



Dear Colleague,

Thank you for requesting information on *Professional Development for Bilingual and ESL Paraprofessionals: The Aspire Curriculum*.

Bilingual and ESL paraprofessionals (also known as teacher aides or assistants) can provide valuable support to English language learners (ELLs) and their teachers and should be important members of the instructional teams serving ELLs. But most paraprofessionals have not been trained to effectively support students' language development and academic learning, and most teachers are uncertain how to collaborate effectively with paraprofessionals.

The Aspire Trainer's Manual provides a professional development curriculum that is designed to teach paraprofessionals how to help ELLs succeed in school, meet high standards, and perform well on rigorous state assessments. Thoroughly field-tested in several Florida school districts over a 5-year period, this complete, ready-to-use curriculum prepares paraprofessionals to collaborate with teachers and to support instruction for ELLs by using simple, flexible strategies that help students develop effective learning strategies and acquire literacy skills and academic content.

The curriculum is designed to be used in four 3-hour workshops during which paraprofessionals learn about and practice using instructional strategies such as webbing, graphic organizers, reading comprehension techniques, and cooperative learning. Between workshops, each paraprofessional collaborates with a teacher to plan how to use a specific strategy with ELLs in ways that will support the teacher's instruction. For example, the paraprofessional can introduce the topic of an upcoming lesson to a group of ELLs and work with them to make a web, drawing on students' existing language skills (in L1 and L2) and prior experience to prepare them to understand and participate in the teacher's lesson. Throughout the professional development experience with the Aspire Curriculum, each paraprofessional develops a portfolio that records his or her learning, reflections, examples of student work, and teacher comments.

The Aspire Trainer's Manual contains everything needed for the program: workshop agendas, presentation notes, and overhead transparency and handout masters. The program is flexible and may be scheduled in several different ways depending on school and district needs.

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PRESENTER'S NOTES

WORKSHOP 1: GETTING STARTED

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. LEARN THE THREE PRINCIPLES WHICH HELP ESL STUDENTS LEARN ENGLISH FOR SCHOOL
2. PRACTICE USING WEBBING BEFORE AND AFTER STUDENTS LEARN NEW MATERIAL
3. PREPARE TO MEET THE ASPIRE REQUIREMENTS

AGENDA [3 HOURS]

1. OVERVIEW OF THE ASPIRE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
2. THE ROLES OF PARAPROFESSIONALS
3. WHAT ESL STRATEGIES DO PARAPROFESSIONALS USE NOW?
4. THE THREE PRINCIPLES WHICH HELP ESL STUDENTS LEARN ENGLISH FOR SCHOOL
 - A. Increase comprehensibility
 - B. Increase student interaction
 - C. Increase thinking and study skills
5. USING WEBBING *BEFORE* THE LESSON
 - A. To identify what students already know
 - B. To preview the lesson
 - C. To develop vocabulary
6. USING WEBBING *AFTER* THE LESSON
 - A. To check comprehension
 - B. To summarize (and remember) the lesson
7. ASPIRE REQUIREMENTS
 - A. Assignments and portfolios
 - B. Small group meetings
8. EVALUATIONS

**PRESENTER'S NOTES****NEXT MEETING [PARAPROFESSIONALS] BRING:**

1. A TEXTBOOK (OR STORYBOOK) THAT YOUR STUDENTS READ
2. YOUR PORTFOLIO WITH THE FOLLOWING COMPLETED:
 - Preparing to collaborate (paraprofessional and teacher)
 - Assignments 1 and 2 with examples of student work
 - Small group meeting summary 1

PRESENTER'S MATERIALS: BRING STANDARD MATERIALS (SEE OVERVIEW FOR LIST) PLUS ADDITIONAL MATERIALS AS FOLLOWS:

- ✓ Letters for teachers on district letterhead (see appendix for sample)
- ✓ Portfolio contents (see appendix for photocopying instructions) and portfolio covers
- ✓ Chart paper, markers, and masking tape for paraprofessionals to use in group work
- ✓ Sample materials from previous Aspire trainings if available: webs illustrating *before* and *after* lessons, a student's summary, and a paraprofessional's portfolio



PRESENTER'S NOTES

4. THE THREE PRINCIPLES WHICH HELP ESL STUDENTS LEARN ENGLISH FOR SCHOOL (10 MINUTES)

- A. Increase comprehensibility
 - B. Increase student interaction
 - C. Increase thinking and study skills
- Use Transparency 3 (Three Principles) to introduce the Three Principles. Explain each briefly and ask how paraprofessionals implement each principle with ESL students.
 - a. **Increase Comprehensibility** – ESL students are struggling to understand what goes on in the classroom. Paraprofessionals can help students understand (comprehend) by giving them comprehensible information. For example: non-verbal information (pictures, demonstrations), language the student can understand (home language, simpler English), tasks broken down into smaller parts, and making links to what students already know.
 - b. **Increase Student Interaction** – *Understanding* a language is not enough, students must be able to use English. Assessment usually requires students to speak (e.g., answer questions, explain) or to write (e.g., tests, essays, reports). It is important that ESL students *practice* these skills, speaking and writing about content subjects, frequently and successfully. For example, Round Robin (and other forms of cooperative learning) gives all students a chance to say or to write a content idea on a given topic.
 - c. **Increase Thinking/Study Skills** – Students may not know *how* to learn in U.S. schools. Paraprofessionals can teach reading comprehension strategies, graphic organizers, note-taking, higher order thinking skills, etc.
 - Tell paraprofessionals that if their lessons with ESL students include these Three Principles, they will help the students learn English for school purposes. We will use these Three Principles throughout the professional development.



PRESENTER'S NOTES

5. USING WEBBING BEFORE THE LESSON (45 MINUTES)

- A. To identify what students already know
 - B. To preview the lesson
 - C. To develop vocabulary
- Tell paraprofessionals that most of them probably use webbing with ESL students, but now they will learn some new ways to use this technique. Also tell paraprofessionals that they will do this technique, in this way, with ESL students in their classroom and bring the results to the next workshop.
 - a. Follow the “before” procedure on Handout 3 (Webbing) to demonstrate: write “What do we know about Oceans?” on a blank transparency or chart paper and elicit prior knowledge from paraprofessionals without webbing. Then ask paraprofessionals to work in small groups to categorize these ideas and make a web on chart paper.
 - b. Ask which of the Three Principles this technique (webbing *before* the lesson) implements (all three). Ask *when* and *why* paraprofessionals might use this technique (to identify prior knowledge, to preview a lesson, to develop vocabulary). Show Transparency 4 (Why Use Webbing Before a Lesson) and review.
 - c. Ask *why* you didn’t make the web when the ideas were suggested (because the students were freer to suggest ideas and because the *students* had to categorize [this is a good thinking skill], not the teacher). Tell paraprofessionals that they do not always have to use this form of webbing, but it teaches a very important thinking and study skill to students that is not taught when the paraprofessional or teacher does all the categorizing.
 - d. Post the webs and ask paraprofessionals to review them to find new ideas to add to their own web. Ask what this step teaches the students (they build on their prior knowledge, they identify possible incorrect information).
 - If there is time, ask paraprofessionals to practice this form of webbing in their small groups. Assign half the groups to prepare students to understand the story *The Three Little Pigs* (e.g., brainstorm types of houses and their characteristics) and half the groups to prepare students to study Thanksgiving (or another holiday). Post and talk about the groups’ lists and webs. Add other ideas like using Round Robin so that each person suggests an idea in turn.



TRANSPARENCY 3

THREE PRINCIPLES WHICH HELP ESL STUDENTS LEARN ENGLISH FOR SCHOOL

1. Increase Comprehensibility
2. Increase Student Interaction
3. Increase Thinking and Study Skills

This page may be used to make an overhead transparency for a professional development program.



TRANSPARENCY 4

WHY USE WEBBING *BEFORE* A LESSON?

1. Students can identify what they already know (prior knowledge) and use it as a **BASE** to build on.
2. Students can **TRANSFER** knowledge from their first language and culture.
3. If the web is in English, students can begin to think in English about the topic and identify words they know and **VOCABULARY** they need to know.
4. Students can **SEE THE CONNECTIONS** between different parts of the topic and this helps them remember.
5. ESL students can **PARTICIPATE** in the classroom lesson because they are prepared with ideas and English words.

This page may be used to make an overhead transparency for a professional development program.



HANDOUT 3

WEBBING: BEFORE AND AFTER A LESSON

BEFORE THE TEACHER'S LESSON:

1. Write a word or topic in the center of a page.
2. Lead students in brainstorming ideas and vocabulary and list their suggestions as they generate them. (The "web" comes later.) Your goal is to prepare students to understand the teacher's lesson by pre-viewing ideas and developing vocabulary.
 - A. Encourage students to develop their ideas; e.g., ask What do you know about this topic? What do you want to find out...? What other words are related to this one? What do you think of when you see this word?
 - B. The paraprofessional may also suggest new ideas or vocabulary words, then paraprofessional and students discuss.
3. Help students categorize the ideas and words. (It is important that students do as much of the work as possible.)
4. Help students make the web using the categories and the most important ideas and words they have suggested.

AFTER THE TEACHER'S LESSON:

1. Choose "A" OR "B"; then do 2.
 - A. Add new words and ideas to the "before" web in a different color; be sure to review the "before" web for accuracy and correct any errors. Students may illustrate some webs and post them in the classroom, OR
 - B. Develop a separate "after" web, asking students to web the main ideas that they have learned from the lesson. Stories may be webbed using the categories: characters, setting, events, and theme. Textbook information may be webbed using section headings review questions.
2. Help the students write a short summary using the web. Younger students may dictate a summary to the paraprofessional who writes it down. Older students may write a summary individually or in pairs. This helps students organize their thoughts and put them into sentences.