**500-word Multiliteracy Essay**

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This multiliteracy design attempts to introduce L2 English Language Learners (ELL) to the basics of the English alphabet. It takes a competency-based approach in its focus on mastering one skill (the Roman alphabet) for purposes of increasing comprehension, literacy levels, and conversational fluency. Our focus on vocabulary, meaning, and English phonemes aim to increase students’ understanding of oral and/or written messages and encourage authentic conversation in and out the classroom. In fact, Stephen Krashen recommends “comprehensible input” (Milner, 94) as an effective method for language acquisition through which the English alphabet serves as our medium.

Our e-book uses several pedagogical strategies and democratic processes to facilitate comprehension for ELL learners. Each alphabetical letter is contextualized in a rhyme and has an associated visual, both which assist meaning making. That is, the “use of context [helps ELL learners] to figure out the meanings of words” (24) whereas images provide nonverbal cues in instances where students are struggling to read (242). The combination of both verbal—i.e., rhymes, use of examples—and nonverbal context—i.e., visual aids, relevant illustrations—aim to convey meaning of new vocabulary and “construct new conceptions” (Li, 218). The use of verbal, nonverbal, and auditory components make our design accessible to all learning types and differentiate the book to suit a variety of student needs, allowing students to receive but also respond to information in multiple ways. For example, our lesson plan invites students to recreate the alphabet using words relevant to their first language with the option of responding with images, not solely words. To further differentiate our e-book, teachers can bring in tactile objects related to the visuals in the book to engage kinesthetic learners. Our design uses readily available objects that can be physically presented to learners for this purpose of engagement. Similarly, we selected vocabulary that would be relevant to learners’ own lives and could assist them with navigating language used in the real world. By allowing students to “explore, discuss, and construct concepts” in relationship to the real-world, we better “equip ELLs for English communication in real life” (Li, 219).

In creating our e-book, we took a constructivist approach to learning. Milner describes constructivist principles as “a conception of learning as an active process of constructing meaning by taking in new information, connecting it prior understandings, and then testing the new knowledge by applying it (10). We see this theory at work in the actual framework of our lesson plan as well as the principles used throughout. For example, throughout our e-book, students are invited to respond to each word in their own language. This allows students to connect learning to their own cultures and integrate it with prior understanding, facilitating the construction of new concepts. This connection to prior experiences and cultures also ensures the creation of a “democratic classroom” where “each member…contributes to learning and exercises some choice about that learning” (Milner, 13). Other constructivist principles include a consideration for differentiation and diversity, collaborative learning, and response-based activities (13). The activity in our lesson plan that requires students to use items from their own cultures, homes, and experiences brings together constructivist learning methods as learners are tested on their comprehension of the alphabet by relating it to their first language. Through this activity students “construct their own set of rules” (95) about the English language as they explore words that begin with letters a-through-z. The idea here is simply that they connect the letter to its appropriate item, demonstrating their comprehension of the Roman alphabet.

Our multiliteracy design aims to facilitate the comprehension of ELL learners through constructivist and democratic principles that make learning relatable, meaningful, and assist learners’ conversational fluency. By making an e-book that is accessible and inclusive, students are encouraged to actively participate in their learning by constructing new knowledge systems in their relation, integration, and use of prior cultural understanding.

Works cited

Li, N. (2013). Seeking best practices and meeting the needs of the English Language Learners:  using second language theories and integrating technology in teaching. *Journal of International Education Research (JIER)*, *9*(3), 217–222. <https://doi.org/10.19030/jier.v9i3.7878>.

Milner, J. O., Morcock, M. L. F., & Mitchell, J. F. (2017). *Bridging English*. Pearson Higher Education.