Supporting Language Learners through Social/Emotional Learning Strategies

Washington Association for Bilingual Education

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Compelling research demonstrates that the success of young people in school and beyond is inextricably linked to healthy social and emotional development. Students who have a sense of belonging and purpose, who can work well with classmates and peers to solve problems, who can plan and set goals, and who can persevere through challenges—in addition to being literate, numerate, and versed in scientific concepts and ideas—are more likely to maximize their opportunities and reach their full potential.

Classroom-Based Research:

What is the effect of Storypath (inquiry-based learning) on student engagement, academic learning and social skills development for students?

Collected data on student engagement, social skills learning and content knowledge in highly diverse elementary classrooms.
How do we “marry” SEL with academic learning?

Project-based Learning

Storypath

Social & Emotional Learning

Real-life Applications
What is Storypath?
A Powerful Narrative Structure for Curriculum Integration

The Storypath strategy uses the components of story--scene, character and plot--to organize curriculum into meaningful and memorable learning experiences.

It is more than reading a story, it is living the story guided by the teacher through an inquiry approach as learners create the scene, become the characters and solve the problems presented through the plot.

Engaging learners is key and that is what Storypath offers...
Episodes in the Storypath

Creating the Setting
Students create the setting by completing a frieze (mural) or other visual representation of the place.

Creating Characters
Students create characters for the story whose roles they will play during subsequent episodes.

Context Building
Students are involved in activities that stimulate them to think more deeply about the people and place they have created.

Critical Incidents
Characters confront problems typical of those faced by people of that time and place.

Concluding Event
Students plan and participate in an activity that brings closure to the story.

The Great Barrier Reef Episodes

Creating the Setting
Students collaboratively create the Great Barrier Reef.

Creating Characters
Each student creates a scientist who will study the reef.

Context Building
Students build an underwater sea lab agreeing on their needs and wants for the lab.

Critical Incident
Students collaboratively create rules for living and working together in the sea lab.

Context Building
Students research underwater sea life creating visual representations and written reports.

Critical Incident
Students come together to investigate an oil spill.

Concluding Event
Students collaboratively plan an “international conference” to advocate for clean oceans.
Let’s begin... The Setting

Ladies and gentlemen, this is your pilot, Captain ______________ speaking. If you look out your window, you will see in the distance a jagged line just under the surface of the water. This is the Great Barrier Reef. The Great Barrier Reef is the largest reef in the world. It rises up like a wall from the ocean floor and stretches for miles and miles. Notice that in some places the jagged line of the reef is above the water and small islands appear to sit on top of the reef. Oh, look, I see a pod of dolphins swimming near the reef! Every few feet they jump out of the water. If you were underwater, you would see brightly colored fish and sea creatures of all shapes and sizes. The reef is actually made of coral. Coral is formed from the skeletons of billions of tiny sea animals. Living coral covers the outer surface of the reef in beautiful shades of tan, orange, yellow, purple, blue, red, and green. The coral has many different shapes: It can look like a bush growing under water, like a fan, like fingers stretching out from a hand, like a round ball, like a bunch of lace, or like the branches of a dead tree. The water is a brilliant shade of blue today.

The deeper you go in the ocean, the darker the water becomes. This is because the sunlight cannot reach into the ocean’s depths. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I must sign off for now as we will soon be landing in Cairns. Please fasten your seat belts and put your seatbacks in an upright position in preparation for landing.

Reading
Key ideas and details:
• Determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it...

Craft and structure:
• Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text... and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
What are the steps for creating the setting?

- Introduce the idea of story and that students are going to be characters in the story.
- Read the description.
- Recall reading and record responses.
- Organize students to create the visual representation of the setting.
- Introduce SEL skills. Discuss and role-play.
- Make the setting applying SEL skills.
- Reflect on the setting, reinforce academic language and SEL skills.
- Create word bank.
- Write about the setting.
The coral reef community is a colorful home to many kinds of animals. It looks like a beautiful underwater garden. Help protect the rich variety of life found on coral reefs.
WORKING TOGETHER
1. Talk with your group about how you will work together.
   - We will listen to each other’s ideas.
   - We will share the work.
   - We will help each other.
   - We will do careful work.
   - We will work together to solve problems.
2. Who will make the coral reef?
3. Who will make the sea creatures?

SELF-ASSESSMENT: WORKING TOGETHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not often/ Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. We listened to each other’s ideas.</td>
<td>☹️</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. We shared the work.</td>
<td>☹️</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😊</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. We helped each other.</td>
<td>☹️</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. We did careful work.</td>
<td>☹️</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. We worked together to solve problems.</td>
<td>☹️</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STORYPATH: The Great Barrier Reef
The Setting & Scientists
What are the practical considerations for creating the setting?

• How will you organize the materials?
• How will you group students?
• What pre-teaching skills and content will you need to address?
• How much time should you plan for in the construction of the setting: About 2 hours
Purposeful Writing

Vocabulary acquisition and use:
Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening...

Text types and purposes:
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately...
Literacy: Writing

Sentence writing...

• Students generated a word bank of nouns and adjectives from the frieze throughout the unit. They could add words from their home language.

• During writing, students used words from the word bank to write complete sentences. Sentence starters helped too...

• Students also used words from the science word wall!

A Jelly fish is **transparent** and can sting you.
How do you create characters?

- Discuss who might live and or work in the setting.
- Brainstorm and record jobs/roles.
- Make characters.
- Complete writing—job application, biography, resume, etc.
- Introduce the characters.
  - Teach introduction skills—role-play and model.
  - Discuss characters as introduced to deepen knowledge base.
  - Spread introductions over a number of days to maintain interest.
  - Display characters.
The Scientists

Text types and purposes:
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately.

Job Application
How do you build context?

• Introduce content you want students to acquire.
• Determine how you will organize this content.
  • Reading
  • Videos
  • Interviews
  • Discussion
• Partner/group students.
• Review and practice SEL skills.
• Determine how will you hold students accountable for their work.

Needs and Wants of an Underwater Sea Lab....

Concepts: needs and wants
Living together in an underwater sea lab.

What do we need to live and work in an underwater sea lab?
Brainstorming
Inquiry/questioning
Sea Lab: Meeting Needs and Wants
Storypath Involves Meaningful and Frequent Student to Student Interactions

Engage students in using social skills to accomplish meaningful academic tasks...

Opportunities for...

- Cooperative learning activities
- Learning partners through character role
- Instructional conversations to solve problems presented through the plot
- Practice language in small groups before large groups
- Role-play in character
- Using academic skills and language in meaningful context
Underwater Sea Lab
Critical Incident: How do we live and work together?

Chores: fair to keep to it.

Rules
* everyone cleans up their own mess
* must use head phones for music
* time limit 5 minutes
* buy your own food if you want to eat between breakfast/lunch/dinner
* you must do your duty
* main lights go off at 9 o'clock

What we need:
- Bins in lounge room
- Reminder signs
- Washing up
- Keep your own bedroom area clean
- Rubbish collector, boat

Don't leave your own stuff around
- Water on the ground mop it up
- Laundry duty
- Baskets for dirty laundry
SEL Skill Instruction

Storypath provides an opportunity to apply social and academic skills

- Classroom Meetings
- Social Skills Lessons
- Mini-Lessons
- Writing
- Reading

Lessons learned:

- Practice/apply social skill first.
- Start basic and scaffold, increase complexity and decrease support as the unit progresses. Some adapted structure may be necessary throughout.
- Opportunity to illustrate and reference why of social skills.
Make a Jelly Fish!

Recycled plastic bottle cut at the end

Ribbon

Building Context

Research & Writing

Sea Life on the Great Barrier Reef
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>My Sea Animal:</strong></th>
<th>![Image of a sea animal]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What colors and shapes do you see on your animal?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Circle and Triangle]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are there eyes? Where are they located?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Eye Image]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are there fins? Where are they located?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Fish Image]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are there patterns on your animal?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Zebra Pattern]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How big is your animal?</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>![Ruler]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How does your animal protect itself?</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>![Bee Image]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Where does your animal live?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![House Image]</td>
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</table>

Scaffold the learning
Oil Spill near the Great Barrier Reef
by Shane Milam

A tanker ship carrying oil has run into the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of Australia. Oil is spilling from the tanker into the ocean. The thick, black oil is creating an oil slick around the reef, and there is fear that much of the sea life will be destroyed. Seabirds whose feathers become covered with oil cannot fly and will die from the oil. Fish and other sea life are poisoned when they swallow the oil. The situation is very bad. It is critical that scientists respond to this terrible event so that we can begin to save the sea life.
Oil Spills

Aim: Investigate ways of cleaning up oil spills.

Equipment needed: tube, water, feathers, sponges, rocks, shells, cotton wool, sticks, paper, toothbrushes, sea sponges, oil and detergent.

Method:
Step 1: Half fill tub with water.
Pour in oil.
Step 2: Place rocks, sponges, feathers and shells in tub.
Step 3: Investigate the effectiveness of sponges, cotton wool and toothbrushes to clean up oil.
Step 4: Investigate the effectiveness of a barrier to contain the oil spill.
Step 5: Investigate the effect of detergent.

Conclusion:
1. The sponge and cotton wool could brush off some of the oil.
2. The toothbrush could brush off some of the oil.
3. Detergent was able to dissolve the oil.
4. A barrier needs to be a curved shape to trap the oil.
## Ongoing reflection on SEL skills

**SELF-ASSESSMENT: SOCIAL SKILLS**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>EPISODE</th>
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<td>1. I listened to other people’s ideas.</td>
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<td>😐</td>
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<td>😞</td>
<td>😐</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I helped others.</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😐</td>
<td>😊</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I disagreed politely.</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I worked with others to solve problems.</td>
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<td>😐</td>
<td>😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I like to work with others because</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I don’t like to work with others when</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
International Conference

Concluding Event

Collaborating to plan the event...

Affirming student learning...

A satisfying ending!
Principles of Storypath

Constructing meaning in context
• Universal appeal of narrative
• Integrated learning across content and experiences
• Meaningful and frequent student to student interactions
• Engage in higher order thinking skills
• Engage in civic discourse

To develop:
• Social skills
• Empathy
• Communication/Academic Language Skills
• Problem solving skills
• Literacy skills
• Content knowledge
• Imagination
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1. Social, emotional and cognitive competencies develop throughout our lives; are essential to our schools, workplaces, homes, and communities; and allow individuals to contribute meaningfully to society (Jones and Kahn).

- Students engage in “lived experiences” to apply their learning through the Storypath approach. Marrying the content—knowing something with solving problems and working collaboratively—enhances the social/emotional learning with content.

- Contrived experiences in which students are not invested don’t necessarily transfer to the real world. Students need to care...
2. Social, emotional, and cognitive capabilities are fundamentally intertwined—they are interdependent in their development, experience and use (Jones and Kahn).

• Because students take on the role of characters and are invested in the plot of the story, learning becomes more meaningful and memorable.

• The collaborative nature of solving problems together—like in the real world—enhances the learning.

• When emotions are engaged through the story, learning is deeper and more likely to be long-term. Just as we remember a story, likewise a Storypath experience is memorable.
3. Engaging in effective social and emotional learning—
informed programs and practices can improve teacher
effectiveness and well-being (Jones and Kahn).

- Teacher report that Storypath enhances learners’
  - social engagement/investment/motivation/ownership in learning;
  - communication skill;
  - cooperative/collaborative problem solving and decision-making
  - academic content knowledge

- And teachers’ report that Storypath enhances their sense of efficacy/success and overall impact on learners (Stevahn & McGuire).
I believe...

• All learners deserve a content rich learning environment.

• They deserve instruction that supports their learning and the belief that they are capable.

• The Storypath experience supports acceptance and involvement of all children in the classroom community, so essential for their future learning.
And Thanks to...

  https://www.aft.org/ae/winter2017-2018/jones_kahn
- Teachers’ Photos: Adria Wilson, Renton School District & Kristi Pihl, Edmonds School District
- Contributions to Slides: Bridget Walker, Sound Supports

To create your own Storypath go to: 
http://www.socialstudiesk8storypath.com/storypath-structure.html