Kerri Gilmore  
FLA 518  
Unit Overview

My unit selection entitled “Teeth” is a unit designed at the second grade level primarily focusing in the subject areas of science and literacy. The unit modifications will be geared towards a mainstream class including English language learners. The unit I have selected is from a literacy program, Breakthrough to Literacy. Breakthrough to Literacy is a district wide program used throughout the New Haven public school district. Two main components of literacy are included in this program, fiction and non-fiction. The book the students will be reading throughout this unit is a non-fiction book about teeth. The book is titled “Teeth” and is written by Joy Cowley.

Throughout this unit I want my students to know what teeth are used for. I would also like for my students to know which animal have teeth. Third, what happens when we lose a tooth. The last goal, what happens when an animal loses a tooth? The goals are content based and have a focus on comprehension while reading the material.
Standards

TESOL

Goal 1: Students will have the opportunity to use English to achieve academically in all area contents: students will use English to interact in the classroom.

Goal 2: Students will have the opportunity to achieve academically in all content areas: students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject matter information in spoken and written form.

New Haven Public Schools
Language Arts standards

Goal 1: Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate strategic reading skills before, during, and after reading.

Objective 1: Preview and predict text.

Objective 2: Read aloud to check for fluency and understanding.

Objective 3: Show understanding by responding orally in writing through technology, and/or the arts.

Content Objectives

Goal 1: Students will have the opportunity to discover factual information about teeth.

Objective 1: What teeth are used for.

Objective 2: Which animals have teeth.

Objective 3: What happen when we loose a tooth.
Objective 4: What happens when an animal looses a tooth.
read, write
talk at home

individualized study

read and discuss

write

Comprehension

make connections

read aloud

Teeth

collage/in size order

dental visit

written text

written text

independent reading

math

social studies

Content

toothbrush

art

science

art/music

paper mache

animal teeth

research

guides reading
Vocabulary Checklist

Featured Vocabulary:
- Big
- Eating
- Fighting
- Inside
- Leaves
- Little
- Meat
- Outside
- Sharks
- Snails

✓ Big- page 2, lesson 1
✓ Eating- page 4, lesson 2
✓ Fighting- page 4, lesson 2
✓ Inside- page 4, lesson 2
✓ Leaves- page 3, lesson 1
✓ Little- page 3, lesson 1
✓ Meat- page 2, lesson 1
✓ Outside- page 4, lesson 2
✓ Sharks- page 6, lesson 3
✓ Snails- page 3, lesson 1
Functions Checklist

Lesson 1: Preview and predict
Lesson 2: Remember and interpret
Lesson 3: Reflect and personalize
Lesson 4: Analyze and create
Lesson 5: Evaluate and summarize
Lesson 1
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Lesson 1 modifications

**Objective:** Students will have the opportunity to activate prior knowledge and predict.

**Implementation**

1. Encourage the use of oral language by engaging the ELL with questioning. Model to the ELL what teeth are with a model or picture. Engage all students by asking them, who has teeth and why do we have teeth? Ask the students what would happen if we wanted to eat an apple but didn’t have any teeth? (time 5 minutes)
2. Predict what the book is about by previewing the front cover of the book and the title. Ask the students to orally respond to the following questions: What do you think this book is about? What do you see in this photograph? Repeat student responses slowly and clearly giving the ELL a second opportunity to process the information. (time 5 minutes)
3. Read aloud “Teeth”. Point to each word while reading asking the students to follow along with his or her eyes. (time 1 minute)
4. Explore the test by asking the students to respond orally. Have you ever lost a tooth? How did the empty space inside your mouth feel? What do you think the first teeth that people get are called? Repeat class answers orally. (time 3 minutes)
5. Build understanding: which animals’ teeth interest you the most? What do the look like? How would you describe the lions’ teeth? Display pages 2 and 3 and point to the picture while asking the questions. (time 2 minutes)
6. Create a graphic organizer. Ask students to list different animals mentioned in the book and to draw each animals’ teeth. Create this graphic organizer as a whole group. Teacher will write and draw student responses.
7. Orally compare the chart as a whole group. (time 5 minutes)
8. Send home with students, home conversation. Home conversation is offered in both English and Spanish.

Assessment- writing prompt: Ell will draw a picture of an animal showing its teeth. (time 10 minutes)

**Total time:** approximately 31 minutes

**Functional:** Preview and Predict.

**Notional:** Teeth
Throughout this lesson I modified several instructional aspects as well as
individualized practice. The first modification I made, encouraging the use of oral
language for the entire lesson. This modification is possible when the teacher asks open
ended questions to initiate group discussions. Encouraging the use of oral language at an
early stage in literacy will benefit not only the ELL but mainstream students as well.
Secondly, using tangible items as a reference for the ELL will enable him or her to have a
better understanding of the topic. In this lesson I suggested using a teeth model. These
models are easily accessible and will engage the ELL offering a more clear understanding
of what is being discussed. Another modification I have suggested is creating a graphic
organizer as a whole group. Allowing each student to actively participate will give the
ELL a better understanding of what the graphic organizer represents and how to interpret
the organizer. The last modification I have implemented involves assessment. The
assessment, drawing and labeling an animal showing its teeth, has been modified for the
ELL to only draw the animal showing its teeth. This will alleviate some stress for the
student allowing him or her to concentrate on the drawing only.
Lesson 2
Objective: Students will have the opportunity to remember and interpret the text.

Implementation:
1. Engage all students by discussing home conversations from previous night. Encourage the use of oral language by asking the students the following questions: what did your family members tell you about teeth? Did you learn something you didn’t know before? Invite students to orally share family responses. (7 minutes)
2. Redirect student’s attention to the text. As a whole group locate the title of the book. Teacher will read the title with the students as well as point to the title on the front cover of the book encouraging the ELL students to look at the title and read it along with the class. Next encourage the students to remember the text read from the previous day. Ask the students, what animal in this book has no teeth at all? The students will respond ducks. Then ask the students, how do you suppose ducks are able to eat if they have no teeth? Why are teeth important to animals and people? (5 minutes)
3. Ask the students while reading the book today to notice how different animals use their teeth. Write this objective on chart paper and reread it as a whole group. This will give ELL students a focus for reading. (2 minutes)
4. Read aloud “Teeth”. Point to each word while reading asking students to follow along with his or her eyes. (1 minute)
5. Students will clarify and confirm text. Display page 2 and read aloud. Ask students how lions use their teeth. Also ask students to think of other animals that eat meat. Invite student responses and repeat student answers orally. (5 minutes)
6. Display page 3 and read aloud. Ask student how snails use their teeth. What other animals eat leaves? Do we ever eat leaves? Invite student responses and repeat student answers orally. (3 minutes)
7. Display page 4 and read aloud. Explain to the students that an elephant grows its teeth on the outside as well as the inside of its mouth. Ask students which set of teeth an elephant uses to eat. Which set of teeth do they use for fighting? What are the outside teeth called? Invite student responses and repeat student answers orally. (3 minutes)
8. Revisit chart paper. Remind students that while reading today they noticed how different animals used their teeth. On the chart paper create a graphic organizer explaining how different animals use their teeth. As a class create a bubble map. Encourage the use of oral language. Draw and write student responses. This graphic organizer will aid the student in their journal entry. (5 minutes)
9. Compare and contrast using the graphic organizer. Ask students what are some ways that all teeth are alike? What are some different ways teeth are used for? (2 minutes)
10. Begin writing prompt. Using the graphic organizer ask ELL to draw a picture of an animal using its teeth. Share student responses. (10 minutes)
11. Conclude by asking students to think about how your teeth are like the teeth of animals and how your teeth are different. (1 minute)

Assessment- writing prompt: Using the graphic organizer ask ELL to draw a picture of an animal using its teeth.

Total time: approximately 39 minutes

Functional: Remember and interpret

Notional: Teeth
Throughout lesson 2, several modifications for the ELL students are incorporated. The use of oral language is encouraged throughout this lesson. When reading the book together the teacher should encourage the students to read along with the class. I suggested if the ELL student cannot read the words to remind that student to follow along with his or her eyes while the teacher points to the words while reading. A graphic organizer will be made as a class to prepare the students for assessment. The use of pictures as well as words is a necessary modification to give the ELL students a clear understanding of the graphic organizer.
Lesson 3
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Lesson 3 modifications

Objective: Students will have the opportunity to reflect and personalize the text and content.

Implementation
1. Engage all students by continuing to discuss the first home conversation. For the ELL students, write the home conversation question on the board and reread it together pointing to every word. This will encourage the use of oral language. (6 minutes)
2. Remember the text and content from the previous day. Ask the students what animal has inside teeth and outside teeth. Point to the teeth inside your mouth and also touch you face when you state outside teeth. (1 minute)
3. Read aloud “Teeth: Point to each word while reading encouraging the student to read along. (1 minute)
4. Reflect on the text just read. Ask the students which animal has no teeth at all. Then ask the students if they have always had teeth. Display page 7 of the big book. Point to page 7 encouraging the ELL student to notice the detail in the picture. Explain to the class that this baby only has two teeth. Ask the class if they think the baby will ever grow more teeth. (3 minutes)
5. Reflect on page 8. Encourage the use of oral language by asking the students the following questions. “What happened to the girls tooth? Will she always have an empty space where the tooth fell out? How many sets of teeth will you grow?” Listen and discuss student responses. (3 minutes)
6. Display page 6 and reread it giving the ELL students a second chance to comprehend the text on that page. Encourage the use of oral language by asking the following questions. “What do you notice about the shark’s teeth? Do they grow straight up and down like ours? How are sharks teeth shaped? (3 minutes)
7. Making connections to the text is extremely important especially at the primary level. For the ELL students, making connection to him or herself will allow him or her to relate directly to the topic. This will give the ELL student a clearer understanding of the content. Begin by asking the students to define to the class what baby teeth are. Explain the teeth students that most individuals will lose his or her baby teeth by the time he or she is an adolescent. Ask the student to describe personal experiences what it is like to lose a baby tooth. Together, create a graphic organizer titled “Goodbye Teeth”. On the left hand side write the student’s names. On the right hand side ask each student how many teeth he or she has lost. Examine the graphic organizer together. (7 minutes)
8. Personalize the experience of losing a tooth by discussing the difference between baby teeth and permanent teeth. Discuss the different ways we can keep our permanent teeth by taking good care of them. (3 minutes)
9. Send home with students, home conversation. Home conversation is offered in both English and Spanish. The home conversation for lesson 3 is “English: Ask
family members what they do to take care of their teeth. Spanish: Pregúntales a los miembros de tu familia que hacen ellos para cuidar sus dientes.”

Assessment: writing prompt: Ask the ELL student to draw a picture of a loose baby tooth and to explain orally what will happen when it falls out. (10 minutes)

Total Time: approximately 37 minutes

Functional: Reflect and Personalize.

Notional: Teeth
Throughout lesson 3 many of the same modifications were practiced such as the use of oral language, creating a graphic organizer, and interpreting the text through pictures and language. One new modification I added to this lesson was making text to self connections. Making text to self connections will give the ELL students an opportunity to interpret the text at a personal level. This will allow the ELL to have a clear understanding of the text and content by relating to him or herself.

Another home conversation is also sent home at this time. This allows the ELL to practice the use of oral language outside of school. The home conversation is sent home in both English and Spanish allowing family members to understand the topic to be discussed at home together.
Lesson 4
Objective: Students will have the opportunity to analyze and create text.

Implementation
1. Engage all students by discussing home conversation #2. Write home conversation on chart paper and read aloud together. Ask students to explain how family members take care of their teeth. (5 minutes)
2. Introduce ELL students to interactive writing. Explain to the students that today they will be creating the graphic organizer using their own writing. The graphic organizer is titled “Take Care of Your Teeth!”. Ask for student volunteers to come up and write different ways we can take care of our teeth. For the ELL students, ask them to draw a picture of a way we can take care of our teeth. If possible ask the ELL student to label his or her picture. (7 minutes)
3. Next give the students an objective for the read aloud. Ask the students while reading the book together to try and imagine what the animals would look like if they brushed and flossed their teeth like people do. (1 minute)
4. Read aloud “Teeth”. Point to every word while reading aloud encouraging all students to read along. (1 minute)
5. Revisit the objective. Ask the students the following questions “What would a shark look like using a toothbrush? What would happen if an elephant needed a dentist? Do you think animals take care of their teeth in the same way people take care of their teeth? (5 minutes)
6. Prepare ELL students for tomorrow’s lesson by asking them to be thinking about what they have learned about teeth thus far. (1 minute)
7. As a whole group prepare students for the daily assessment. Explain to the students that they are going to have the opportunity to make a class book. Ask students to close their eyes and choose a favorite animal and imagine the different ways that animal might be taking care of it teeth. Explain to the students that momentarily they will have the opportunity to draw their animal pictures and write about them. ELL students will be asked to draw and label pictures. When the pictures are completed they will be combined to make a class book and placed on display. Model ELL instruction. (5 minutes)

Assessment- ELL students will create 1 page each for class book. Each ELL student will create a picture of his or her favorite animal taking care of its teeth. (10 minutes)

Total time = approximately 35 minutes

Functional: Analyze and create.

Notional: Teeth
During lesson 4 the modification of interactive writing is introduced. Interactive writing allows the ELL student to practice his or her writing with guidance of the classroom teacher. Interactive writing with the use of oral language is a great classroom exercise for an ELL student. This combination provides the ELL with support in his or her writing and success with writing.

Secondly, as an assessment students will create a class book. The class book will allow the ELL to display his or her writing as well as share it with classmates. This again will give the ELL success while writing boosting his or her confidence. When the ELL has self confidence in what he or she is producing in writing, most likely that ELL students will continue to take risks. Inevitably this will improve his or her writing skills. The ELL will continue to move to the next level in his or her writing.
Lesson 5
Objective: Students will have the opportunity to evaluate, summarize, and celebrate the text.

Implementation

1. Continue to engage students in home conversation #2. Ask all students the following questions, “How do your family members take care of their teeth? Why is it important to take care of your teeth?” (5 minutes)

2. Expand the ELL student’s knowledge by making text to world connections. Explain that we know that people and animals have teeth. Ask the students “What other things have teeth? Can you think of other things that have teeth?” Guide ELL student’s answers for successful text to world connections. (5 minutes)

3. Write reading objective on chart paper and read together. The objective is while reading the book, think about all the things you know about teeth. (1 minute)

4. Read aloud “Teeth”. Point to each word as you read aloud. (1 minute)

5. Together review what students have learned about teeth. Create graphic organizer titled “What We Know About Teeth”. On the left hand side of chart paper ask students to explain what they knew about teeth before we began this unit. On the right hand side of the chart paper ask student to explain what they know about teeth now. Accompany pictures with the words for the ELL students. (9 minutes)

6. Encourage the use of oral language by evaluating the book “Teeth”. This will allow feedback for the teacher on student comprehension. The exercise will also give the teacher feedback on how much the students enjoyed the book. Suggested questions, “Did you like reading “Teeth”? Why or why not? How would you describe this book? Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?” (7 minutes)

7. Encourage the students to celebrate by reading his or her student copy of the book to a family member. The ELL student will have the option to retell the story in his or her own words to a family member. (1 minute)

Assessment: ELL. students will draw a picture that shows one way teeth are important and use words to describe the picture. (10 minutes)

Total time: approximately 39 minutes

Functional: Evaluate and summarize text.

Notional: Teeth
The final lesson includes several modifications for the ELL students. The students continue the use of oral language while making text to world connections. This will give an opportunity to the ELL students to use the information from the text to make connections to his or her world.

Also the text is celebrated at home when the ELL student is asked to use his or her take me home book to retell the story to a family member. This celebration will make the final connection from school to home. Since the student will receive a copy of the book they will now begin to start an at home library.
Original Lessons
Stage 1: Activate Prior Knowledge and Predict

Featured Book Bag Suggestions
Big Book
comb, zipper
photographs or x-rays of teeth
related literature

*Highlighted words are featured vocabulary.*

Engaging Students
Who has teeth? What do teeth do? Why do we have teeth? Encourage student discussion. What would happen if you wanted to eat an apple but you didn’t have any teeth?

Predicting
Display the front and back covers of the Big Book and cover the title. Ask students to examine the photographs. What do you think this book is about? Display the title page and cover the title. What do you see in this photograph? Read aloud the title of the Featured Book.

Let’s read Teeth and see what we can find out.

Read aloud Teeth.

Exploring
Have you ever lost a tooth? How did the empty space inside your mouth feel? Explain that people usually have two sets of teeth: baby teeth and permanent teeth. Display page 7. Why do you think the first teeth that people get are called “baby teeth”?

Building Understanding
Which animals’ teeth interest you the most? What do they look like? Invite student responses. How would you describe the lions’ teeth? Display pages 2 and 3 of the Big Book. Invite students to discuss the various animals’ teeth.

Display and read aloud page 3. Did you know that snails have teeth? What do you think snails’ teeth look like?

Invite students to list on a graphic organizer the different animals mentioned in the book, and to draw each animal’s teeth beside its name.
Graphic Organizer: Animal Teeth Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animals and Teeth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>donkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>snail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparing
Which animal on our chart do you think has the biggest teeth? Which one do you think has the most teeth? What do you imagine would happen if a lion had the teeth of a snail?

Display and read aloud page 4. Do people have inside teeth or outside teeth? What do people use their teeth for?

Home Conversation #1
Read aloud the Home Conversation. Distribute photocopies to students for family discussion.

Ask family members to tell you something about teeth.

Elephant have inside teeth for eat and outside teeth for fight.

Have students determine whether words, syllables, or letters are missing from the message. Then ask them to identify what part of each word is missing (i.e., beginning, middle, or ending). Write the following word endings below the sentence: -s, -ed, -ing. Have students predict which ending belongs with elephant, then write the predicted ending at the end of each mystery word in the sentence. For example, “Elephants have inside teeth for eats and outside teeth for fights.” Read the sentence. Ask students if it make sense and why or why not. Repeat with the other two endings. Ask if the same ending can be used to complete each mystery word and why or why not. Experiment with all of the listed endings until the message is deciphered.
Engaging Students
Discuss Home Conversation #1. What did your family members tell you about teeth? Did you learn something you didn't know before? Invite students to share their family discussions.

Remembering
What is the name of our Featured Book? What animal does this book say has no teeth at all? How do you suppose ducks eat when they have no teeth?

Why are teeth important to animals and people? Encourage student discussion. When we read the book again today, notice how different animals use their teeth.

Read aloud Teeth.

Clarifying and Confirming

Display and read aloud page 3. How do snails use their teeth? What other animals do you think might eat leaves? Do you ever eat leaves?

Display and read aloud page 4. An elephant grows teeth on the outside as well as the inside of its mouth. Which set of teeth do elephants use for eating? Which do they use for fighting? What are the outside teeth called?

Walk students through the rest of the book and discuss how sharks and people use their teeth.

Let's create a graphic organizer to show how animals and people use their teeth. Help students draw or write their responses on the graphic organizer.

Graphic Organizer: How Animals and People Use Their Teeth Bubble Map

Writing Prompt:
Draw a picture of and write about an animal using its teeth.
Comparing and Contrasting
What are some ways that all teeth are alike? What are some of the different ways that teeth are used?

Wrapping Up
Think about how your teeth are like the teeth of animals and how your teeth are different from the teeth of animals.

Write the words from the high-frequency and common words list on name tags or pieces of masking tape. Give each student a tag to wear and explain that the word on the tag will be that student’s name for the following game. Play a version of “Simon Says,” substituting the high-frequency and common words for the students’ names. Have “Simon” address individuals instead of the group. For example, “Has says, ‘Was touch the ground.’” If Was successfully completes the command, that student becomes Simon and he or she gives another student a command. For example, “Was says, ‘You blink your eyes.’” Continue until each student has been Simon at least once.
Engaging Students
Continue discussing Home Conversation #1. **What did your family members tell you about teeth?** Encourage students to share what they learned in their family discussions.

Remembering
**What animal has “inside teeth for eating and outside teeth for fighting”? What are these outside teeth called? What do you imagine it would be like if you had tusks on your face?**

Read aloud Teeth.

Reflecting
**Which animal in the book doesn’t have any teeth? Have you always had teeth?** Display page 7 of the Big Book. **This baby has only two teeth; do you think she will grow more? When?** Encourage student discussion.

Display and read aloud page 8. **What happened to this girl’s tooth? Will she always have an empty space where the tooth fell out? How many sets of teeth will you grow?** Discuss and clarify for students.

Display and read aloud page 6. Encourage students to examine the photograph of the shark. **What do you notice about the shark’s teeth? Do they grow straight up and down like ours? How are the shark’s teeth shaped?**

Making Personal Connections to the Text
**What are baby teeth?** Explain that most people will lose all of their baby teeth before they are adolescents, and that not everybody loses the same teeth at the same age. **Do you think animals have baby teeth like people do? What is it like to lose a tooth?** Invite students to share their stories.

On a graphic organizer, record how many teeth students in the classroom have lost. Invite students to write their names and the number of teeth each has lost.

**Graphic Organizer: Good-Bye Teeth Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>How Many Teeth Lost?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towanna</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Writing Prompt**
Draw a picture of a loose baby tooth and write about what will happen to it when it falls out.
How many teeth has the whole class lost? Help students add up the number of teeth lost and record the grand total. What do you think happens to all those teeth? Encourage student discussion.

Integrating and Personalizing
Remind students that children lose their baby teeth and grow a set of permanent teeth. Define and discuss permanent. Sometimes people lose their permanent teeth, too. Why do you think this might happen?

One way people can avoid losing permanent teeth is by taking good care of them. How do you take care of your teeth? Discuss routine brushing, dental checkups, mouth guards, and so on. Encourage students to continue thinking about ways to keep their teeth healthy.

Home Conversation #2
Read aloud the Home Conversation. Distribute photocopies to students for family discussion.

Ask family members what they do to take care of their teeth.

Elephants have ___side teeth for eating and ___side teeth for fighting.

Decide whether words, syllables, or letters are missing from the message. Provide the clue that the mystery syllables create two-syllable, compound words. Ask students to add words to ___side to form compound words (e.g., inside, outside, upside, topside, underside). Provide the clue that the compound words in the mystery message are opposites. After identifying inside and outside as the two mystery words, discuss the two types of teeth. Ask what the outside teeth are called and what they are made of. Finish by having students read each word in the sentence while clapping out the syllables. List the one-, two-, and three-syllable words in the sentence. Ask if all of the two-syllable words in the sentence are compound words.
Engaging Students
Discuss Home Conversation #2. **How do your family members take care of their teeth?** Encourage students to share their family conversations. **Why is it important to take care of your teeth?**

Interactive Writing
**What are some ways that we can take care of our teeth?** Encourage students to contribute their ideas and to recall what they may have learned from their family discussions. Then help them write words or draw small pictures describing ways to maintain healthy teeth.

Graphic Organizer: Taking Care of Teeth Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Take Care of Your Teeth!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brush every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go to the dentist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don't bite on hard things like ice cubes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When we read the book today, try to imagine what the animals would look like if they brushed and flossed their teeth like people do.

**Read aloud Teeth.**

Imagining
**What would a shark look like using a toothbrush? What would happen if an elephant needed a dentist?** Encourage students to use their imaginations. **Do you think animals take care of their teeth in the same ways that people take care of their teeth? Why or why not?**

How might animals take care of their teeth? How do you think they keep their teeth clean without using toothbrushes?

Creating
Explain that students will have the opportunity to make a class book about animals taking care of their teeth. Invite students to each choose a favorite animal and imagine different ways it might take care of its teeth. Model drawing and writing about an animal taking care of its teeth and post the model in the writing center. Explain that students will later be able to draw their own animal pictures and write about them, and that afterward the pictures and writings will be combined to make a class book. This whole-group instruction prepares students for work in the writing center.
Wrapping Up
Be thinking about which animal you'd like to draw and how it might take care of its teeth.

Provide student partners with a list of words from the high-frequency and featured vocabulary lists. Ask students to do an open sort of the words and to explain their categories to the larger group.
**Stage 5: Evaluate, Summarize, and Celebrate**

**Engaging Students**
Continue discussing Home Conversation #2. **How do your family members take care of their teeth? Why is it important to take care of your teeth?**

**Expanding Knowledge**
We know people and animals have teeth. What other things have teeth? Can you think of other things that are said to have teeth? Guide students to consider combs, rakes, zippers, gears, and so on.

As we read *Teeth* today, think about all the things you now know about teeth.

**Read aloud Teeth.**

**Reviewing**
What did you know about teeth before we began reading *Teeth* and having our discussions? Encourage student discussion. **What do you know about teeth now?** As students share their ideas, record the information on a graphic organizer and display in the classroom.

**Graphic Organizer: What We Know About Teeth Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What We Knew Before</th>
<th>What We Know Now</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teeth help chew food.</td>
<td>We have permanent and baby teeth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some animals use their teeth to chew food.</td>
<td>Ducks don't have teeth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush every day.</td>
<td>Animals have different shapes of teeth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Synthesizing**
What do teeth help people to do? Discussion might include biting and chewing food, talking, and smiling.

**Evaluating**
Did you like reading *Teeth*? **Why or why not?** Encourage student discussion. What did you like most about it? What did you like least?

What other animals' teeth would you like to know about? If you could ask author Joy Cowley to write more about teeth, what would you ask her to write about?

How would you describe this book? Would you recommend this book to a friend? **Why or why not?**
Celebrating
Read or retell your Take-Me-Home™ book to a family member and place a star on your Featured Book poster. Send Take-Me-Home books home with students.

Mystery Message
Snails have little teeth that make holes in _ _. Have students determine whether words, syllables, or letters are missing from the message. Brainstorm a list of words that begin with the letter _l_. Read the sentence aloud and identify words on the list that could sensibly complete the sentence. Provide the clue that the mystery letters will complete a plural word. Write the vowel digraph _ea_ after the _l_. Ask students if they know the mystery word now. Ask what other letters are needed to spell the word. Next, circle the words in the sentence that are plural words. Write _snail, tooth, hole_, and _leaf_ under the corresponding words in the sentence. Compare and contrast the singular and plural forms of each word.
Appendix
Teeth

Story by Joy Cowley
Dear Parent or Guardian,

This selection is one of the stories your child has been reading this year. It is part of Breakthrough to Literacy®, an interactive multimedia program for beginning readers.

You can contribute to your child’s reading success by sharing in the reading experience. Here are some suggestions:

• Take turns with your child reading aloud.

• Talk with your child about the experiences of the characters in the stories.

• Use new words from the stories in everyday conversations with your child.

• Invite your child to observe, in the everyday world, the common words, objects, and colors presented in the stories.

• Encourage your child to share the stories with other family members.

Have an enjoyable reading experience!
This book belongs to:
Teeth

Story by Joy Cowley
Lions have big teeth for eating meat.
Snails have little teeth that make holes in leaves.
Elephants have inside teeth for eating and outside teeth for fighting.
Ducks have no teeth at all.
Sharks have rows of teeth. The old teeth fall out and new teeth grow in.
My baby sister is six months old. She has two teeth.
I have lots of teeth, but one came out in an apple.
Home Conversation #1
*Teeth*
Ask family members to tell you something about teeth.

Conversación Casera #1
*Dientes*
Pídeles a los miembros de tu familia que te digan algo acerca de los dientes.

Home Conversation #2
*Teeth*
Ask family members what they do to take care of their teeth.

Conversación Casera #2
*Dientes*
Pregúntales a los miembros de tu familia que hacen ellos para cuidar sus dientes.
English Language Learners and Great Opportunities!

This issue of the Newsletter highlights English Language Learners (ELLs) who now account for eleven percent of students enrolled in elementary school in the United States, approximately 5.5 million. About 80% of these students speak Spanish. (Programs for these children are sometimes referred to as ESLs [English as a Second Language] and ESOLs [English Speakers of Other Languages].) Although young English Language Learners may often seem vulnerable to failure, research gives us, and them, hope.

While ELLs may have special curricular needs, what they need is no mystery. If they are exposed to a rich early literacy environment that includes systematic, formal instruction in English, they respond not only successfully but enthusiastically. The Breakthrough program has been credited by our interviewees for this issue as playing a significant part in those successes. We hope you will find reports of their experiences instructive.

For the past several years it has been our custom to spotlight a school in this January issue of the Newsletter. Its purpose is to recognize schools that have exemplary Breakthrough to Literacy programs in their schools, establishing benchmarks to which other schools may aspire. This year we have chosen the Fulton County schools in Georgia because they have a highly successful ESOL program.

Fulton County extends 70 miles from north to south including Atlanta. (Atlanta public schools are a separate entity.) In 2003 it had a population of over 818,000, 48% being white, 44% African American, 3% Asian and 5% others including Native American and Hispanics. Twelve percent live below the poverty level. It includes 52 elementary schools, twenty-one of which have Breakthrough programs (9 pre-k, 34 k, 19 grade 1, and 3 grade 2). In doing this spotlight we visited two of the schools. In addition we talked to teachers from three other schools who came to our interview sites. Here we present some of the responses to our interviews. — Editor
Maria Montalvo (MM): “I am the ESOL coordinator for Fulton County. I came from the Dominican Republic to New York City when I was 12 years old. Having been an ESOL student, and having been a teacher of both English and Spanish languages gives me a perspective for evaluating the impact of Breakthrough on the education of ESOL students. I think it’s just a great program.

“We have officially adopted the program for our ESOL program, particularly for our sheltered programs which are for new arrivals with no English.

“The teachers who are trained in the Breakthrough program have gained a tremendous amount of understanding of literacy development. Literacy development for second language learners is different from first-language literacy. Breakthrough allows the students to go through that second language learning process without having to have the teacher constantly with them. The computer part of it provides an excellent tutoring piece which the students can access on their own. We have a lot of information that shows that the students who start out with Breakthrough in pre-k and first grade are considered to be fluent in English by the time they are in third grade, and that is a great goal for us.

“I get a lot of calls from teachers who want to have Breakthrough. They tell me that it is more effective than the language arts series that they are teaching. So I don’t get any resistance to implementing Breakthrough! A lot of ESOL teachers don’t necessarily come in with an elementary background; they have second language teaching experience but they don’t necessarily have an understanding of how children learn to read, much less how to read a second language. So they gain a lot of instructional strategies with the process, having a lot of support, a lot of coaching.

“The component that is very strong is that students read everyday, that they actually get to read on the computer by themselves and get to hear themselves. That’s really important for
an ESOL student who is able to hear a word 50 times, to hear a sentence, to hear a story and be able then, in their own comfort zone, repeat it. I think that component is extremely important for the ESOL student. And the other component that is extremely strong is the coaching, the staff support that is ongoing for the teachers.

"Here at High Point Elementary (the location for this interview. ed) there is a parent program to help the parents understand the Take-Me-Home books by having a Saturday program during which the parents sit at the computer, reading the same books that the students are taking home to read. It’s a program for the adults to learn English through exposure to the Breakthrough books that their children are reading. They get to hear and try to repeat the questions. They get to ask questions, all of this taking place as the parents are learning English."

Nancy Said (NS): “I am the principal here at Evoline C. West Elementary. I’ve been a principal for about 20 years, all of it in Fulton County, and the last seven years here. I taught in a variety of grade levels: first, second, third, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth grades before becoming an administrator.

“Our county staff development and ESOL departments first learned of the Breakthrough system. A number of principals were invited to learn about it. At that meeting Jerry Zimmermann from Breakthrough spoke about the system. We were looking for something that would help us with the children who don’t come to us ready to start to read.

“Breakthrough sounded like a program that would help us and I got fired up about it. The system was willing to buy a classroom unit for our ESOL department. I knew that what was good for ESOL students would also be good for our other students too. We found some money and bought some classroom units. Then the challenge was to get the classroom teachers on board.

“In the beginning none of our kindergarten teachers wanted to adopt the system. But finally one of them agreed to try it in our ESOL kindergarten classroom. That year we had 17 ESOL children in that class. Twelve of the 17 tested out of the ESOL program at the end of the year even though they had come to us with very little English. Those results started winning teachers over right and left, and the next thing I knew I had more teachers wanting the system than I had funds for.

“We have teachers who believe in the strategies and approaches that Breakthrough uses. So it is a good fit for us. Once you have some really good teachers doing good things, other teachers see that and buy in. Now that they know that Breakthrough has upgrades, the teachers are asking when we can get them.

“We are located in suburban Atlanta but with a rural kind of feel. The area is growing and the school population is growing. We have a mixed school population here with about 60% qualifying for free lunch. It is a very supportive community which faces many of the same issues as more urban schools.

“It’s our objective to improve students’ performance in reading, writing and math, all of which are pretty basic for most schools. One of the things that the teachers like about the Breakthrough program is that it has all of those elements in it. We believe that literacy
has increased our students’ achievement in all the language arts. Incidentally, we introduce writing as soon as the children can pick up a pencil. When they tell us something, we write it down so that they can see how it looks.

“One of the things that initially motivated me to look further at Breakthrough was the fact that we were not just purchasing a program but also very good support and staff development. Those elements make it stand out as a very effective program.

“We’ve got children who come in not knowing a letter. Now they are doing the grade level work in second grade. So you know that our program is working, which accounts for the fact that our teachers don’t have any reservations about the Breakthrough program.”

Caroline Cartin (CCa): “I started working at Evoline C. West as an Early Intervention Program (EIP) teacher. The following year I was trained for Breakthrough to Literacy to work with second graders.”

Charrel Coleman (CCo): “I came to Fulton County in 2002. I began by teaching first grade EIP and that’s when I experienced having the Breakthrough program in my class. It was just wonderful for my students. I had students who had no idea how to spell their names. They had no letter or sound recognition. I used the Breakthrough program and tutoring. I stayed with them thirty minutes after school and let them utilize the computer program with Breakthrough. That seemed to generate their self-esteem and they felt like they could do the tasks they were given. After that I taught preschool where I also had the Breakthrough program. By the end of the year all my students were reading.

“My students love to record their voices while reading the stories. By the end of the week they have taken ownership of the book. Even on Friday there is something more that they learn about the story. It’s not difficult to keep their interest up by asking questions and expanding their thinking.”

CCa: “Our Hispanic children absolutely love the Take-Me-Home books. They cherished them so much that they kept on bringing them back to school to keep them in their folders, frequently saying things like ‘I don’t want them to stay at home because my little brother will get them.’

“We have encouraged the children to engage in conversations at home. My parents look for the books. I forgot one time and I got many notes asking where the Breakthrough book was. Now the children see that talking with their parents is their responsibility and sometimes it’s hard to move on from children’s reports of what their parents said.”

CCo: “The graphic organizers are great for teaching children to be actively responsible for their learning. It’s just a great way for the children to organize their thoughts and start learning it early. It’s very helpful to have the organizers built into the teachers’ manual for each of the days of the week.”

Myrna Lehman (ML): “I am an ESOL teacher here at Evoline C. West. Three years ago I was teaching ESOL to fifth graders at
another school. The ESOL kindergarten teacher said, "You have to come to my classroom and see the BTL program." I visited her classroom and could see why she liked the program so much.

"It takes between 68 to 78 repetitions of hearing the word before the children can incorporate it into their vocabulary. BTL is absolutely a wonderful tool for meeting that need. It's not the only tool we use but it's the most consistent tool. They can see the same thing over and over. See the pictures, see the words, and hear the words. That's what they need.

"This past year was the first year that third graders were required to pass the CRTS (Criterion-Referenced Competency Test) to move on to the fourth grade. The children who started with BTL in kindergarten all tested out of ELL by the end of first grade and were in a good position to pass the CRTS at the end of third grade."

Ngaire Shepard-Wills (NSW): "I am originally from New Zealand. I came to Evoline C. West in 2000 and taught first grade for three years during which time I had my Breakthrough training. Last year I taught grade four in England for a year and now I'm back here teaching grade four."

Sue Keller (SK): "I'm also a first grade teacher. I come from England. I have been here three years using Breakthrough in first grade."

Scott Feathers (SF): "I taught first grade at Evoline C. West for 6 years. After time out to get a masters degree I am in my first year of teaching a fifth grade class."

NSW: "Even though we may have a wide range of abilities in the class, Breakthrough gives us something collectively that provides the same experiences, the same understanding so even though we may split up into various instructional reading groups to write during our language arts time, we can always relate because we all have that common understanding. I have had children come in my class not speaking any English and have watched them progress to be fluent readers and speakers in the upper grades. I give the Breakthrough program much credit for their progress.

"When I had my first Breakthrough training and saw the elephant, I thought how silly. No one is going to believe this. But I came from teaching grade four down to grade one. The class absolutely loved it. One of the parents worked for Delta Airlines. We made up a game where one day Peanut, the elephant, just disappeared. We acted like we didn't know where he was. The next day a postcard showed up from the airport saying he had gone on a trip. The parent would take him on her flights and would mail postcards from places where she had landed. She would send back pictures of Peanut flying in first class. Other people would mail post cards from other places: New Zealand, Tokyo, New York, the Mall of America in Minnesota and Colorado. We put up a great big map and tracked Peanut's vacation journey. The day that he turned back up was very, very exciting. We had airplane food and goodie bags. It was super and it really captured their interest. Even at the end of the year they were still talking about Peanut's trip."

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SK: “I just found that, based on the stories, the creative writing really took off because you could extend the stories. At the end of last year we did a great big picture of Sidney Harbour. I told the class that it might be a real place. Since I’ve been there, I found some photographs of the harbour. And they were so into this as a real place. Then somebody said, “Can we draw a picture?” So we all drew a picture of the Harbour and Opera House. They were talking about things like the spelling of Sidney Harbour. We talked about driving on the other side of road and other local customs because their interests went beyond the harbour itself.”

SF: “I, too, have seen kids get inspired by realistic stories, so much so sometimes, that they begin to do their own research. When they took responsibility for themselves, and their writing, I saw some tremendous changes in their ability level.

“I have found the documentation from the Breakthrough reports very helpful. They are used by our student support team which determines what help the kids need to be able to get where they need to be on grade level. We also use that information to track progress over time to determine if we need to use alternative strategies.

“At the end of the year the students took part in a PTA program. Each class selected its favorite book and put it on an easel. One child turned the pages while another child read it. The parents knew the story, of course, and they enjoyed watching their children perform. We tied the readings in to a description of our literacy program. The program was very well received.”

Lisa Silverstein (LS): “I am the principal here at High Point. While I have been the principal at High Point only since last November, this is my 11th year in Fulton County. I have been a kindergarten teacher, a third grade teacher, a curriculum support teacher at one of the elementary schools and an assistant principal before I moved here last November. We have Breakthrough programs in our three pre-k classrooms, six kindergarten classrooms, and three ESOL classrooms using the first grade program.

“The teachers love the Breakthrough program. We definitely see a difference in students who are using Breakthrough and students who aren’t using Breakthrough. We have a large ESOL Hispanic population and I think it’s wonderful for those students as well. Originally Breakthrough was adopted in Fulton County through the ESOL department. However, here at High Point it was adopted in the kindergarten and pre-k classrooms as well to get those children off to a good start. The teachers find it easy to use and easy to correlate with our other reading programs.

“My parents support the program tremendously, as does our PTA. In fact, it is a program that the PTA has really taken under its wings. They allow a certain amount of money each year to support the Breakthrough to Literacy program.

“Here at High Point our school population consists of 60% Hispanic, 15% Caucasian and the rest mostly African American. Our test scores are good: 80% of our Hispanic population is meeting or exceeding standards on the CRCT. While we have a very strong ESOL department, I also believe that getting them off to the right foot is very important and having Breakthrough in pre-k and kindergarten helps them get off to a strong start.”
Dena Hammond (DH): “For years I worked with kindergarten children with special needs, primarily those with communication disorders. Sixteen years ago I started the ESOL program here. The number of students enrolled has grown in no small part because of the influx of Spanish-speaking families to this area. This year 62% of our school population is Hispanic so we’ve really seen it grow tremendously over the last 16 years. We were the first school in Fulton County to pilot the Breakthrough program. At the time we had four ESOL teachers. We also had what we call ‘survivor classes.’ These were for the children who came into the country new to the language, new to the culture. They spent a portion of the day in these classes. It was a really good situation to be able to have Breakthrough in a homeroom-based class where the kids could get on the computer very regularly, more than once a day. We had sheltered-like third, fourth and fifth grades and used the first grade program. We placed the children who had very limited skills and no English in the pre-k program. We used the kindergarten program for children with higher skills. Some of the teachers outside the program were skeptical about the program in the beginning but they couldn’t help noticing the changes and were won over.”

Lynne Smejkal (LS): “I'm a kindergarten teacher at Hembree Springs Elementary. I originally started with bilingual education in New Mexico, working with Navajo English-speaking children. Then I did a little over 10 years in California as a bilingual teacher of Spanish and English, both in regular classrooms and in special education classrooms. About four years ago I obtained my present position at Hembree Springs Elementary.

“Hembree Springs draws from a very mixed population. We have some children who come from very privileged social economic backgrounds; we have a number of children who come from a more challenged economic background. Last year I had one child who spoke Korean. Another child's parent had been transferred here for a 5-year assignment from Japan. We have a number of children whose parents come from the Ukraine and speak Russian. We also have a number of children from India and Pakistan.”

Lane Long (LL): “I am in my 26th year of teaching. Most of my years of teaching have been in kindergarten. For the past two years I've taught a sheltered kindergarten class geared for those children who have little English. It's not specifically an ESOL class but it's for those children who are acquiring English. I have had the Breakthrough program to use the last two years.

“Approximately a third of the school population of Heards Ferry comes from the Hispanic community. We also have many neighborhood children who come from privileged homes who choose to come to our school.”

LS: “I find that the semantic approach helps me build vocabulary at a number of levels. I have children who are experiencing English for the first time; some who have heard English from brothers and sisters; and some whose parents may speak a little bit of English but aren't comfortable with it. So we get a broad range of English skills.

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“Earlier this month we visited a dairy. We had begun to read *The Farm Concert*. We had also introduced *The Pumpkin*. With *The Farm Concert* we worked with the beginning students, identifying the name of the animal making the sound. We also did work with the setting. 'Where are the animals?' 'They're in the field.' 'Where is the farmer?' 'He's in the house.' Those who already were speaking some English would start chatting, using the sentence structure to describe what was going on. In the case of *The Pumpkin* we talked about how things grow. We got into pumpkin growing, peanut growing, cotton growing and flower growing. We talked about the seed and how the plant grows from a little root, working with sequencing as well. For the beginners we worked with three or four basic words. The more intermediate students talked about the stories in short sentences with picture aids. They described different steps that were involved in the pumpkin growing. And our more advanced students were reading the story.”

LL: “I have a sheltered class in which most of the children have very little English. The wonderful thing about the Breakthrough program is that it completely puts them at ease. They love the stories on the computer. The stories help to build their language and connect their oral language to the print. It’s such a comprehensive program because it has all the components from stories that the children can connect from the computer to the activities in the classroom, including wonderful graphic organizers.”

LS: “The program allows us to put children into the curriculum at their level and, when is becomes very easy for them, you can bounce them up according to the various bench marks. The response from the non ESOL children and their parents has been wonderful. There’s a lot of talk going back and forth when we are highlighting stories in the classroom. I had one child last year who had been retained from the previous year. He came in as my Spanish-speaking expert because he’d done Breakthrough before. He was showing my English-speaking children, as well as the Hispanic children, how to work the program. His self esteem just shot up and he did fabulously the second time around in kindergarten. He came out a really strong reader, much more confident in himself. I attribute much of that to Breakthrough.

“In connection with the Take-Me-Home books I record the guided reading technical questions into the story. At the end of each question I pause. The parents are reporting that the children are answering the question about the text like I’m standing right there. The tapes also help those parents who don’t have any English along with brothers and sisters. So it’s not just the child that’s in my room being targeted. It can help the whole family.”

LL: “At the end of the year we have what we call ‘Muffins for Mom.” All of the mothers are invited in for little brunch. In preparation, last year the children wrote their own books about mom. We had ESOL children writing ten pages or more. They got up and read the books to their mothers. Later I did computer print-outs of their stories to make them look professional. Then I laminated them and the children took them home. The mothers were touched.”

LS: “We do a lot of within-the-class tutoring. Those who are doing well can read the story to a child who is not so advanced. By seeing me model how pull out the vocabulary my English-speaking children do same thing with children who are learning English. It’s really nice to see such bursts of confidence.”
LL: “The more confident the students feel, the more excited they get, and the more enjoyable it is for me to teach. Since I started with the Breakthrough program I have felt so much better about coming to school each day. Breakthrough is a program that makes sense for the children. When the children are excited, teaching is a happy experience.”

Vera Woods (VW): “I currently teach Kindergarten here at High Point Elementary and I’ve been here for going 16 years now. I came to know about Breakthrough through a teacher who was teaching in our ESOL program. I was fascinated and rather jealous. By the end of year, her children had so much more confidence. Their writing skills were so much better than some of the children who were in regular kindergarten classes. So six years ago Breakthrough was installed in all the kindergarten classes. I have been so happy with the results, just with the total program. It’s amazing what it does, not only for the children but how it helps me as a teacher and my planning. The parents look forward to the books that are coming home and knowing that their child is actually reading and writing.

“I have 18 children in my class, half of whom are speakers of other languages. Last year was the first year that our pre-k class had Breakthrough and a majority of my children had already had Breakthrough. Typical comments are: ‘I know what to do, I know how to paint and draw, I know how to click on the stories, I know how to go to another bookshelf, here’s my name, I’m going to able to work in this program that is just for me, I know my letters, I know my sounds, I’m ready to do some other reading, I’m ready to retell the story all on my own.’ So the children are fascinated. A lot of the children are learning the alphabet and you hear them singing the alphabet song. This week they’re playing with the words in The Pumpkin. So you hear the melody ‘jimkin, jimkin, jimkin, jimkin,’ and they’re having a ball. And occasionally I may have to go over because, by this time, they are so into

their reading that everybody in the classroom will turn around and start saying ‘jimkin.’

Recently we visited a farm after we had read The Farm Concert. The kids were making the appropriate sounds. They were so delighted. They were having fun and reading was fun. They were involved.

“Any books that we’ve already read are put in a bin. When they have finished with an assignment the children know that they can go to the book bin. Their favorite thing is to go through all of those Breakthrough books that we’ve been studying. Our fourth grade reading buddies read to our kindergartners but what is so exciting and so amazing is that our kindergartners go and read to the prekindergartners. They’re thinking ‘I can do this all on my own and it is so much fun.’ It gives them an opportunity to have fun reading. Then they get in the writing portion of the program and sound out words. They enjoy writing a continuation of the story at the end of the book they are reading.

“With Breakthrough the children have their own private tutor. They can read on their own, getting help when they need it. Later I can find out how the student is doing and what areas he or she is having difficulty with. I can later report to the parents about their child’s accomplishments and what the child is currently working on, and where some additional help is needed. It compliments my teaching strategies.

“The children are impressed when I pull up the teacher report with the student’s name on it. I can tell them how many lessons they have completed. In our newsletter at the end of the week we send home the Breakthrough word explorer for the week. It tells how many children have explored ‘X’ amount of words and the books that we’ve read. These things help to establish ownership of the program by the children.”
What impact does Breakthrough to Literacy have on students who are English Language Learners (ELL)?

A response for this question came from the Live Oak School District in Live Oak, California. The district first implemented Breakthrough to Literacy five years ago. Educational Technology Coordinator Maggi Reser, mreser@santa cruz.k12.ca.us, recently shared these comments:

1. Breakthrough to Literacy improves vocabulary and teaches phonics;
2. Breakthrough to Literacy makes ELL children feel more confident as both readers and writers;
3. Breakthrough to Literacy provides audio models that promote good pronunciation;
4. Breakthrough to Literacy helps ELL children develop an understanding of language structure;
5. The Breakthrough to Literacy Individualized Software Instruction offers abundant opportunities for word recognition;
6. Breakthrough to Literacy’s use of extra ‘lap-reading time’ at home extends children’s language studies;
7. Breakthrough to Literacy’s visual support of concepts—graphic organizers, posters, cards, and so on—is robust;
8. Breakthrough to Literacy’s approach to instruction improves listening and following directions skills dramatically.

How do I handle the update reports?

The 6.0 Individualized Software Instruction generates update messages to provide information based on patterns of student work. The Current Updates Report provides information about students that may require your attention. At the end of each week, the program presents a list of students who may either be excelling or who may be having some difficulty at their current placements. Click on the update to see detailed information. The Current Updates Report also offers a suggested action for each student named in the report. You may either accept or decline the suggested action. If you accept the suggested action, the student’s placement is automatically reset as indicated. When you select either Yes or No, the student’s name is removed from the Current Updates Report and inserted in the Updates History. Some teachers find it helpful to designate one day each week to review the update reports. Some find it easier to view reports on one computer at a time and so have a designated day for each computer. Others prefer to review all the updates on same day.

What can families do to help children?

Breakthrough to Literacy offers a variety of family materials in English and Spanish. Home Connections booklets and videos are available at prekindergarten through grade 1. The Book-of-the-Week and Featured Book posters and stars present the opportunity for children and families to keep track of the stories that have been featured in the classroom. Each of those stories has a Take-Me-Home book that is sent home at the end of the week in which the story is featured. Children can read the book aloud with their family. In prekindergarten and kindergarten, additional family activities are provided in the blackline masters. Parent Letters can be found at our website, www.breakthroughtoliteracy.com. Home Conversations are presented twice a week. The conversations are great ways for families to build oral language, share family stories, and support classroom work.
Classroom Teacher Newsletter Survey

We are eager to include material in the Newsletter which will be both interesting and helpful to classroom teachers with the Breakthrough to Literacy program. Please help us by completing this short questionnaire and returning it to us. Please be as specific as possible. — Editor

Name _______________________
Professional address _______________________
E-mail (optional) _______________________
Present teaching responsibility _______________________
Years having Breakthrough to Literacy in your classroom ______

What do you like best about Breakthrough to Literacy?

Are there improvements you would like to see in Breakthrough to Literacy?

What kinds of information would be most helpful to you in future issues of the Newsletter?

Please describe an activity which you have used in connection with Breakthrough to Literacy that we can consider for inclusion in the "Teacher's Corner" of the Newsletter.

Feel free to insert an additional sheet of comments in responding to any of these queries.

Thanks very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. We welcome your partnership in making the Newsletter best for you.  

Fold, seal with tape, and drop in the mail.
800-874-2851

Our Customer Support Team

By reader requests we are happy to put faces to the voices that many of you have heard when you called in with questions. Matt Heckroth and Jason Heilman are Breakthrough's main voice to the outside world. They are responsible for answering any customer questions that come from teachers, administrators, support staff, and other Breakthrough employees. Their main goal is to assist customers in the installation and everyday usage of the program. Since they have been with Breakthrough through program upgrades and the introduction of new programs, they can assist with most computer issues. They do so with friendly respect and thoroughness. Tip your hats, guys!

If you have a question or comments for the customer support team, they can be contacted at (800) 874-2851 or by e-mailing btsupport@mcgraw-hill.com.

Your ranks continue to grow. Our latest count indicates that Breakthrough to Literacy is now in 41 states, 465 school districts, and 1958 schools, with 8990 classrooms serving 179,800 children. You are members of this special academy that is offering so much to the children we serve.
Teacher’s Corner

Mindy Layfield, prekindergarten teacher, Oakhurst Elementary, Fort Worth, Texas, mlay@ftworth.isd.tenet.edu (4.11)

“We love letters because they make sounds. Our friends that walk up and down the halls read our sounds because we love to write. We share our stories with all of our friends at Oakhurst. We love our ducks. We can count them and tell you all about our duck tales.”

Gabriele Adams, Patricia Fuller, Vivian Wren, Nina Shuster, Kamisha Young, prekindergarten teachers, Dillow Elementary, Fort Worth, Texas (4.11)

These teachers find creative ways to integrate daily writing with the Book-of-the-Week. They use Go-for-Thinking charts and graphic organizers to extend their students’ knowledge and vocabulary. They feel that using Daily Comprehension Strategies and Critical Thinking Skills with the Book-of-the-Week have enhanced their children’s performance in reading and writing.

Patricia also encourages her children to complete lessons in Explore Words by placing a star on their rotation cards for every lesson completed. Children are excited to explore words, and she reports that they are more motivated to complete lessons.

Clara Williams, pre-k teacher, Sunrise Elementary, Fort Worth, Texas (4.11)

Clara extends her Book-of-the-Week, The Gotcha Box, with daily writing. She reports that her students have had great fun creating “Pop up Books” to help integrate reading, writing, and creative art. The “Pop up Books” are the children’s written responses.

Amy Coleman, first-grade teacher, Ockerman Elementary, Florence, Kentucky (6.0)

Here are some excerpts from a letter that Peanut, the elephant, sent to the children in her class:

“I have noticed that some of you are doing an excellent job in certain sections on the computer:

Amy is answering 76% of the questions without any help from me.

Monroe is answering 40%.

In the vocabulary section Justin is answering 47%.

I would like Alex and Nathan to try reading the vocabulary and answering questions independently. Only click on the clues if you need them.

Everyone needs to always follow the schedule!

Make sure you are not just sitting at the computer. I can tell who is working and who is not. I let Mrs. Coleman know.

Your friend,

Peanut”
Phyllis Cowley, second-grade teacher, Lee Elementary, Hampton, Virginia
winstir@cox.net (6.0)

"My grade 2 students enjoyed reading Lady Liberty, a story that corresponds to several state standards. They generated questions to research by using the relevant text features. Locating the answers to their questions, they produced a paragraph in their own words. We then draped ourselves in green tablecloths and constructed 'crows' and 'torches.' Armed with our graphs and costumes, we visited the second-grade classrooms to present our work. Since the first graders must recognize symbols of America as part of their standards, we presented for them as well. I recited the Emma Lazarus poem 'The New Colossus' as my contribution to the drama. Bringing the statue to life really enhanced our reading experience."

Marge Vento, prekindergarten teacher, Cassadaga, Elementary, Cassadaga. New York
mlv1417@netsync.net (4.11)

"I use Roy G Biv as one of my first books at the beginning of the school year as we learn about colors. I made a 'life-size' Roy B. Biv to match the clothes he wears. I hung it by the computer. Several children drew pictures of Roy G. Biv. My student teacher brought in clothes to match and the children loved dressing up as Roy G. Biv. Next, each child picked a rainbow color and 'feet painted'. We then displayed the 'feet rainbow' for all to see and to review colors."

Tell us about your children who have made exceptional progress in learning to read, write, and use language. What results did you observe? How do you account for them? What role did you play? As you see, we share this information with our readers to help them establish their own reference points and expectations. Use the enclosed self-addressed, postage-paid form to write us today! — Editor
Soaring to Success through Dual Language and Breakthrough to Literacy

Rio Grande City, Texas: Some weeks ago I had the opportunity to talk with the principal, Adolfo Peña, Jr., and several of the teachers who are very excited about the progress made by their students who have the Breakthrough to Literacy program, especially in light of the fact that nearly all of their pre-k students speak only Spanish when they enroll at La Union.

La Union is in a poor, rural farm community with a high migrant and at-risk population. The campus is a Title 1 district in which nearly 100% of the students are entitled to free or reduced lunch. The Breakthrough program has gradually been introduced in the kindergarten through second-grade classrooms. It is Mr. Peña’s goal to have the program in all pre-k through second-grade classrooms as funds become available.

—Editor

Adolfo Peña: “I became aware of Breakthrough to Literacy when I was a consultant for the bilingual dual-language program in Region 1. During that time I was doing research for that program to see what programs were out there from the different publishers. I visited the Dallas Public Schools where I came across Breakthrough to Literacy, and saw the success that the students, especially the bilingual students, were having with it. After I became a school principal, I started purchasing it for my campus. I have been involved with Breakthrough for six or seven years.

“We have a pre-k program which is bilingual since all students in pre-k are bilingual and 100% fluent in Spanish. Most of the students begin to acquire English in pre-k, but for the most part they are Spanish dominant.

“We have a dual language program at La Union. We work with our students in their native language, and build on the second. While Spanish is the dominant language, we have a great need to have a strong English component. Breakthrough offers that to us. Among
the many misconceptions in bilingual education is that if students are learning two languages at the same time, they get confused. However, based on the research and our experience with students using the dual approach, that is not the case. The students are learning both languages at the same time and they are not confused.

"On this campus we focus on consistency from one grade to the next. We start by identifying our students' needs and develop intervention plans to make sure that we are addressing them at every grade level. Having targeted each student’s needs through different data and reports, every teacher can tell you the students who are still having difficulty in English or in Spanish because we track our student in both languages. From beginning reading skills to fluency to comprehension, teachers can tell you exactly where their students are from assessment in English and Breakthrough’s reports. They use the data to guide instruction for centers, and after-school tutorials as well.

"In Texas we have a test called the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) which measures student progress in different areas. The test is given at third, fourth, and fifth grades. Four years ago 50% of our students passed the test at the third-grade level. This past year 98% passed it, quite an improvement in four years! In fourth grade we have also had gains. They were not as striking since very few of those students had gone through the Breakthrough program when they took the test.

"At the beginning of the school year we have parent meetings. First, we have a general assembly. Then the parents go to the classrooms for more one-to-one with teachers. The teachers explain the programs that they have in the classroom, the expectations they have for the children, and the goals for the school year. They describe the Take-Me-Home books and the role of the parents in working with the children at home.

"The district has started to focus on our campus a lot, since just four years ago it was the lowest performing one in the district. Now we are one of the top two, out of eight elementary schools. District officials have been coming around inquiring about the materials and training involved in the Breakthrough program. After this coming year, as we continue to grow and accomplish more, I expect that a lot more attention will be directed to us."

I also spoke with seven of the teachers involved in the La Union program. Here is a sample. — Editor

Julie Saenz: "I have been teaching for 13 years, my very first year in prekindergarten and the following 12 in kindergarten. I have been involved with Breakthrough for three years.

"I like the fact that the Breakthrough program follows the developmental stages of reading skills in kindergarten, going from sentences to syllables to sounds. It has a lot of vocabulary development opportunities which are very necessary in the early stages, especially in kindergarten. I really like the 15 minutes of one-on-one time; I also like the reports that I am able to utilize for my intervention reading groups. The data make me more aware of the skills that the children are lacking.

Breakthrough to Literacy is very much aligned to the TPRIs (Texas Primary Reading Intervention). It is very strong in phonemic-awareness. I can just go on and on.

"The children really enjoy going to the computers every day. We come from an area where most parents do not have computers in their homes, so just the fact that their child is using a computer as an educational tool impresses the parents; they are so grateful. A lot of the parents don't have the income to buy books for their students so they are grateful for the Take-Me-Home books. I am grateful that the titles in the program integrate so nicely into other areas. It makes planning a lot easier.

"I wish you could hear my children when I record them reading the Big Books that they listen to on the computer. It almost brings tears to your eyes because they can really read them. It really helps the Spanish speakers because they are picking up the English so quickly."

_______________________more...
Sylvia Garcia: “I have been teaching for three years, all of them here at La Union. This is my second year with Breakthrough. The students love going to the computer. My Spanish dominate students love the program because they are getting exposure to English that they might not otherwise get at home. My English students are getting one-to-one time for reading. Sometimes the parents don’t have the time to read to the students so they are getting that story time that they might not otherwise get.”

Teresa Solis: “This is my 13th year of teaching at La Union and my third year as a second grade teacher with the Breakthrough program. The children come from kindergarten, where they have also had Breakthrough. They are getting their phonics, they are getting their hands on the different components of the program. In first grade they have more exposure, more elaboration, more techniques at higher levels. In second grade we pick them up with more elaboration. It is like a chain link. We get to put them at the levels where they need to be; we get to change the program, gradually increasing the level.

“I see a lot of improvement in our TPRI scores from past years and I think that comes from the fact that in kindergarten they are getting a lot of exposure to language. My students are more advanced than they have been before, and something is happening along the way, in the kindergarten and first grade, that is helping. Breakthrough seems to be the obvious answer.”

Adolfo Peña: “The teachers at La Union consider themselves fortunate to have come across a program that addresses the needs of the ELL students and to have a literacy coach like Carmen Ontiveros, who understands our goal and how important it is for our children to learn English. She also understands how important it is for our children not to lose their native language. Having both languages is the key that will open many doors of opportunity, both personally and professionally.
A Surprise from the Sky

This year the Albany Elementary School in Albany, Kentucky, is embarking on the Breakthrough to Literacy program. The children in the six kindergarten classes got quite a surprise when a helicopter delivered the elephants to the classes. They were promptly named “MacDonald,” “Dr. Seuss,” “Fuzzy,” “Elvis,” “Dumbo,” and “Sugar.” The teachers report that the students are excited to be able to learn to read and write their own names with their new friends.

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*Breakthrough to Literacy* Oracle: “Good instruction seems to transcend characterizations of children’s vulnerability for failure; the same good early literacy environment and patterns of effective instruction are required for children who might fail for different reasons.”

Principal's Corner

The end of a semester provides opportunity for reflection on your school's implementation of Breakthrough to Literacy. Take a few moments to consider the following:

Are you noticing improvement as students read aloud to you? Are they reading with more fluency and expression? Are you observing growth in language development and in oral comprehension as you facilitate Book-of-the-Week or Featured Book discussions in classrooms or chat with students about the Featured Book? Is student writing showing growth?

How have teacher's conversations about student growth shifted? Are the teachers becoming better observers of students? Implementation parameters can be found in the appendices of the Professional Development Guide: Level III (for grades 1 and 2) or the Professional Development Guide: Reports (for grades kindergarten and prekindergarten). These rubrics offer a way to measure the level of implementation of Breakthrough to Literacy at the classroom level.

What information about student growth and implementation progress does the literacy coach have to offer? Schedule a meeting with the literacy coach to discuss the implementation and share observations.