

Literacy Strategy: Content Chants and Songs



About the English Language Development Series

The English Language Development segments from Agua Caliente Elementary School in Cathedral City, California, feature lessons aligned to a six-stage instructional model outlined below.

About this Segment

Teachers use chants and songs to scaffold students' acquisition of content knowledge. This strategy is particularly effective for English language learners.

Pre-Viewing Discussion Prompt

Discuss the role that music, songs, and chants play in your classroom. What do you use it for? What types of music do you share with your students?

Reflection Questions

1. How do the teachers in this segment incorporate chants and songs into their content instruction?
2. How might chants and songs be effective strategies in other areas of teaching (e.g. classroom management, procedures, transitions)?
3. How does the learning from this segment align with your professional development goals?

Agua Caliente Six-Stage Lesson Sequence

- **Introduction:** The warm-up or anticipatory set. Teachers help activate students' prior knowledge and prepare them for new learning.
- **Input:** The teacher-led direct instruction.
- **Focus:** A quick check for understanding. Can be in the form of thumbs-up/down or fist-to-five questioning.
- **Transfer:** Students apply their new learning by working on activities or answering questions independently or in groups.
- **Evaluation:** Students report on their learning through teacher check for understanding, whole-class share-out, or presentations.
- **Extension:** Students take part in engaging, often hands-on activities that provide additional reinforcement of new knowledge.



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Resources from School Improvement Network

Music for transitions. Edivation. <https://pd360.com/#resources/videos/8129>

Relevant Academic Articles

Institute of Education Sciences (n.d.). English language learners. *What Works Clearinghouse*. Retrieved August 21, 2014, from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Topic.aspx?sid=6>

Practical Resources

Spillett, A. J. (n.d.). Strategies for teaching English language learners. Retrieved August 18, 2014, from <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/strategies-teaching-english-language-learners>