

# \* Word Generation for English Learners

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- \* SERP – Boston Field Site
- \* Challenging text books and test questions
- \* General Academic Vocabulary from AWL taught across all content areas
- \* 15-20 min weekly lessons using engaging, controversial topics

## \* Word Generation Program



\* History

Catherine Snow and Claire White led a SERP team to develop 72 weekly units (enough for the span of MS) for all content teachers (not just ELA) to engage kids in brief activities relating to academic language. This was in response to a request from Boston Public Schools.

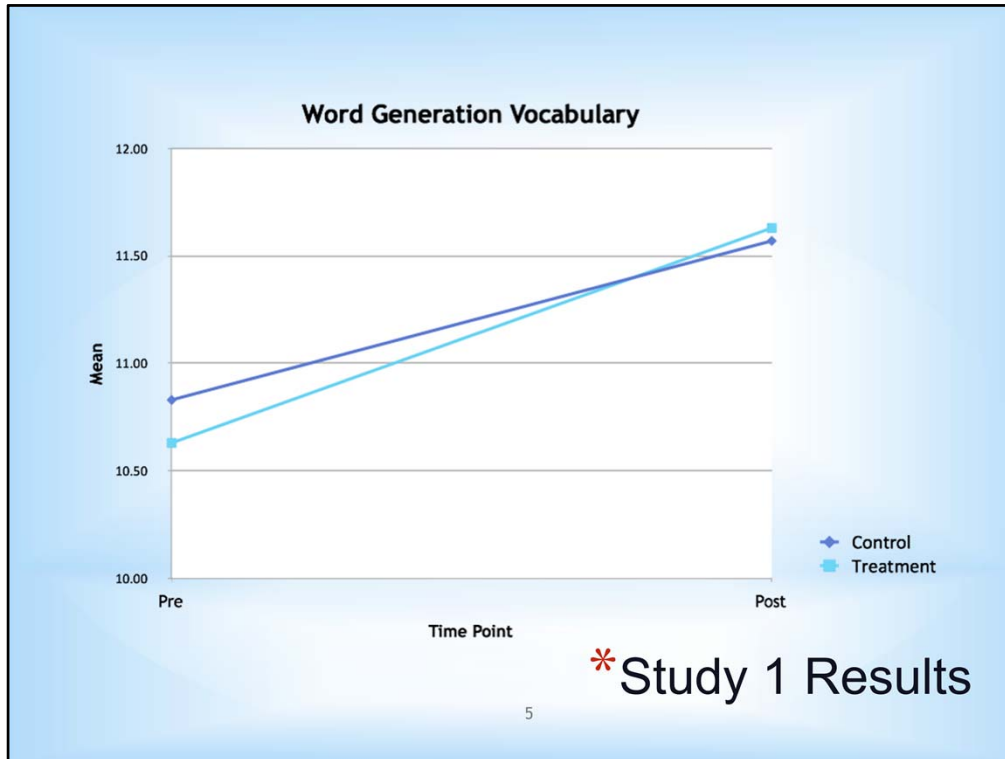
SERP decided to share the resources publicly and built the [wordgeneration.org](http://wordgeneration.org) website.

Several efficacy studies were conducted. The most recent involving SFUSD.

CREATE also used a version of Word Generation as part of a study in Texas.<sup>3</sup>

## \*Examine Data: CST ELA Scores

Treatment Schools	% change 2010-2012	Control Schools	% change 2010-2012
Lincoln MS	+3.8	Western MS	-1.0
Graham MS	+3.7	Stockton MS	-1.2
Elm MS	+6.5	Moss Beach	+1.8
Carver MS	+8.5	Island MS	+0.7
Washington MS	+0.3	Valley MS	-8.3
Mark Twain MS	+7.2		



### **CREATE ELL Word Generation Materials**

CREATE asked SERP to build out a version they used in their study because they were encouraged by student gains. That version was ten weeks and included activities focused on language.

SERP went to Austin and SFUSD to explore what that build-out might look like and came away with this message:

Maintain the integrity of the original WG program. Don't do a separate thing.

Offer intuitive and varied options for implementation.  
Allow for support materials to be used with all students OR as a preparatory/remedial.

**SO...**

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## \*Product Development Update

\*Word Generation - with additional components for ELLs



**Advancing Academic  
Language for All**

## Traditional Word Generation program

### 1. *Keep the format...*

Monday		Weekly Passage, Discussion Questions, Word Chart
Tuesday		Problem of the Week
Wednesday		Thinking Scientifically
Thursday		Debating the Issue
Friday		Write about it



- \* Controversy introduced with a scenario or anecdote
- \* Teacher frequently will read passage and ask both comprehension and open-ended questions
- \* Both sides of issue are introduced
- \* A few facts or statistics
- \* Intentionally unelaborated upon
- \* Five focus words are introduced

The screenshot shows a word generation page with the following content:

Join the national conversation!

**SHOULD OUR USE OF PAPER OR PLASTIC BE AN INDIVIDUAL CHOICE OR BE REGULATED BY THE GOVERNMENT?**

Word Generation - Unit 3.02

**Focus Words**  
strategy | research | cite | phase | data

WEEKLY PASSAGE

"Paper or plastic?" asks a grocery clerk in Boston. You no longer hear that question in San Francisco. In 2007, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors banned grocery stores from using plastic bags to bag groceries. Groceries are put in paper bags or bags customers bring from home. Many applaud San Francisco for creating the bag law and urge other cities to follow the northern California city's example. Others say that the city government has overstepped its bounds. They feel the city took action that it should not have taken.

Supporters say banning plastic bags is a good **strategy**. They **cite research** that says plastic bags are bad for the environment. Our country uses 30-100 billion plastic bags per year, and the bags are piling up in landfills. Plastic is not biodegradable, so the plastic bags will stay in the landfills for hundreds of years. Plastic bags also litter the streets. Some drift out to sea and kill turtles and other sea creatures. Plastic bags are made from petroleum, or oil, a costly resource. People who support the ban say that our earth is being polluted and its resources

are being wasted. Those people argue that we need government intervention to protect the earth and its resources.

Opponents state that city governments have no authority to ban plastic bags. They argue that storeowners are doing their part to help the environment. Some storeowners are **phasing in** recycling programs, such as placing recycling bins for the plastic bags in their stores. People who oppose the ban also point out that plastic bags do not pose any immediate danger. They claim that there are no **data** that prove that paper is better. After all, we chop down trees to make paper bags. In addition, paper bags weigh more than plastic bags, so it costs more to transport them from the factory to the store. They are not as strong as plastic, so we use more of them. Finally, people against the ban argue that private industry pays for the bags, not the taxpayers, so private industry should decide.

What is your opinion? Should city governments ban plastic bags or should the grocery stores decide?

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## Launch Passage

(Monday - ELA Teacher)

- \*Teacher may use word chart as resource or activity
- \*Simplified over the last year in response to feedback
- \*Teacher edition has variations of the words

Unit 3.02  
**Should our use of paper or plastic be an individual choice or be regulated by the government**  
FOCUS WORDS OF THE WEEK

**cite** : (verb) to refer to as an example or as proof  
FORMS: \_\_\_\_\_  
EXAMPLES OF USE: \_\_\_\_\_  
NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

**research** : (noun) systematically collecting information about a subject  
FORMS: \_\_\_\_\_  
EXAMPLES OF USE: \_\_\_\_\_  
NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

**data** : (noun) facts  
FORMS: \_\_\_\_\_  
EXAMPLES OF USE: \_\_\_\_\_  
NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

**phase** : (verb) to do in steps according to a plan  
FORMS: \_\_\_\_\_  
EXAMPLES OF USE: \_\_\_\_\_  
NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

**strategy** : (noun) a systematic plan or method  
FORMS: \_\_\_\_\_  
EXAMPLES OF USE: \_\_\_\_\_  
NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Launch Passage<sub>(cont.)</sub>

(Monday - ELA Teacher)

- \* Word problem that is related to controversy
- \* Focus words are used
- \* Two options are included (Option 1 is 6th/7th, Option 2 is 7th/8th).
- \* Discussion Question at bottom for all students
- \* Teacher edition has answers


## Problem of the week

(Tuesday - Math Teacher)

Unit 3.02

### Should our use of paper or plastic be an individual choice or be regulated by the government

PROBLEM OF THE WEEK



**Option 1:** The Washington Post wrote an article about cities that are **phasing** out plastic shopping bags and switching to paper bags. The people in these cities think that this **strategy** will help the environment. However, the article **cites data** that might make them change their minds. Researchers discovered that 2511 BTUs of energy are used to make a paper bag and just 594 to make a plastic bag. Therefore, the article recommends that a better **strategy** to save energy is for shoppers to bring reusable bags from home.

How much more energy is spent making a paper bag than making a plastic bag?

A) 2,000 BTUs  
B) 817 BTUs  
C) 1,918 BTUs  
D) 1,917 BTUs

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**Option 2:** Taylor is making her weekly trip to the grocery store. Despite the **research** on the benefits of reusable bags, she still uses paper and plastic. She bags her own groceries in two **phases** using a special **strategy**: meats and cheeses in plastic bags, fruits and vegetables in paper.

Write an equation that shows the relationship between the number of paper and plastic bags Taylor uses and the total number of BTUs it took to make those bags. Use the **data cited** in problem one. Let  $p$  = the number of paper bags,  $c$  = the number of plastic bags, and  $t$  = the total number of BTUs.

**Discussion Question:** Researchers have pointed out problems with using paper bags as well as plastic bags. The **data cited** above illustrate one of those problems: making bags takes energy. To protect the environment, some cities passed laws to **phase out** plastic bags. Was this the best **strategy**? Can you think of a better one?

\* BTU (British Thermal Unit) is a standard measurement for heat energy.

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- \* Data from a science experiment from a fictional class
- \* Focus words are used
- \* Requires students to use scientific language
- \* Discussion questions at bottom engage students in scientific argumentation
- \* Teacher edition has answers

Unit 3.05  
**Should our use of paper or plastic be an individual choice or be regulated by the government?**

**THINKING SCIENTIFICALLY**

Ms. Seery and Mr. Chen are talking about the plastic and paper bags that most people get from the grocery store each time they go. **Chen said** her reason for using paper bags instead of plastic, "Most plastic bags take at least a hundred years to break down and be absorbed by the earth." "Interesting point, Chen," responded Ms. Seery. "but I just read about a new kind of plastic made from corn that is supposed to break down more quickly than regular plastic."

"Switching to corn plastic could be a **strategy** to help with the problem of too much trash in landfills," said Chen. "I think we should **phase out** regular plastic bags."

"Not so fast, Chen!" said Ms. Seery. "We shouldn't make a claim just because your teacher mentioned an article. Let's do some **research** to find out more. Maybe someone in our class can help by doing an experiment and collecting some **data**. Anyone interested?"

→ Chen was very interested and quickly volunteered with her friend Angelo to create an experiment that tested bags in dirt.

**Question:**  
 Do paper bags, regular plastic bags, and biodegradable plastic bags break down at different rates?

**Hypothesis:**  
 Paper and biodegradable plastic will break down faster than regular plastic.

**Materials:**

- Samples of each bag material
- Markers, gloves, shovel, labels to stick in dirt, small pail of sand
- Scale

**Procedure:**

1. Get and a problem a paper bag with a mass of 250 grams. To the same with regular plastic and with biodegradable plastic.
2. Bury them in the same area and label each spot.
3. Every four weeks, dig up each sample and measure the mass. Then rebury each sample.

	Paper	Regular Plastic	Biodegradable Plastic
<b>Starting mass</b>	250g	250g	250g
<b>After 2 weeks</b>	196g <i>(lost 54g)</i>	260g <i>(gained 10g of the soil)</i>	224g
<b>After 4 weeks</b>	72g <i>(lost 178g of soil)</i>	286g	196g
<b>After 6 weeks</b>	— <i>(lost all paper)</i>	285g	41g

Do Chen and Angelo's data tell you anything that relates to their hypothesis?

Does it necessarily mean that they are the best choice for the environment? Why do you think there were any exceptions? Do you think you think scientists can help?

In step 1 of the procedure, the students decided to use one 250 gram sample of each bag material. Why is it important that the samples have the same mass? How do you think the data were? Do you think their three 250g samples were all the same size?

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# Thinking Scientifically

(Wednesday - Science Teacher)

positions on the topic

- \* Four positions are included reflecting a range of possible arguments
- \* Teachers conduct debate in a variety of ways (line up, four corners, fishbowl)
- \* Sentence starters provided

## Debating The Issue

(Thursday - Social Studies Teacher)

Unit 3.02

**Should our use of paper or plastic be an individual choice or be regulated by the government**

DEBATING THE ISSUE

**Get ready...**  
Pick one of these positions (or create your own).

**A** City governments should ban plastic bags. There is enough research to show that we are hurting the future of the earth. It is the government's responsibility to ensure our safety.

**B** City governments should limit the number of plastic bags grocery stores give out. People should be encouraged to use paper bags or bring their own.

**C** City governments should not regulate bags. Grocery stores are private, so the government should not be able to tell them how to operate their business.

**D** City governments should ban paper bags instead of plastic. Paper bags are more harmful to the environment.

**E** \_\_\_\_\_

**Get set...**  
Be ready to provide evidence to back up your position during your class discussion or debate. Get down a few quick notes.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**GO!**  
Be a strong participant by using phrases like these.

I believe first...

I agree with you...

You make a good point, but I don't see...

Can you show me evidence in the text first...

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2. and offer additional materials that teachers may choose to use for a more intensive focus on language.



ANNOTATIONS  
FOR TEACHERS

Showing  
teachers the  
elements of  
complex text



EVIDENCE AND  
PERSPECTIVES

Who cares  
about the issue  
and why?  
Relevant facts  
and statistics



GETTING  
ORIENTED

Some basic  
background on  
the issue or  
references in  
the passage



GENERATING  
WORDS

Word study  
activity related  
to the  
conventions of  
English



DEVELOPING  
DISCUSSION

A more  
structured  
option in place  
of or addition to  
the class  
debate

- \* SIOP emphasis on background building
- \* Emphasis on informational text in CCSS-ELA
- \* Accessible language but not overly simplified

**Advancing Academic Language for All**  
Plan with David Condon/2012

**Should our use of paper or plastic be an individual choice or be regulated by the government?**

**GETTING ORIENTED**

The weekly passage mentions San Francisco's laws about plastic bags. Here is some information that might be helpful to students less familiar with this topic.

**Plastic Bags**

Plastic bags are such a small item that it is difficult for many people to see how one bag can be a problem. In America there are over 100 billion plastic bags a year. These bags are made from petroleum. It takes 100 years to decompose. If the bags are not recycled, they will end up in a landfill. In fact, the plastic bags get more tangled and stick to the bottom of lakes or oceans, they cover the floor that the nesting ground of many animals and are dangerous.

**Recycling and Energy**

It's as though you were using glass as your dinner table and someone threw a big punch on the table. Glass tables and your recycling bin are made of the same material. It's not recycled glass, it's not recycled paper.

**Cruse Peltier**

In today's world many people are very concerned about the environment. There are many ways to help the planet and people make personal choices. The effort to protect the environment is an easy way to make a positive impact on the planet. This is why many people have joined the Green Party. They are not required on a regular basis.

**Recycling**

Recycling some materials that would otherwise become waste into valuable resources. Collecting used bottles, cans, and newspapers can save you some money, but it is also an important part of a healthy environment. Recycled materials can be used, made, and reused as well. Recycling reduces the need for landfill. Every generation will be better off if we protect the environment now. People who live in cities are encouraged to recycle and good about what they are doing.

They are proud of their programs and they are not afraid to talk about them. In fact, they are proud of their programs and they are not afraid to talk about them. In fact, they are proud of their programs and they are not afraid to talk about them.

**Biodegradable Products**

Biodegradable products are products that are made from natural materials. They are made from natural materials and they are not afraid to talk about them. In fact, they are proud of their programs and they are not afraid to talk about them.



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# GETTING ORIENTED



- \* Emphasis in CCSS-ELA
- \* Many ELs may not know why anyone cares about these topics
- \* Data and facts for evidence when making an argument (discussion and writing)

**Advancing Academic Language for All**  
 (Join with Your Classroom 2012)

**Should our use of paper or plastic be an individual choice or be regulated by the government?**

**EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES**

<p><b>Some may have this view:</b></p> <p><b>General Public</b>                  Many people care about the environment and want it to be safe and cared for. More people do value recycling. Many cities across America hold their citizens to recycle by providing variety of trash cans for different kinds of waste such as plastic, paper, and metal waste. From this point about being they just to improve the environment. Some people read the labels on all kinds of things with great care. The more concerned people bring their own reusable bags to the store and use them every day. Many of the people who support the law against plastic bags feel that because the government has taken the lead on the legislation, they are happy that the government is well informed and has passed its knowledge on to the rest of the people.</p>	<p><b>But others may think:</b></p> <p>People who are against the banning of plastic bags often feel strongly about not wanting the government to tell people what to do. They want to make their own decisions about whether or not to address a recycling program. Some people say the ban would only contribute to the cost of the bag. They say that they have done to be thinking about bringing a bag that has to be put there properly. They don't see the fact that there are many big landfills as a immediate threat to the world.</p>
<p><b>Shop Owners</b>                  Shop owners are part of the general public so they usually want to support what other people support. They may even reusable bags with their own stores some and bags. They want people to take their bags and use their stores as part of the community.</p>	<p>Some shop owners are all this as a major contribution. They think if they have to be ready to supply paper bags, it will cost a lot more. They think people will be the reaction of the store which they have to have their own bags at the cost. They also don't see this as a major contribution.</p>

**Additional Reading for Teachers**  
 Recycling plastic bag information:  
[www.plasticbagrecycling.org/02/04/02\\_1.php](http://www.plasticbagrecycling.org/02/04/02_1.php)  
 More information about plastic bags:  
[www.ecn.com/2007/08/10/plastic\\_bags/](http://www.ecn.com/2007/08/10/plastic_bags/)  
 The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):  
[www.epa.gov/commerce/100/recycle.htm](http://www.epa.gov/commerce/100/recycle.htm)  
 More facts about waste:  
[www.environment.org/waste/waste/facts.html](http://www.environment.org/waste/waste/facts.html)

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# EVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVES

- \* Emphasis in CCSS-ELA
- \* Features of complex texts
  - \* Dense
  - \* Explicit markers
  - \* Subjects of sentences are abstraction

Advancing Academic Language for All  
 (Pair with *Word Consciousness 3.02*)

**Should our use of paper or plastic be an individual choice or be regulated by the government?**  
 ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Features of Academic Text: Explicit awareness of organized discourse.

**"Paper or plastic?" asks a grocery store in Boston. The no longer than that decision in San Francisco** In 2007, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors banned grocery stores from using plastic bags to bag groceries. Groceries are put in paper bags or bags customers bring from home. Many applaud San Francisco for creating the bag ban and urge other cities to follow the northern California city's example. Others say that the city government has overstepped its bounds. They feel the city took action that it should not have taken.

Many non-fiction texts may begin with a quote or short story to introduce the controversy. For some students, this geographic location. They may wonder why the author began the story but then switches to something that sounds more like a textbook.

**Supporters say** banning plastic bags is a good strategy. They cite research that says plastic bags are bad for the environment. Our country uses 30-100 billion plastic bags per year, and the bags are piling up in landfills. Plastic is not biodegradable, so the plastic bags will stay in the landfills for hundreds of years. Plastic bags also litter the streets. Some drift out to sea and kill turtles and other sea creatures. Plastic bags are made from petroleum, or oil, a nonrenewable resource. People who support the ban say that our earth is being polluted and its resources are being wasted. These people argue that we need government intervention to protect the earth and its resources.

**Opponents say** that city governments have no authority to ban plastic bags. They argue that consumers are doing their part to help the environment. Some storeowners are phasing in recycling strategies, such as placing recycling bins for the plastic bags in their stores. People against the ban also point out that plastic bags do not pose any immediate danger. They claim that there are no data that prove that paper is better. After all, we chop down trees to make paper bags. In addition, paper bags weigh more than plastic bags, so it costs more to transport them from the factory to the store. They are not as strong as plastic, so we use more of them. Finally, people against the ban argue that private industry pays for the bags, and the taxpayers, or private industry should decide.

What is your opinion? Should city governments ban plastic bags or should the grocery stores decide?

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# ANNOTATIONS FOR TEACHERS

- \* ELD instruction should explicitly teach elements of English (vocabulary, syntax, grammar, functions and conventions)
- \* English Learners **need enhanced, explicit vocabulary development**

**Advancing Academic Language for All**  
(pair with Student Conversation 3.02)

**Should our use of paper or plastic be an individual choice or be regulated by the government?**

**GENERATING WORDS**

**Roots and Prefixes**

The **root** of a word is the base part of the word that helps you figure out what the whole word means. It gives the basic meaning. The meaning of the word can be changed by adding a prefix before the root.

For example, the prefix **bio** means that it is related to life. All of the following words have something to do with life or living things.

**Directions:** Match the word with its meaning.

biodegradable	a book about a person's life
biology	using living organisms to make products like pharmaceuticals
biobazard	the science of life
biography	is capable of decaying through the action of living things
biotechnology	material from humans or animals that are dangerous to living things

**Using your knowledge of prefixes and root words, what do you think the following words mean? Write the definition next to each word.**

biodiversity \_\_\_\_\_  
 biosphere \_\_\_\_\_  
 bioweapons \_\_\_\_\_

• What are some other words that have the prefix bio?

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## GENERATING WORDS

- \* ELD Instruction **should emphasize listening and speaking** although it can incorporate reading and writing
- \* ELD instruction should include interactive activities, but they must be **carefully planned and carried out**

Advancing Academic Language for All  
(pair with World Connection 3.02)

**Should our use of paper or plastic be regulated by the government?**

DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS

**Government should limit the use of plastic bags?**

Harm to the environment    Danger to animals    Adds toxic waste to streets

**Government should not limit the use of plastic bags.**

Freedom to choose    Cheap to produce    Convenient to carry

**Step One:** Look at the reasons for both sides of the issue. Think about which reasons are strong and which reasons are weak. Color in the meter above each reason. Think about why you chose the strongest and weakest reasons. Be happy to explain to your partner. Think about how you can use these words: strategy, research, one phrase and data.

**Step Two:** Explain your meter to your partner. Why did you choose a strong or weak rating? Ask your partner questions if you need more information. Challenge your partner if your ratings are different. As a pair, be prepared to argue that one of the issues has stronger reasons.

**Step Three:** Explain to another pair of students in the class which side you think has the better reasons.

**Word and phrases:**

- The strongest reason for banning plastic bags is \_\_\_\_\_.
- That is the strongest reason because \_\_\_\_\_.
- The weakest possible evidence for this claim is that \_\_\_\_\_.
- That is the weakest reason due to \_\_\_\_\_.
- That sounds like a good reason, but what is the evidence for \_\_\_\_\_?
- In some ways, I agree \_\_\_\_\_.
- I agree that it's the strongest. Can you think of any more evidence?
- That's important, but do you think it outweighs \_\_\_\_\_?
- I don't think of that. Can you say more about \_\_\_\_\_?
- We realized that \_\_\_\_\_ has stronger reasons. For example, \_\_\_\_\_.
- What side do you think has the best reasons?
- Do you really believe that?
- Can you think of any reasons that we not considered here?

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## DEVELOPING DISCUSSIONS

- \* Office space for four SERP staff members
- \* Classroom space for 25 participants
- \* Moveable furniture, walls and whiteboards
- \* Allows for teachers to think outside of box (school)
- \* Conference room with large-screen TV for monitor
- \* HD projector on white walls



## SERP Design Center

San Francisco, CA

\*Windows looking out  
on SF Mission  
District and Twin  
Peaks

\*Creative space



## SERP Design Center

San Francisco, CA



\*Abundance of  
whiteboard space

## SERP Design Center

San Francisco, CA

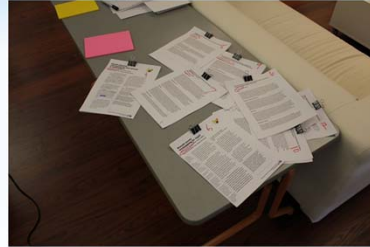
- \* Began writing, editing and laying out materials
- \* Needed a focus group for feedback before final drafts
- \* Group of teachers from a school in San Jose who use WG off the web
- \* Group of teachers and coaches from SFUSD who used WG as part of IES efficacy trial
- \* Members of the Meadows Center who helped with initial create project
- \* SERP staff



## Focus Group



- Pairs of teachers from different organizations examined materials
- Followed a template for feedback



## Focus Group

- Pairs prepared feedback on moveable whiteboards, following template



## Focus Group

Organization explicit for students

Is worth it?

Background info - graphics/kid-friendly, example/non-example, Simplify some advanced words w/in expl. "Dogs are descended from wolves" [come from?]

Points I want to remember - "worth it!"

Discussion Questions

\* Paired Academic Conversation: Directions need to be simplified (kid friendly) → Possibly a video clip of kids engaging in accountable talk using the kid friendly steps would be a good resource for teachers to show kids

Math/Science? Will this fall on ELA teachers?

Statistics & Quotations

\* add source to each fact so kids can practice citing (common core connection)

\* Guiding Question included? How would you use this piece of evidence to support your position?

Statistic & Quotes

Additional information for teachers → great! Teachers love to supplement

Discussion Questions (mis-titled → Plastic Bags)

\* Paired Academic Conversation

Explanation: for the teacher or the student?

→ in the sequence of the weekly lessons can we give teachers an idea of who should use this

Stakeholders - kid friendly

↳ refer to #11 as example - more fact-based and better organized

Unit 3.02-Plastic bags  
 High interest content  
 familiar but varying  
 stakeholders + costs/benefits  
 are not well understood.

Background info.  
 decompose, petroleum, banning,  
 landfills → passage + background  
 → have higher level science words  
 may need footnotes or explanation

\* Yes... if are attentive  
 to annotations.  
 \* More explicit suggestions  
 of

YES! Would work in a variety of schools.  
 The discussion questions component  
 has way too many  
 tasks/elements  
 than is practical.  
 \* Ss can sort the  
 arguments (criteria)  
 then use language  
 to discuss them.  
 (frames, starters.)

In discussion questions component  
 need all the pros + cons  
 in advance (in a scrambled  
 list?) to sort + then discuss

arrows  
 are confusing!

pro	con
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Format - of disc. element doesn't  
 make sense (the arrows)

Love generating words "bio"  
 prefix element

- Pairs presented feedback
- Discussion



## Focus Group