer, students brainstorm and preplan their writing response to “If I Were in a Snow Globe.” (LISTENING, WRITING)
2. Students then write their response to the prompt on paper (WRITING).
3. Students meet with a buddy for a peer edit. Students read their writing to their buddy. Students follow a check list to give each other feedback on capitalization, punctuation, and grammar (READING, SPEAKING, LISTENING).
4. Students independently revise their written response using the feedback provided by their peer (WRITING)
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Reading Centers

Reading centers can often become very flat and do not often allow students to practice outside of the reading domain. And, for many teachers, they find that incorporating listening and speaking through “buddy reading” can become chaotic! But, allowing students to not only speak and listen, but also to write during this center is vital to getting the most out of this 20-minute rotation. Here are some ways to bring all 4 domains into this center and helping students stay on task.

Kindergarten: Wordless Retell

Kindergarteners are often able to retell a story long before they are able to actually read the words. This center capitalizes on the students’ ability to recall details and practices telling a story in sequence...both key for students to learning to read. Note, this center might need to stretch over a few days, depending on how quickly students work. Or, it could be done at the end of the week after the teacher has covered the stories previously as a part of the whole class lessons.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to a video of the original story. This can be a video of the teacher reading the story as a whole class read-aloud (2 birds with 1 stone!). In this case, it is the story of The Three Little Pigs. Students should be able to see the words as they are read, even if they are unable to read them on their own. (LISTENING)

2. Students are given a copy of the story that is the same as the one they to which they just listened but has no words on the pages. This is important because the goal is for students to recall details, not to try to read the text. It is important to note that the wordless book that will be used must match the story they are hearing...and, not all stories have the same exact storyline even if they have the same title. (READING)

3. Students are then asked to “write” on the pages to fill in the text that is missing. Keep in mind, this might be a sentence, a word, or a drawing. They might even choose to copy a word or letter. But, students should not be encouraged to copy the original text word for word. (WRITING)

4. Students then practice reading their “writing”. (READING)

5. Students sign in to SeeSaw and make a video journal post of themselves reading (or explaining) what they have written on their paper. Special attention will be made to them pointing to each word they wrote as they read. (SPEAKING)

   To make this a blended learning activity, teachers project one person’s SeeSaw post on the Smart Board each day during the week and listen to it as a class. This allows students to hear different versions of the same story, since every child will tell the story a little differently. Point out key details that students remember. A good follow up would be to have students recreate the book by assigning each child a part of the story to draw and “write” and then keep that in the class library. Students can keep their wordless books in their book boxes to “read” whenever they want.

First Grade: Sequencing

Sequencing a story and retelling details is a major component of the Diagnostic Reading Assessment and is a big part of the SOLs for 1st grade. Incorporating the 4 WIDA domains will make this center more robust.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to an online video of a read aloud for the story The Three Little Pigs. (LISTENING)

2. Students cut apart the pictures from the story and put them in the correct sequence in their own “book”. Then, they write the text that goes with each picture on that page. (WRITING)

3. Students practice reading their writing until they are confident reading it. (READING)

4. Students sign in to SeeSaw and make a video journal post of themselves reading their version of the book. (SPEAKING)

   To make this a blended learning activity, students add their books to the class library and other students are able to read them. Students also listen to the other versions of the stories read in SeeSaw and leave comments to the authors.
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Reading Centers, Continued

Second Grade:

Students in 2nd grade often read and then complete a reading response sheet or take an “AR” test to show comprehension. But, this does not always allow for our ELL students to truly interact with what they have read. And, students should be using this time to focus more on reading skills that go beyond comprehension. Using the 4 domains in one center along with technology will give teachers more time to focus on more reading skills throughout the year.

1. Students read the traditional story of The Three Little Pigs. (READING)
2. Students then use a QR code to connect to a video of the book The Three Little Javelinas read aloud. (LISTENING)
3. Students think about how the two stories are different and write to explain how the stories are the same and different. Students can write as many sentences as they can to meet their level. Sentence stems to start the sentences can also be used. (WRITING)
4. Students then think about which version of the story they liked the best and why. (READING)
5. Students independently record themselves reading their paper as a video journal post in SeeSaw to explain which version they liked best and why. (SPEAKING)
   • To make this a blended learning activity, students listen to other people’s responses in SeeSaw and leave a verbal response to that person’s post to say if they agree or disagree with them.

Upper Elementary: Making Inferences

In grades 3-5, students develop their ability to make inferences when reading. Teachers may use picture prompts and interactive read alouds to introduce this concept. Inference poems and riddles are a way to promote higher level reading comprehension skills.

1. Students will independently read an inference poem (READING).
2. Students will then use a QR code to link to the inference poem being read aloud (LISTENING).
3. Students think about what the poem is referring to. Students type their response in their SeeSaw journal using evidence from the text. Then students record themselves reading their response (SPEAKING and WRITING).
4. Students create their own inference riddle with 3 clues and post to a class FlipGrid. Students respond to at least one peer’s response to make an inference (SPEAKING AND LISTENING).

To differentiate this center for newcomers, ELLs can investigate inferences with pictures (instead of poems and riddles).

1. Students will reflect upon a picture on a laminated worksheet. Using a QR code, they will listen to the directions (LISTENING).
2. Using a sentence stem, students will describe what they see in the picture (WRITING)
3. Then students will describe what they can infer from the picture (SPEAKING).

Upper Elementary: Point of View

For our ELLs, abstract concepts can literally get lost in translation. Understanding point of view is a key reading comprehension strategy covered in the SOLs for grades 3-5. This activity uses multiple language domains to give students choice and develop a more solid understanding of Point of View.

1. Students listen and follow along to The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by Jon Sieszka (LISTENING, READING)
2. In their SeeSaw journals, students describe the Wolf’s point of view in the story (WRITING)
3. Students respond to a FlipGrid discussion post: Do you believe the Wolf’s story? Why or why not? (LISTENING, SPEAKING)
Word Work Centers

In a lot of classrooms, word work centers look like worksheets, rainbow writing, and spelling lists. And, while no one will ever be able to get teachers to let go of these types of activities (just look at how many of them are on Pinterest and Teachers-Pay-Teachers)...we can do something to make these types of centers much more useful for our ELLs. Many times, these worksheets appear to be working on a phoneme or word family, but for our ELLs who may not have the vocabulary to do it, these worksheets can be very frustrating. Focusing on all 4 WIDA domains will allow ELL students to get more out of the word work centers beyond rote completion of the task.

Kindergarten: B Word Match

This worksheet is similar to ones used in kindergarten rooms across the country. Students trace letters or words and match words and pictures to show knowledge of a particular letter or sight word.

1. Students use a QR code to connect to a video featuring the letter sound /b/. (LISTENING)
2. Students use the worksheet and it has a QR code that will connect to a ThingLink that will allow students to click on the pictures that are on the worksheet and hear the words. (READING/LISTENING)
3. Students are then asked to trace the word, glue the pictures to match the word, and then write that word in the space given. (WRITING)
4. Students then practice reading their “writing”. Students could be encouraged to add the sentence stem “I see a...” if they are ready for that instead of just reading the words. (READING)
5. Students sign in to SeeSaw and make a video journal post of themselves reading their paper. Special attention will be made to them pointing to each word they wrote as they read. (SPEAKING)

To make this a blended learning activity, teachers have students hunt around the room or school to find something else that begins with the same sound /b/. Students then post the picture of what they found as a picture post in their SeeSaw journal. The teacher projects these pictures on the Smart Board and together with the class sounds out and writes the words on the image. Print out and add these words/images to the class word wall under /b/.

First Grade: Cloze Passages

Typically using cloze passages with ELLs is not considered appropriate. However, these cloze sentences are focused on reading the sentences and using visual discrimination clues to find the words, not vocabulary knowledge. And, by interacting with the worksheet using the 4 domains of reading, speaking, and listening, students will get more out of completing this activity than they would if they just plugged in the words mindlessly.

1. Students use a QR code to listen to the sentences on the worksheet read aloud. These sentences should include a picture or video to build understanding of what the sentences are about. (LISTENING)
2. Students look at each sentence and read the sentences with word(s) missing. They will use visual discrimination and recall to fill in the missing word and write it on the lines. Notice that each sentence excludes a different word until all words have been replaced at least once. By the end, students should be able to read and write all the words in both of the original two sentences. Students then write a third sentence that would go with the original “story”. (READING/Writing)
3. Students sign in to SeeSaw and make a video journal post of themselves reading the two given sentences and their additional sentence. (SPEAKING)

To make this a blended learning activity, the teacher works with the student to fix up their extra sentence and allows them to repost it on SeeSaw. The teacher then projects students’ sentences on the SmartBoard and has students practice reading it aloud.
Word Work Centers, Continued

Second Grade: Consonant Digraph /ch/

Students in second grade may no longer be doing the same word work as they did in first grade, but ELL students still need a lot of support in phonics. In this activity, students will be taking a very simple fill in the blank worksheet that would normally take a few seconds to complete, and using that to springboard into a much more meaningful activity.

1. Students connect to an activity online that focuses on building experience using the digraph /ch/. (LISTENING)
2. Students then complete the worksheet by filling in all the blanks with the correct digraph /ch/. Then, students read through all the words that start with /ch/. For students who need more significant support, they can connect to a video of the teacher reading the full story using a QR code. (READING)
3. Students then take a booklet and write each /ch/ word from the story onto a separate page. Students will be challenged to come up with at least one additional /ch/ word on their own. Students then draw a picture to go with each word in their book. (WRITING)
4. Students make a video journal post in SeeSaw to read each page of their book aloud. (SPEAKING)
   - To make this a blended learning activity, students draw a picture on a 3x5 card of their /ch/ word and label it. Add these to an anchor chart for the /ch/ digraph posted in the room. Students should then be encouraged to “read the chart” to explore new vocabulary words.

Upper Primary: Prefix and Suffix

In third grade, students begin to review simple prefixes and suffixes. Word work may include sorting activities, dictionary skills, Frayer models, and writing about words in sentences.

1. Students watch BrainPop Video clip on Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes (LISTENING)
2. Students create new words by combining prefix and root word cards (READING).
3. Students choose 5 new words and write a complete sentence for each on a worksheet (WRITING).
4. In SeeSaw, students use the draw function to draw and label a picture of a new word (e.g. an emoticon for unhappy). Students use the record function to read their word and describe their picture (SPEAKING).