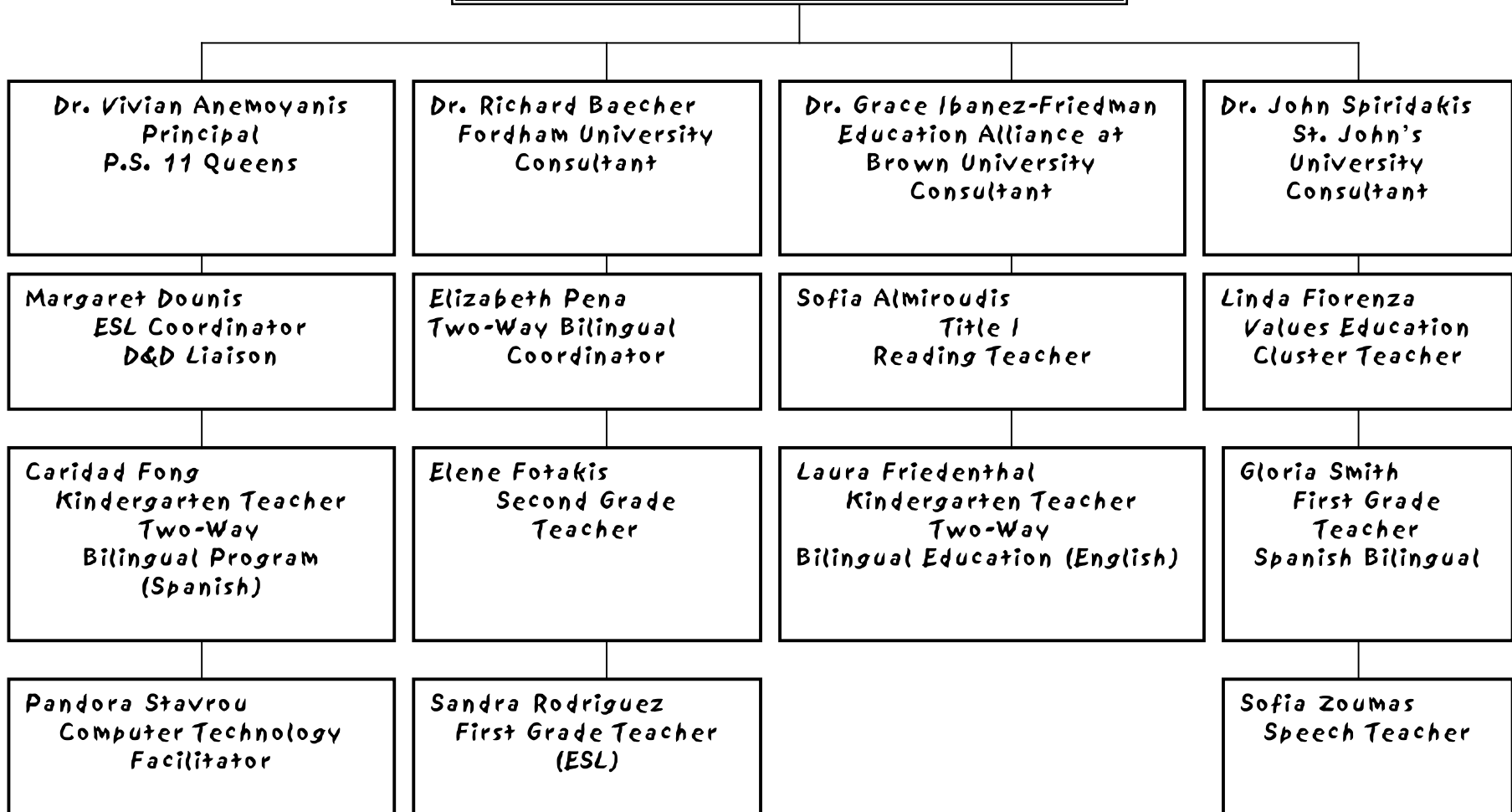


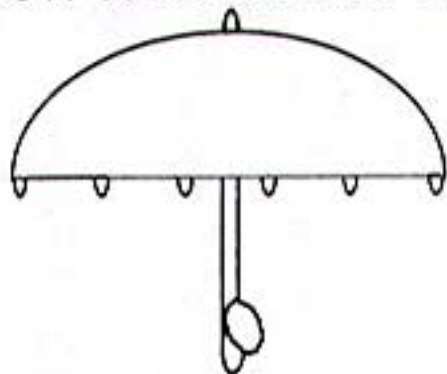
**P.S. 11's  
Action Research  
Process**

- 1. P.S. 11 Team**
- 2. Action Research Questions**
- 3. Final Write-Ups**

Meet the P.S. 11  
Action Research Team  
1999-2000



# P.S. 11- D&D Action Research Process



## Umbrella Question

Why is it important for children to have a real sense of responsibility for the quality of their work and to share it with others?

Ms. Linda Fiorenza

In what ways can I build student vocabulary in order to strengthen comprehension skills?

Ms. Gloria Smith

What strategies can I use to get former English Language Learners to comprehend a story at their reading level?

Ms. Sofia Almiroudis

What teaching/learning strategies can we develop to strengthen students' literacy skills so they may meet performance standards?

What strategies are effective in improving the decoding skills of my students so that they can read on grade level?

Ms. Sandra Rodriguez

How could I instill more self-confidence in my former English Language Learners so that they can express themselves more comfortably in front of their peers?

Ms. Elene Fotakis

Does interaction of English Language Learners and English Proficient students have a positive effect on English language acquisition?

Ms. Friedenthal and Ms. Fong

How can I help former English Language Learners with language processing problems?

Ms. Sofia Zoumas

## **P.S. 11 –SOFIA ALMIROUDIS’S ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS**

### **QUESTION**

What strategies can I use to get former English Language Learners to comprehend a story at their reading level ?

### **INITIAL REFLECTION**

An environment conducive to learning for bilingual students should be one where the teacher expects the children to succeed. One where the atmosphere has low anxiety, errors are expected, and students are encouraged to question ideas and experiment with language. With the emphasis on cooperative activities; peer-assistance; sharing of experiences in story telling; and lively discussions, I wanted to observe whether these strategies are effective in improving my students' English language development as well as their comprehension skills.

### **PLANNING**

My target group consists of five third grade children. All of my students are English Language Learners bilingual in both English and Spanish.

The data sources I used to collect information on these learners are as follows:

<b>Archival Sources:</b>	<b>Other Sources:</b>
- LAB Scores	- Congruence
- ECLAS	-Observations/Reflections
	-Parent, Teacher Conferences
	-Student Performances
	-Assessment Activities
	-IRI
	- Conferencing with target group
	-Report cards
	-Articles

### **RELATED LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS**

Reading

E1a. The student reads at least 25 books or book equivalents each year.

E1b. The student reads and comprehends at least four books (or book equivalents) about one issue or subject or four books by a single writer, or four books in one genre.

E1d. The student reads aloud, accurately (in the range of 85% – 90%) familiar material.

Writing

E2b. The student produces a response to literature.

E2c. The student produces a narrative account.

E2d. The student produces a narrative procedure.

### **ACTION**

I practice a variety of strategies to get former English Language Learners to comprehend a story at their reading level. These include:

- Guided Reading/Shared Reading/Paired Reading/Read Aloud
- Exposure to a variety of literature
- Journals
- Student/ Teacher Assessments
- Opportunities to respond to literature
- Scaffolding/Story Frames
- Teacher Modeling
- Cooperative Groups

### **OBSERVATION**

Looking back to the beginning of the school year my students were very nervous and reluctant to volunteer information or participate in a reading activity. Even though they were proficient in English they had limited comprehension of what they were reading.

Using a combination of the strategies mentioned, students have a greater chance of successfully doing their academic work.

### **REFLECTION**

Through my action research process I confirmed that the strategies I am using in my classroom effectively facilitate my students' learning. The children showed both academic and social benefits.

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## **P.S. 11 –LINDA FIORENZA’S ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS**

### **QUESTION**

Why is it important for children to have a real sense of responsibility for the quality of their work and to share it with others?

### **INITIAL REFLECTION**

As a values teacher, I wanted to help my ELL students not only to improve the quality of their work, but also build their self-esteem so they would feel more comfortable sharing their work with their peers. Teaching them the value of responsibility and guiding them to take ownership of their work I felt, would help them to accomplish these goals. I used the following questions as a guide:

- How can I encourage my students to learn responsibility through my values curriculum?
- What kind of opportunities can I provide that will promote my ELL students’ self-expression verbally as well as in written form?
- How will the strategic/materials I use promote their self-confidence in sharing their work with other classmates?

### **PLANNING**

- Observation of 2 ELL students in a third grade ESL class.
- Data collected:  
LAB scores, teacher conferences, observations/documentation. Student work samples, conferencing with students, research articles.

### **RELATED LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS**

- E-1 a-Participates in informal discussions
- E-1 d-Reads aloud fluently
- E-2b- Produces a response to literature
- E-3a-Participates in one-to-one conference with teacher
- E-5a-Responds to fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama using interpretive and critical skills.

### **ACTION**-Provided opportunities:

- for introducing value through L.I.V.E. curriculum (especially the value of responsibility) with authentic literature.
- for exposure to quality literature through videos, filmstrips and pictures.
- for reflecting on and responding to literature through discussions, role playing, peer tutoring, cooperative learning groups, games and written responses.
- for using webbing and KWL charts organizing ideas and making connections.
- for self-assessment through decision making tasks and evaluating their choices through peer/teacher conferencing.

### **OBSERVATIONS** Students:

- were highly motivated by high interest literature stories that reflected values
- more engaged in discussions and reflections of story elements after viewing videos/filmstrips.
- felt less anxious and more confident about when working in cooperative learning group situations and peer tutoring.
- were empowered by stories that reflected their cultural heritage which help to build their self-esteem.
- improved on their writing skills when using graphic organizers as springboards for ideas.
- assumed more responsibility for their actions, making decisions about their work and in how they will share it.

### **REFLECTION**

My L.I.V.E. values program was very effective in providing my 2 ELL students with an abundance of resources and opportunities. The rich literature, the various strategies/materials and the cooperative/collaborative interactions that I incorporated helped to improve both their verbal and written skills. They both passed their Spring LAB tests. At the same time, their self-esteem and self-confidence increased encouraging them to take more responsibility for their work and sharing it with others. (OVER LEAF)

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## **P.S. 11-ELENE FOTAKIS'S THE ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS**

### **QUESTION**

How could I instill more self-confidence in my former ELL students so that they can express themselves more comfortably in front of their peers?

### **INITIAL REFLECTION**

In working with one particular student in my class, I observed that she felt very insecure and uncomfortable in responding to questions and participating in group and whole class discussions. This was surprising to me, because her language skills and cognitive abilities were strong. Therefore, I wanted to find out how.....

- \*to help her overcome her inhibitions?
- \*to promote more interaction with others?
- \*to instill more of her self-confidence?

### **PLANNING**

- \*identification of a former ELL student in a monolingual setting
- \*collection of data from the following sources:
  - Lab Tests
  - ECLAS
  - Parent/Teacher Conference
  - Observation of student in class
  - Student Work Samples
  - Assessments
  - Research Articles

### **RELATED LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS**

- E1d-the student reads aloud familiar material
- E2b-the student produces a response to literature
- E3a—the student participates in a 1 to 1 conference
- E3b-the student participates in group meetings

E3c-the student prepares and delivers a presentation

### **ACTION**

#### **STRATEGIES USED**

- \*Cooperative Groups
- \*Response to Literature
- \*Paired Reading
- \*Journal Writing
- \*Reading Aloud
- \*Shared Reading
- \*1 to 1 Conferences

#### **OBSERVATIONS**

Student.....

- \*Felt less threatened working with a group to complete her work
- \*Was more motivated to write and respond to topics that related to her personal experiences or cultural background.
- \*Demonstrated more verbal interaction when paired with a student that was sensitive to her needs.
- \*Expressed her inner thoughts and feelings through daily journal writing and subsequently shared some of her entries.
- \*Showed enthusiasm and participated more in reading aloud/shared reading activities.
- \*Enjoyed the 1 to 1 interaction with me, liked sharing feelings and personal experiences, and at the same time, getting a boost from my pep talks.

#### **REFLECTIONS**

Through the action research process, I discovered certain strategies that worked very well with a child who needed to acquire self-esteem and confidence in order to complete her academic skills. By using the above named strategies, this child has become able to complete her homework alone, ace every spelling test, complete all of her projects and reports,

write and share creative stories of her own, work with others equally, and feel good about herself and her work.

#### **SOURCES**

I read and used much information from articles that included the following titles:

- \*THE SHY CHILD (I used 8 specific points)
- \*SHARED READING (I used 3 specific points)
- \*SELF-ESTEEM (I used 7 specific points)
- \*READ-ALoud (I used 6 specific points)
- \*COOPERATIVE LEARNING (I used 6 specific points)

## P.S. 11-LAURA FRIEDENTHAL'S AND CARIDAD FONG'S ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

### QUESTION

Does interaction of English Language Learners and English Proficient students have a positive effect on English language acquisition?

### INITIAL REFLECTION

As teachers of a two-way bilingual kindergarten class, we wanted to learn more about which interactions and activities were the most effective in improving our students' English language skills. We used the following questions as our guide:

- How will our EP and ELL students communicate in various language-grouping configurations?
- How does a formal structured (task-orientated) activity and an informal (free-play) interaction affect students' communication?
- How can we make our students become more active, self-directed, and communicative?

### PLANNING

- Observation of 3 EP students and 3 ELL students
- Collection of data: LAB scores, ECLAS, photographs, audiotapes, Work samples, congruence meetings, documentation of observations, research articles.

### RELATED LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

- Reading
  - E-1a-The student reads and comprehends 4 books.
- Speaking, Listening, and Viewing
  - E-3a-The student participates in one-to-one conference with a teacher, paraprofessional or adult volunteer.
  - E-3b-The student participates in group meetings.

### ACTION

Provided opportunities for:

- Shared reading/Big Books
- Responding to literature via discussion, experience charts, writing illustrations
- Interclass paired reading using dual language emergent level books

- Paired play through social situations (centers)
- Intraclass book talk-retelling of stories, character analysis, favorite parts using picture cues
- Paired learning experience through thematic content area instruction (e.g. science project)

### OBSERVATIONS

#### Students were:

- Motivated to take more risks using language skills and reading along in shared reading activities.
- Engaged more actively in responding to literature when done cooperatively with other students/teacher (less threatening) through experience charts.
- More confident in reading and interacting in paired reading activities increasing self-esteem.
- Socializing and communicating more during play time and centers as time went on.
- Using picture cues during "book talks" to talk about story elements promoting their language skills.
- More interested and focused when participating in group task-orientated or problem solving activities within the context of a theme.

### REFLECTION

Through this action research process we provided opportunities for various types of cooperative/collaborative activities to promote interaction. We discovered that grouping for task-orientated activities yielded more meaningful verbal interaction. We observed that students subsequently were able to interact more comfortably during informal social classroom situations. We felt that these interactions fostered mutual respect for students' native language and culture. They also promoted interdependence in a safe and supportive environment boosting students' self esteem.

**(OVER LEAF)**

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## P.S. 11-SANDRA RODRIGUEZ'S ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

### QUESTION

What strategies are effective in improving the decoding skills of my students so that they can read at grade level?

### INITIAL REFLECTION

I was very interested in knowing which techniques are more effective so that students can read at grade level. I asked myself the following questions:

- How effective is the phonemic approach?
- Does phonemic awareness really help students read at grade level?
- Is improvement more significant when there is a combination phonemic awareness and other approaches such as thematic units, today's news/journal writing, buddy reading, music, poems and games, etc?

### PLANNING

\*Observation of 1 female ELL student

\*Collection of data: LAB scores, Parent-Teacher conference, and congruence with previous and present teachers, articles, student samples, and documentation of observations.

### RELATED LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

E-1a-Reading: Participates in formal/informal discussions

E-1b-Can make inferences to text comparing/contrasting

E-2b-Writing: Produces a response to literature

E-3a-Speaking: Participates in one-to-one conference with teacher

E-3b-Participates in group setting

### ACTION-Strategies I used:

- Working in cooperative groups.
- Working with thematic units, games, manipulatives & flashcards
- Reading with a buddy
- Writing in journals
- Listening to music and poems
- Charting experiences
- Motivating parents

### OBSERVATIONS

Looking over my documentation, I found that my subject has improved tremendously. I have found that she is more motivated to read, has more self-initiative, engages more actively in responses to literature and focuses more attentively whether in a group setting or independently. Her self-esteem increased and is eager to work with a partner. I feel she has become more of a risk taker.

### REFLECTION

Through this action research process I provided my student with various avenues of learning. I found that the best way of getting my students to read at grade level, was by using the various methods I mentioned above. The use of these in combination was less threatening for my subject as well as for my other students. My subject's learning experience was more rewarding because of the various activities. In the process of this research, I also gained a valuable lesson. I learned more about dyslexia and other learning disabilities,

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## P.S. 11-SOFIA ZOUMAS' ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

### **Question:**

How can I help former ELL students with language processing problems?

### **Initial Reflection:**

As the pull-out speech teacher of the school I service many ELL students with processing problems. I wanted to see what type of strategies I could use with my students in improving their English language skills, and using those skills within their general education classroom.

-What type of learning strategies can I use to help ELL students with processing problems?

-What type of multi-sensory principles and approaches best meet the needs of my students?

How can I as an SLP help my students increase their expressive and receptive oral/written language in English?

### **Planning:**

-Identify two third grade students with similar goals and objectives.

-Collecting data from the following sources:

LAB scores

IEP's

Conferences with general education and resource teachers

Sessions, Observations, and Evaluations

Students work samples

Progress Reports

Research articles and literature

### **Standards:**

E-1A Participate in informal discussions.

E-1C Read & comprehend informational materials.

E-2B Produce a response to literature.

E-2C Produce a narrative account.

E-4A Demonstrate a basic understanding of the rules of the English language in written and oral work.

E-4B Analyze & subsequently revise work to improve its clarity & effectiveness.

E-5A Respond to non-fiction, fiction, poetry, and drama using interpretive & critical process.

### **Action:**

Intervention and strategies used:

-Multi-sensory Teaching (visual, auditory & kinesthetic-tactile modalities)

-Teacher Modeling/Role Playing & Repetition to increase expressive and receptive language

-Grammar games/exercises to increase:

Phonemic Awareness: How sounds play a role in words.

Syntax: Individuals are taught through grammar/grammar rules & sentence variation.

Semantics: Individuals are taught how to interpret written language in order to gain meaning.

-Webbing/.Illustrations/Pictures

-Start lessons with a Book Walk

-Response/Reflection to literature by answering "WH" questions while reading the book

-Sequence/Rephrasing/Paraphrasing by sequencing pictures according to events

-Finding solutions to problems in the book (they use individualized mini-pictures)

-Students wrote sentences to support visual pictures

-“COPS” (Capitalization, Organization, Punctuation, Spelling) each others work in class, while writing their various drafts.

### **Observations**

-Students do best with visual support to help with their expressive language skills

-Sequencing events helped them to develop descriptive language and vocabulary related to sequential thinking, and increase their awareness of time (past/present tense)

-Sequencing allowed them to organize their thoughts orally and in their written work

-They love responding to literature and presenting their work in class among their peers

-They loved reflecting their books through a narrative account, and creating their own books by using visuals to help them with their sentences

-They became more confident in sharing what they have written with their peers

-Their final written drafts reflected a cooperative learning experience that they shared by “COPS” each other's work

## **Reflection**

Through this action research I learned that multi-sensory principles of instruction benefits all children because it consists of:

a) Simultaneous Multi-Sensory (VAKT):

Teaching is done using all three learning modalities (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic-Tactile) concurrently in order to enhance memory and learning.

(b) Systematic and Cumulative Language is taught in an order. It starts from the easiest, most basic elements, to more difficult materials. Instruction is based on things already learned. Also, concepts already learned must be reviewed continuously to strengthen memory

(c) Direct Instruction: Instruction must be performed with continuous student-teacher interaction. The concept at task must be directly taught.

(d) Diagnostic Teaching: Plans of Instruction are taught based on the assessment of each individuals needs. The task being focused on within the lesson must be mastered and become automatic.

(e) Synthetic and Analytic Instruction:

\*Synthetic Instruction: Parts of the language are presented and students learn how the parts work together to form a whole.

\*Analytic Instruction: Students are taught to look at the whole and break it down to its component parts.

The multi-sensory approach has been effective in my target group and the children have started to take the skills they've learned and are starting to apply it within their general education classroom.

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