

Making classroom lesson openings and closing more meaningful for English Language Learners – integrating SIOP strategies into GOALS and SUMMARIES

- **Teachers will understand the importance of:**
 - **Introducing clear objectives at the start of each lesson (clear beginning); and**
 - **Checking in with students at the end of each lesson (clear ending).**
- **Teachers will know how to incorporate scaffolding activities into the clear beginning and clear ending of lessons.**

The teachers in Middletown NY are already focusing on the implementation of the lesson planning and delivery framework outlined by Jane Pollock in *Improving Student Learning One Teacher at a Time*. Coaching sessions are designed to explore and introduce classroom strategies and activities that will *make each step more accessible to English language learners*. The SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) provided guidance for best practice.

Clear Beginnings

The importance of clear beginnings, or **SETTING THE GOALS (GO)**, is described by Pollock:

“Goal setting and objective setting are important tools for directing feedback for improvement in the classroom. Without question, the teacher needs to establish the direction for learning or students will set their own.”

Ensuring content objectives are clearly defined, displayed, and reviewed with students is an important feature of SIOP best practice. Classroom objectives are frequently written in a manner that is not easily accessible to ELLs. Clear, well defined objectives help to focus teachers and students on what is important for that block of time.

Some suggested activities that go beyond the ‘post and read’:

- **Write the content objective on the board or someplace where it will remain visible. If you are using a smart board or powerpoint presentation, incorporate it into the header or footer so it doesn’t ‘disappear’ after the introduction.**
- **Consider writing it and having students read aloud in two languages where it makes sense.**
- **Give students an index card and have them self-rate their understanding.**
- **Introduce the objective and have students to discuss it in small groups or pairs, coming up with their own explanation or rephrasing. Have some students report out.**
- **Have students write the goal in a journal.**

- **Make sure the objective is clear, simple, short and focused. Keep in mind that not every objective, every day, needs to have both a declarative (what you know) and procedural (what you can do) element.**
- **Consider flipping the order of *introducing the content objective* and *activating prior knowledge***
- **Use the interactive writing process to write the goal with the children**
- **Webbing**

Clear Endings

Again drawing on Pollock's summary of **GENERALIZE OR SUMMARIZE (GEN)**:

“Closure is that time after new learning occurs when the learner reflects on or summarizes what she now knows about the benchmarks and objectives that she may not have known before the lesson. These three to seven minutes metaphorically ‘close the neurons’ as the bookend to the neuron-firing APK (activating prior knowledge) at the beginning of the lesson.”

Summarization is particularly important for ELLs, and is a time for you to explicitly indicate what is important. Students who are struggling with English devote their energy to figuring out what is being said (or read) and do not have the time and skill to evaluate the relative importance of information – everything is equally new to them!

Some suggested activities for the final three to seven minutes of class time:

- **Reinforce and review key vocabulary through the use of analogy and paraphrasing as part of your wrap up.**
- **Have students discuss three important points from the day, or make a prediction about the next steps. Follow this up with oral sharing or journal writing.**
- **Prepare an exit ticket (index card) that asks the student to self-rate their understanding and write down one thing they would like to know more about.**
- **Post sentence starters for a final conversation or written activity: I wonder, I discovered, I still want to know, I learned, I still don't understand, I still have a question about, I will ask a friend about.**
- **Revisit the objective through referral to a visual or list or other organizer.**
- **Have students discuss and/or write what they think the main idea for the day was.**
- **Share the purpose of generalizing at the end of the day with students. Don't tell them what they learned, let them tell you.**

- **Provide an interesting or unexpected prompt to capture interest at the end of the class period.**
- **Reassess student understanding (self rating)**
- **Complete a ‘Now I Know’ chart**

Resources:

Sample (free) SIOP lesson plans: <http://www.cal.org/siop/resources/lessonplans.html>

Common core standards online (searchable) – great resource for content objectives – available online or as an app for the ipad and iphone

www.masteryconnect.com