

TPR STORYTELLING®



TEACHING PROFICIENCY THROUGH READING AND STORYTELLING

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LANGUAGE ACQUISITION VS. LANGUAGE LEARNING

We acquire language through comprehensible input (listening and understanding).

- Most language acquisition studies deal with first-language acquisition. A baby may acquire language 10 hours a day for 6

years and would have over 20,000 hours of language acquisition. However, teachers are lucky to have students on task for 600 hours of acquisition.

- We must make every minute count.

Focus on Fluency

To focus on fluency, we teach stories. Fluency comes by:

- Students focusing on the details of a story.
- Students *not* focusing on the language.
- Students picking up the language unconsciously.

What is TPRS®?

TPRS® is a method of second-language teaching that uses highly-interactive stories to provide comprehensible input and create immersion in the classroom.

Key 1: COMPREHENSION

Comprehension is a function of the following:

1. Using vocabulary students know. When we use a word they don't know, we write it on the

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board with translation.

2. Speaking slowly enough to allow students to process what we're saying.
3. Continually editing our speech, making sure students know every word we use.

Key 2: Repetition

Repetition is directly linked to comprehension. As we learn to be repetitive, the comprehension of our students will increase. TPRS® makes the language repetitive in the following ways:

1. Asking repetitive questions, or “circling”.
2. Going back and reviewing storyline. We review by asking questions. As we ask questions, the role of the students is to answer the questions. The review allows the students to process the language faster, thus increasing their confidence in understanding the oral language.
3. Adding details to a sentence one at a time. Once we add a new detail, we review it by asking questions.
4. Using multiple locations. Multiple locations allow for variety in the storyline. Our goal is to limit the amount of new vocabulary in order to increase comprehension (this is especially important with beginning students).
5. Using multiple characters. Multiple characters enhance interest. Multiple characters allow us to ask a lot of questions by comparing and contrasting one character with the other(s). This allows us to practice the same details in creative ways.
6. Verifying the details to the class and with our actors. To verify a detail means to repeat the correct answer after the students answer a question. We do the same process of asking questions & verifying details with the student actor(s). This will build confidence in our students because it will allow them to hear the language more. Verifying the details with the actor(s) will also teach the students the other forms of the verbs used correctly and in context.

Key 3: Interest

We make the class interesting by:

1. Surprise details. We add details to stories by telling the students a new detail or by asking a question and having them guess. As the students guess, we have the option of taking their suggestions. We encourage them by telling them to try to surprise us with their responses. As you model “surprise” details as a teacher, your students will learn to be more creative and will in turn contribute surprise details.
2. Game playing. Since students are trying to surprise us, they are competing to get their surprise detail in the story. This game or competition doesn't get old.
3. Personalization. We personalize our stories based on the culture of our students. We learn details about our students and inject them into our stories.
4. Positive exaggeration. We always make our students look good. We add celebrities to our stories so we can compare our students to the celebrities. Our students *always* look better than the celebrities.
5. Dramatization and dialogue. By acting out storylines and events and adding dialogue, student interest is enhanced. The better the acting, the more interesting it will be.
6. Act out “events”, which are defined on page 16.

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Teach to the Eyes

1. Teach students not curriculum. TPRS® emphasizes that students set the pace of the class not the curriculum. In TPRS® we practice for mastery instead of covering curriculum.
2. Look in individual students' eyes when teaching. Looking in their eyes is a way to connect with students and to assess whether communication is taking place.
3. Hold students accountable by having them answer by questions.
4. Always check for understanding. When we see a student who isn't answering the questions, we call him/her by name and ask him/her the question individually.

Story Retells

Have students frequently retell stories

1. Have all students retell the story to partners at the end of the story.
2. Choose a superstar to retell to the class.
3. Limit retells to 2 or 3 minutes.
4. Have them retell to an adult at night.

Shelter Vocabulary

The average two-year old has a vocabulary of about 300 words and the average three-year old has a vocabulary of about 900 words. Mr. Sandman (answers@yahoo.com) says we only need about 400 to 500 words in everyday speech. Mark Davies in *Spanish Frequency Dictionary* said the 50 most common words in Spanish make up 60% of the language and the top 1000 words make up 85% of the language. We therefore limit the vocabulary we teach to a few hundred words. Limiting vocabulary is the only way we can be repetitive enough for our students to learn to speak.

Don't Shelter Grammar

In TPRS® we teach grammar as vocabulary. Grammar is taught through meaning by getting students to feel the grammar. We try not to shelter tenses or structures. We introduce whatever tense or structure is necessary to tell our story.

We always start out our beginning classes in the past tense. We also have them do readings in the present tense. This gives our students continual practice in both the present and past tenses. We use other tenses when needed for whatever meaning we want to teach. Our students focus on the details of the story, not the language. Students pick up the structures unconsciously. Learning the structures by feel is the key to learning how to speak a language.

Barb Watson's Study

Barb Watson did a study where she compared a TPRS® teacher with a textbook teacher. She filmed both teachers for one hour at four different intervals throughout the year. She studied the teachers and saw that the TPRS® teacher asked questions and the other teacher did not. She found the TPRS® teacher asked about 4 questions a minute.

The other teacher didn't ask questions but did use the vocabulary words. He used them an average of 11 times a class period.

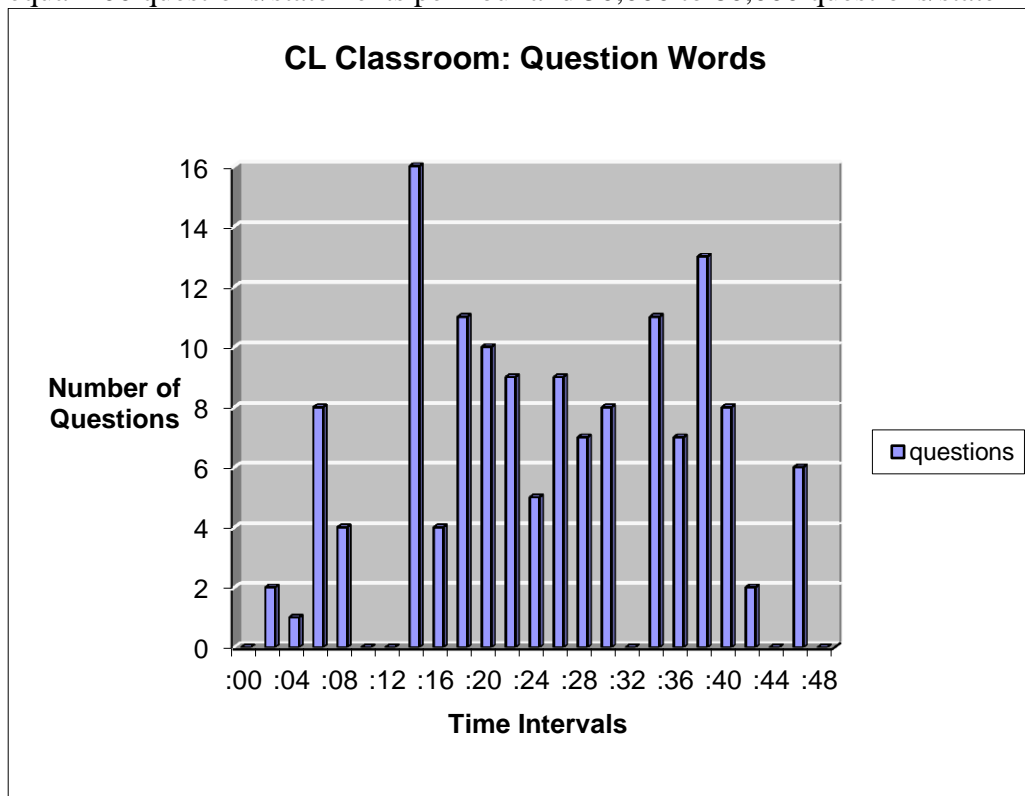
In Barb's study, TPRS® students scored slightly better on a district final exam, and one standard deviation above the control group. The TPRS® group was at the 86th percentile in

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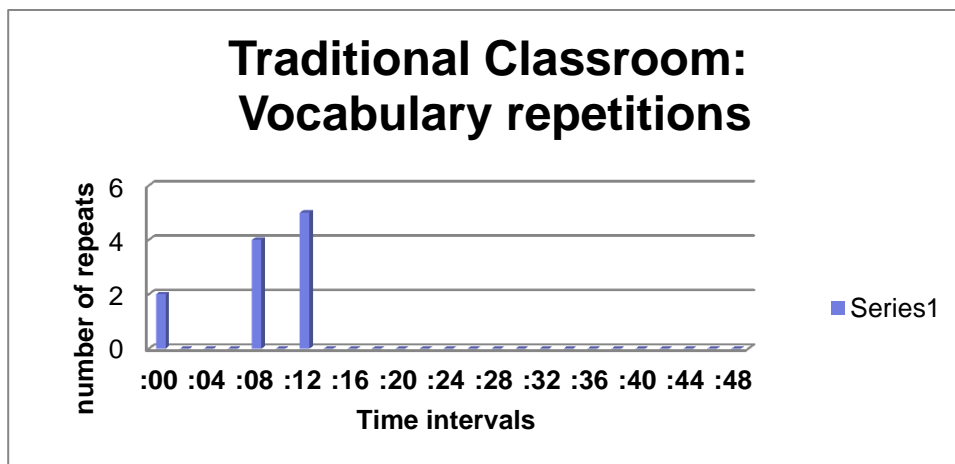
fluency while the other group was at the 50th percentile.

Barb found the TPRS® students were generally not confident they would score well on the district test. The control group students in surveys displayed more confidence. It was surprising to see the TPRS® students score better.

In TPRS® we try to ask our student 4-8 questions (and statements) per minute. That would equal 400 questions/statements per hour and 50,000 to 80,000 questions/statements per year.



This is the chart of the TPRS® teacher in Barb's study.



This is a chart of the control group teacher in Barb's study.

Brain Rules by Jon Medina

Brain Rules

1. We don't pay attention to boring things.
2. We have 30 seconds to repeat something before it is forgotten.
3. Students must pay attention in order to learn. We get them to pay attention with novel, distinctive or unpredictable stimuli. We also use emotions.
4. Most of what we learn is visual. Since people usually forget 90% of what they learn in class within 30 days, we have to use long-term memory teaching techniques to get students to remember. To help them remember, we dramatize the story and use props like wigs, fake hats, stuffed animals, and cardboard cutouts.
5. The initial learning is important, but we can increase the lifespan of a memory simply by repeating it in timed intervals.

There are two types of memories – declarative and non-declarative.

- Declarative memory is learning facts. Eg “Jupiter is a planet” or “The shirt is blue.”
- Non-declarative memory is something learned by feel. Sports, music, art, driving, riding a bike, and learning to speak a language are examples of non-declarative memories.

Learning the rules of language is a declarative memory. Learning to speak a language is a non-declarative memory. In language teaching, learning about language and learning to speak a language are two largely unrelated skills. Information is best remembered when it is elaborate, meaningful and in context. Specific details increase the chance of long term memory.

TPRS® Procedures

There are three procedures in TPRS®: The teacher says the following.

Procedure 1: When I make a statement you will respond with an expression of interest. It sounds like this: OHHHHHHHHHH. We give the students a visual cue to remind them to respond with an expression of interest. One possible visual cue is for the teacher to raise his hands. When something negative happens, we react in a negative way. We may say “Oh no, oh no, that’s terrible!” and have the student do the same.

For variety, students can also make comments like, “marvelous”, “wonderful”, “fabulous”, “wow”, “amazing,” “How terrible” or “I can’t believe it.”

Procedure 2: When I ask a question and the answer is known, your job is to answer out loud and in the target language.

This is a key procedure in the TPRS class. The primary purpose of asking questions is to get the students responding chorally. Their responding to our questions is evidence that they understand.

Procedure 3: When I ask a question and the answer is not known, your job is to guess. These are the student rules for guessing:

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- a. You must guess in the target language.
- b. You can guess though with English proper nouns if the question allows for a proper noun.
- c. When you guess, surprise me. If you don't surprise me, I will surprise you.

We dramatize all of our stories

TPRS® is taught a sentence at a time. When we teach a sentence we talk to student actors. We teach the sentence until we see confidence in our student actors.

The student actors either answer our questions or read the answer from the board. When our students hesitate or show a lack of confidence in any way, we label this a breakdown.

For example, we establish a detail of the story by saying, "Sharon is in Vermont." We then turn to the student and ask, "Sharon, are you in Vermont?"

Sharon then answers, "Yes, I am in Vermont."

The student either answers the question with confidence or hesitation. We are always looking for answers that show:

- Confidence (confidence is a measure of how fast they're able to answer the questions correctly)
- Accuracy
- No hesitation
- Breakdown (i.e. a lack of confidence and/or hesitation) tells us we need to practice more.

If we see breakdown, then we practice. We practice in two ways:

1. Circling
2. Add one or more parallel characters - Adding a character allows us to practice the verb. One possible character we can add is ourselves. Adding ourselves as a parallel character allows us to speak to the characters about ourselves, the other characters about him/herself. This questioning process is very engaging for the class and the student actors.

For example, teacher asks, "Sharon, are you in Vermont?"

Student actor responds, "Yes, I am in Vermont?"

Teacher asks, "Am I in Vermont?"

Student actor or class responds, "No you are in Virginia."

The questioning continues both to the student actor and to the class. If the student actor needs more practice we add another character (e.g. Megan Fox is in New York; a girl in your class will play the role of Megan Fox so you will be talking to another person). "Is Megan Fox in New York?" (The class guesses and then the teacher says, "Yes, Megan Fox is in New York.") We can talk about any of the characters to the class and to the characters. This keeps the class interesting yet gives the students tremendous repetition of the verb. It is the repetitive that allows them to gain confidence and eventually improve their output of the language.

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When students show confidence and accuracy then the focus shifts from circling and parallel characters to adding storyline. As we add storyline and student dramatization, we continue to look for breakdown as we use other verbs. When breakdown occurs, we continue to circle and add parallel characters, if necessary.

To give our students even more practice we also go back and review details of the story that have already been established. We review facts about all of the characters that have been introduced and also facts about ourselves.

Sometimes we have an interesting fact that can be embellished or fleshed out. This is done by going back in time. We call this an “event” or a “back story”. We often start an event by saying a time expression like, “One day . . .” or “Two years ago . . . “. This expression tells the students we are going back in time and filling in information that we left out the first time through the story.

Circling: The Heart of TPRS®

TPRS® uses repetitive questions. It is our way to practice the language. We circle to build confidence. No one learns with one or two repetitions. We only learn with extensive repetitions. The two primary purposes of circling are: 1) getting the students to respond to our questions chorally, & 2) building fluency. If they hear the language enough and it is comprehensible to their brains, speech will emerge.

Below is a circling model.

- 1. Make a statement.**
- 2. Question with a yes answer. (Verify)**
- 3. Ask either/or questions. (Verify)**
- 4. Question with a “no” answer.**
- 5. Restate the negative and restate the positive.**
- 6. Ask: who? (Verify)**
- 7. Ask: what? where? when? how much? how many? why? how?
(Use the one that fits.) (Verify)**

When you circle:

1. Circle in any order. Don’t follow the above order. (Always going in the same order is predictable and therefore boring.)
2. Circle a different part of the sentence, called a variable (i.e. subject, verb, compliment, etc). Each variable has many alternatives. Think about several different alternatives with each variable. Mixing up variables and alternatives allows for variety as we ask repetitive questions.

3. Question words. Use the question words. Questions words are slowing processing so practice saying the question words and pausing.
4. Be sure to keep asking negative questions. Students need to hear the negative.
5. Add a detail. Do this by telling the class the new information or asking them a question and letting them guess. Circle the new detail.
6. Add another character and compare and contrast the two characters.
7. Do any combination of the above.

“Circling” Template

Statement: Mildred started dancing in the park.

Circle the subject

Answer with yes _____(Verify)

Either/or _____(Verify)

Answer with a no _____(Restate the negative and verify positive)

Question word _____(Verify)

Circle the verb

Answer with yes _____(Verify)

Either/or _____(Verify)

Answer with a no _____(Restate the negative and verify positive)

Question word _____(Verify)

Circle the compliment

Answer with yes _____(Verify)

Either/or _____(Verify)

Answer with a no _____(Restate the negative and verify positive)

Question word _____(Verify)

Get a new statement by asking when

Answer with yes _____(Verify)

Either/or _____(Verify)

Answer with a no _____(Restate the negative and verify positive)

Question word _____(Verify)

Add a parallel character (Brutus started dancing in school.)

Answer with yes _____(Verify)

Either/or _____(Verify)

Answer with a no _____(Restate the negative and verify positive)

Question word _____(Verify)

How to start a story

Whenever we start an oral story, we write some key phrases on the board with translation. These are the structures that we want to practice with several questions. We either ask for a volunteer to be the actor or select a good actor. We then start the story. We first introduce a character by making a statement (e.g., Class, there was a girl.). We ask some circling questions about that statement. We add a detail by telling the class the name of the girl (e.g., The girl was Elena.). We ask circling questions to the class with this sentence. In addition to asking questions to the class, we ask questions to the student actor.

The suggested model is to ask the questions to the class in the past tense and to the student actor in the present tense. Mixing tenses allows student to acquire both tenses and it will happen over time. We focus on the following as we “ask a story”:

- Adding details one at a time by telling the class the new detail or by asking a question and letting the class guess.
- Asking circling questions about the new detail(s) (the role of the student is to answer the questions).
- As the students answer the questions chorally, we focus on verifying the details.
- Ask the student actor(s) questions in the present tense.

We continue this process by adding details one at a time and focusing on the above skills.

Below is a sample of the process:

Teacher speaking to:

**Clase
(PAST)**

Clase, Elena era una chica.
Class, Elena was a girl.

Teacher speaking to:

**Student
(PRESENT)**

¿Eres una chica? (Are you a girl?)
Elena answers, Sí, soy una chica.
Sí, eres una chica. (Yes, you are a girl.)

Clase, Elena era una chica. (Class, Elena was a girl.)

Clase, ¿dónde estaba Elena? (Class, where was Elena?)

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Elena estaba en ... (Elena was in _____)

¿Dónde estás? (Where are you?)

Elena answers, "Estoy en _____."

Sí, estás en (Yes, you are in _____.)

Clase, Elena estaba en ... (Class, Elena was in _____.)

Clase, ¿dónde estaba Elena en ...? (Class, where was Elena in _____?)

Elena estaba en ... , ... (Elena was in _____.)

¿Dónde estás en ...? (Where are you in _____?)

Elena answers, "Estoy en _____."

Si, estás en ... , ... (Yes, you are in _____.)

Clase, Elena estaba en ... , (Class, Elena was in _____.)

Clase, ¿dónde estaba Elena en ... , ... (Class, where was Elena in _____?)

Elena estaba en ... , ... , ... (Elena was in _____.)

¿Dónde estás en ... , ...? (Where are you in _____?)

Elena answers, "Estoy en _____."

Sí, estás en ... , ... , ... (Yes, you are in _____.)

Clase, Elena estaba en ... , ... , ... (Class, Elena was in _____.)

Clase, Elena era chica número uno. (Class, Elena wa girl number one.)

¿Eres chica número uno? (Are you girl number one?)

Elena answers, "Soy chica número uno."

Sí, eres chica número uno. (Yes, you are girl number one.)

Clase, Elena era chica numero uno. (Class, Elena was girl number one.)

Clase, ¿quién era chica número dos? (Class, who was girl number two?)

.... era chica número dos. (_____ was girl number two.)

Teach a story in your groups

At any point we can add a parallel character. We add a parallel character in the same way that we add a new detail, either by telling the class the new information or by asking them a question and letting them guess. Once we've added a new character, we can go through the same process of asking questions & verifying details both to the class and with the new character.

Teach a story in your groups of four or five. Teach it a sentence at a time using the above model. When something can be dramatized, the dramatization needs to happen right at that moment. (She went---nothing happens in the story until the girl has gone to the new place.) The first story would be: There was a girl. She didn't have a cat. She wanted a cat. She went to _____. There was a boy in _____. (Use dialogue to show the boy didn't have a cat.) The girl was not happy. She went to _____. There was a boy in _____. (Use dialogue to show the boy had a cat.) The boy gave the girl the cat. She was happy.

First part of story: Background information

A story consists of two parts. The first part is background information. The second part is a set storyline that includes a problem, three locations, and a resolution. The background information doesn't have to be related to the second part of the story. Background information can include any of the following:

- Any information about the main character. E.g., his/her name, physical description, personality type, likes/dislikes, where he/she lives, what he/she did last week, etc.
- Any additional information about the setting. E.g. time of day, the weather, day of the week, holiday, seasons, etc.
- Parallel characters and information about them. The parallel characters can include national or local celebrities, students playing the role of themselves, animals, or even inanimate objects. Students play the role of the parallel characters.
- Acting out an "event". As we add details to our background information or stories, our goal is to show the information by acting it out. We call this extra storyline an event.

One purpose of adding background information is to allow the teacher to "slow down" and focus on giving the student more repetitions of the basics of the language, rather than adding more storyline. By being more repetitive with the basic structures of the language, the students will build fluency. With beginners, this means that they will learn a lot of the most frequent verbs of the language and be able to produce them. It is only by practicing those verbs with a lot of repetitive questions that the production will emerge.

For teachers teaching classes ranging from 30 to 55 minutes, the suggested model is to teach the background information on the first day and the second part of the story on the next day. For teachers teaching longer classes, both parts could take place in the same day.

Second part of story: Problem, 3 locations, & resolution

Part 2: The Problem

Location 1: Introduce the problem

The problem comes after the background information. For teachers teaching shorter class periods (30 to 55 minutes), this would take place on day 2. Before introducing the problem, we want to review yesterday's background information for a few minutes. Once the review ends, the story now focuses on the main character rather than a parallel character. Every story has a problem. A problem can be something as simple as a boy or a girl wanting a cat (or something else). We introduce the problem in the first location of the story by telling the class what the character wanted or by asking the class what the character wanted and they guess. If we like a suggestion from the class, then we could take their answer and it would become the correct answer in the story. We can add additional details about the thing that the character wanted by either telling the students the new information or by asking them questions and having them guess. Whenever we say something that the students do not know, we write it on the board with translation in order to ensure 100% comprehension. We circle these new details by asking questions to the class and to the student actor.

Location 2: Unsuccessful attempt to resolve the problem

The character goes to a new location. The problem will not be resolved in this location. Since the new location is a new detail, we add the new location in the same way that we add a new detail, by either telling the class the new detail or by asking them and letting them guess. Once we establish the new detail by saying "(name of character) went to X", we have the student actor physically go to a different area in our room that represents the new location. Once they're in the new location, we want to dramatize the storyline in the new location with dialogue. For example, if the story were about a girl who wanted a cat, the dramatization could look like this:

Class, in Las Vegas, there was a boy. (We then get a boy in the class to play the role of the boy). The girl said to him, "Hi boy! I want a cat. Do you have an extra cat?"

The boy said to the girl, "Hi girl. I'm sorry but I do not have an extra cat."

The girl was not happy. She cried.

Our job is to give the student actors their lines and have them repeat them. If there is any doubt as to whether or not the class understands the dialogue, we translate the lines. We coach the actors to be melodramatic and enthusiastic actors. If they are, then the class will be very engaged and entertained.

Location 3: Successful attempt to resolve the problem

The character goes to a third location (same process as before). The problem will be resolved in this location. Once he's in the new location, we dramatize the storyline in this location with dialogue.

For example:

Class, the girl went to PetSmart in New Orleans. In PetSmart, there was a boy (We get a boy in the class to play the role of this boy.) The girl said to him, "Hi boy! I want a cat. Do you have a cat?"

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The boy said to the girl, “Hi girl. I have 3 cats. I have 2 cats for me and an extra cat for you.”

The boy gave the girl the cat. The girl was happy. She held up her cat and yelled, “I have a cat. I am happy now!”

The story ends when the problem is resolved. If we have extra time, we can do any of the following:

- Review any of the storyline by asking questions. This will give the students extra repetitions.
- Act it out again but this time add one or more surprise details.
- Add new details to the story by asking or telling.
- Add one or more parallel character(s) and add contrasting details. Act out the storyline with the parallel character(s).
- Act out an event.
- Student retells.

Personalization

1. PQA (Personalized questions & answers)
 - a. Talk to your students
 - b. Do a student survey. Find out their interests. Add those details to stories during the year.
 - c. Interview students. Find out what is happening in their lives. Ask about what they do when they aren't in school. Ask about their music, movies and sports.
2. Use student actors.
 - a. Have students play themselves.
 - b. Your stories will always be more interesting and real if they are dramatized.
 - c. Choose enthusiastic actors.
 - d. Have students show emotion.
 - e. Have students write letters, make phone calls, and write emails to other characters in the stories.
 - f. Coach students how to act.
3. Know student culture.
 - a. Find out their favorite movie stars.
 - b. Use their favorite athletes in stories.
 - c. Be in touch with popular moves.
 - d. Know about the current hit songs.
 - e. Talk about their video games, IPODs, and cell phones.
4. Positive exaggeration
 - a. Compare students to celebrities to make the student look better than the celebrity.
 - b. Students are always the best. They are the best looking, the best basketball player or the best dancer.
 - c. Exaggerate student abilities. Your student can run faster than anyone. Jill can sing better than Britney Spears. Mark can beat Kobe Bryant in basketball.
5. Props
 - a. Use animals, toys or any other realia.

TPRS® Lesson Plan

Part 1: Background information:

Select some fluency structures that your students need to practice. Write these in your lesson plan (these will be written on the board): _____

List several questions to establish the background information. Include possible surprise answers. Do the same thing for one or more parallel characters. Plan one or more events. Plan dramatization and dialogue for the characters.

Part 2: Problem, 3 locations, & resolution

Problem: _____

Two or three practice structures 1. _____ 2. _____

Location 1. The story now shifts to the main character. We will introduce the problem. Plan any surprise details related to the problem.

Location 2. In the new location, the character will attempt to resolve the problem, but it will not be resolved. Plan the dialogue and any other related surprise details for location 3.

Location 3. In the new location, the character will also attempt to resolve the problem. It will be resolved. Plan the dialogue and any other related surprise details for location 3.

Embedded Readings

Laurie Clarke has come up with a new idea called embedded readings. Add the embedded readings on Wednesday. By then the students are familiar with the new structures.

First embedded reading

- Chorally translate the first two embedded readings. Teacher reads a sentence in the target language and the students chorally translate it.
- Students sit in pairs in groups of six or eight. Student one reads the first sentence in the target language. Student two translates the first sentence and reads the second sentence in the target language. Students alternate reading and translating in this manner to the end of the story. (Volleyball translation) Students do volleyball translation for 3 minutes and then change partners. Students change partners 3 or four times. (Students do volleyball translation for about 9 to 12 minutes with 3 or 4 different partners.)

Discuss and Dramatize the Extended Reading

Our objective is to spend two class periods (30-55 minutes) on the readings (embedded readings & extended reading) or a full block period (90 minutes).

Every student has a copy of the extended reading. Our goal is to make the readings more interesting. There are several ways to do so. One option is to add background information before you chorally translate any of the reading with your students. A second option is to translate some or all of the first paragraph and then do any of the following:

- Circling questions
- Add background information
- Add surprise details
- Add one or more parallel characters
- PQA (Personalized questions & answers)
- Act out an event
- Dramatize the storyline with student actors. If the story has dialogue, then the student actors would say their lines. If there isn't dialogue, you could add dialogue.

The process of asking circling questions to the class and student actor(s) is part of this process. Our objective is to identify some fluency structures that the students need to hear more in order to improve their speech. We want to include questions using those key phrases so that students are 1) answering the questions chorally, and 2) building fluency through comprehensible input.

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As you go through the reading paragraph by paragraph and make the readings more interesting by doing the above skills, your readings will take a lot of time. The last thing we will do with the reading (the last 10-15 minutes of the allotted time) is the following:

Chorally translate the entire extended reading and dramatize it with student actors. Then follow the volleyball translation pattern used in the embedded readings with the entire extended reading. You can do this for just the present tense reading or for the reading in the present and in the past. If there is additional time, do a student retell.

As we add surprise details to either the oral stories, extended readings, or novels, our goal is to act out “events”. An event is a tool of creativity that can be used anytime.

EVENT:

TPRS in its best form allows for maximum creativity. Events add tremendously to the creativity of the TPRS classroom. Below are the guidelines that seek to define an event:

- An event consists of “extra information” that was not part of the original story. The primary objective of an event is to embellish a storyline.
- Allows us to *show it* rather than just *talk about it*. According to brain research, it’s much more interesting and engaging for us to *see the action* rather than just *talk about it*.
- There are no time limitations for an event. Some events go back in time, others take place in the present time, and they can also take place at a future time. When going back in time, an event often starts by saying something like, “One day . . .” or “Two years ago . . .” or some other time reference. This narrows our focus to a specific time period.
- The goal is to use words they know. Write unknown words on the board.
- Circling is not the focus of the event, but it can take place during an event whenever you sense that the students don’t understand.
- As the event evolves, new details are added by the teacher telling the details and/or asking the class for details.
- Dramatize whatever can be dramatized. Add dialogue. Dramatization and dialogue are *high interest*.
- Events can be planned, improvised, or a combination of the two.
- Events can get more elaborate as students learn more language. Events are simpler with beginning students because they know less language. A simple event could take as little as 5 minutes. An elaborate event could take as long as 45 or 50 minutes. Other events could take any amount of time in-between.

The 5 Parts to TPRS®

Part 1

1. Talk in Spanish about the students' weekends.
2. Use PQA -- personalized questions and answers. Ask students questions about their lives using vocabulary or phrases listed on the board that will be used in the story.
3. Start the ask-a-story. Establish characters and add whatever background information you want. Add surprise details and make general details more specific.

Part 2

1. Review the background information from yesterday's story. Add any other background information you want. Add other proper nouns and surprise details. Constantly verify the details with the class and with your actors.
2. Introduce a problem where the main characters need or want something.
3. Attempt to solve the problem. Sometimes, change something about the problem so it can't be solved.
4. Finally, solve the problem, which means your actor gets what he/she wanted.

Part 3

1. Chorally translate embedded readings one and two. Students write in words they don't know.
2. Volleyball translation in groups of two. Rotate 3 or 4 times.
3. Add background information and parallel characters. Add lots of surprise details about the reading and parallel characters.
4. Add specific, surprise details and proper nouns to the story.

Part 4

1. Review all the details from yesterday.
2. Add more surprise details to the story and about your characters.
3. Dramatize the rest of the story.
4. Read and discuss the rest of the story.
5. Chorally translate the entire extended reading. Students write in words they don't know.
6. Volleyball translation with the either one or two of the extended readings.
7. If there is time, do a student retell.

Part 5

1. Do a timed writing.
2. Follow all of the steps of the extended reading with a novel.

GRADING

1. 50% Tests (Unannounced!) Test are vocabulary translation tests. They are cumulative. Test words they know.
2. 25% - Daily Work. This includes any non-test grade. These include timed writings, quizzes and homework. Homework includes retelling the story to an adult or doing something with the story

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such as rewriting the story, writing a new version of the story or drawing out the story.

(Reading option. (10% of the final grade. Grading is then 40% of final grade.) First and second year students read a novel every nine weeks. Third year students read a novel every month. Fourth year students read 2000 words (10 pages) of literature a night. All students turn in double entry journals where they copy from the chapter and then write a one page reaction about what they wrote or what they were reading.)

3. 25% - Participation. In order to participate there can be no social talking, writing or sleeping.

All students begin with a 100-point nine-week participation grade. They receive a 5-point deduction called a “Págame” (“Pay Me”) infraction. Your goal is to have perfect follow through. NEVER allow students to socially talk in your class, sleep or text.

Págames:

1. Each student starts with 100 points for a nine-week period.
2. There is one rule:
 - a. No social talking, no sleeping and no writing or texting.
3. Violating this rule causes a student to lose 5 points.
4. The teacher keeps a list of students’ names on the podium in front of the class so he/she can mark down the infractions.
5. Students get 4 free makeups. The first 2 are made up by making the teacher a card. (The card can say anything and be in English or the target language. I tell them to write something nice about my class or me.) The second makeup is by giving me a handshake. So they get 4 free (easy to make up) págames.
6. After the four free ones, students make up págames by writing 100-word essays. Each essay makes up one págame.
7. Maximum two págames per day. On the 3rd págame, the student goes to the office or sits in the hall.
8. The teacher should have a pat answer if students talk back: “Make it up.” If the teacher needs to add anything else, he/she might add, “I am not asking you to cut off your hand. It is easy to make it up and besides I gave you four free ones.”
9. Be sure to get across the idea that this is a positive system, not a negative one. Students get an easy way to earn 100% participation. It is available to anyone in the class. It is easy. If anyone suggests the system is negative, remind them it is only negative for the students who don’t make them up.
10. Be sure you don’t use págames for discipline. Págames are not for throwing paper, leaving one’s

chair, or other disciplinary infractions. They are only for a lack of participation.

11. Give págames with a lighthearted voice. “Juanito, págame.” Be sure to make your voice go up. Never express anger with págames.

USING THE MATERIALS

MATERIALS

There are two books for Level One: *New Mini-stories for Look, I Can Talk!* and Teacher’s Guide with the same title. These books are currently available in Spanish, French, and English.

The oral stories are found in the teacher’s guide. The student book contains the embedded readings, extended readings and written exercises for the students. The embedded readings are currently available only in Spanish 1 & 2 and French 1. They will be available in English 1 and French 2 soon.

Stories do not have to be taught in order. It is possible that you will not be able to complete all of the stories in a school year.

The same pattern applies to Level Two and Three. The two Level Two books are called *New Mini-stories for Look, I Can Talk More!* and teacher’s guide with the same title.

For third year students the student book is called *Look, I Can Really Talk!* Mini-stories and longer chapter stories are included in this book. There is also a teacher’s guide called *Teacher’s Guide for Look, I Can Really Talk!*

The written exercises make good homework assignments (For example, you could ask the students to provide a variety of creative answers).

If you want to adapt your own textbook or fairy tales, follow the **procedure** outlined below:

1. Select the 15-25 highest frequency items from the chapter story. Give students the words for the entire week or the entire chapter.
2. Teach 3 vocabulary words (or phrases) per day (total of 5-7 vocabulary days per chapter).
3. Use a copy of each day’s mini-story as a reading or have a longer reading passage that also uses the daily words.
4. Recycle the vocabulary in at least two mini-stories. Use as many cognates or easily-taught words as you can.

HOW TO TEACH GRAMMAR

1. Students learn grammar by hearing and understanding language. You can help them focus on finer points of meaning by asking questions about meaning. “What does the ‘r’ in hablar mean?”

“What does ‘le dijo’ mean?” You are asking about meaning with these types of questions.

2. Always explain the grammar of

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guidewords from a **meaning** point of view. For example, let your students know what the “le” or “se” does in the sentence. As students get more advanced, ask them the difference between “quiere” and “quiero” or “quería” and “quiere.” As time passes you could ask them the difference between “habló” and “hablaba.”

3. Teach verbs in your stories. Add lots of dialogue where a student has to use “I have my own cat.” Verify the details of a story with your student actor. Be sure the student answers with a complete sentence.
4. Constantly ask students the difference between “is and was”. Ask them the

difference between “I have and he has.” As you keep asking, students will learn differences in tenses and verb conjugations.

5. Have students write **essays**. Use essays to teach accuracy, especially with upper-level classes. Use minimal corrections but always correct with meaning. In other words, correct only one or two errors in an essay unless the student is very advanced and writing with few errors. Your corrections must show that their errors cause confusion. (Yo habla = “I he talks” or libros importante = “is there one book or more than one?”)

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Timed writings

There are two types of timed writings. Both are done regularly in class. They start out by having students rewrite a story. Soon students progress to writing about topics.

1. A speed write is where students write for 5 minutes with the goal of not editing and not stopping. They write as fast as they can. They try to get 100 words in 5 minutes on the topic.
2. A relaxed write does the same thing but allows students to ask questions, edit and try to write as accurately as possible. They can do this with teacher help, book help or help from fellow students.

100 most common words in Spanish

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. El, la the | 35. Ya now, already | 69. Si if |
| 2. De of, from | 36. Ver to see | 70. Día day |
| 3. que that | 37. Porque because | 71. Uno one |
| 4. Y and | 38. Dar to give | 72. Bien good |
| 5. A to | 39. Cuando when | 73. Poco little bit |
| 6. En in, on | 40. El he | 74. Deber should |
| 7. Un a | 41. Muy very | 75. Entonces then |
| 8. Ser to be | 42. Sin without | 76. Cosa thing |
| 9. Se himself, herself | 43. Vez time, instance | 77. Tanto so much |
| 10. No | 44. Mucho a lot | 78. Hombre man |
| 11. Haber to have | 45. Saber to know | 79. Parecer to seem |
| 12. Por for | 46. Qué What? | 80. Nuestro our |
| 13. Con with | 47. Sobre on, about | 81. Tan so |
| 14. Su his, her | 48. Mi my | 82. Donde where |
| 15. Para for, in order to | 49. Alguno some | 83. Ahora now |
| 16. Como like, as | 50. Mismo same | 84. Parte part |
| 17. Estar to be | 51. Yo I | 85. Después after |
| 18. Tener to have | 52. También also, too | 86. Vida life |
| 19. Le to him, her | 53. Hasta until | 87. Quedar to remain |
| 20. Lo it | 54. Año year | 88. Siempre always |
| 21. Todo all | 55. Dos two | 89. Creer to believe |
| 22. Pero but | 56. Querer to want | 90. Hablar to talk |
| 23. Más more | 57. Entre between, among | 91. Llevar to take |
| 24. Hacer to do, make | 58. Así so | 92. Dejar to leave, let |
| 25. O or | 59. Primero first | 93. Nada nothing |
| 26. Poder to be able to | 60. Desde from, since | 94. Cada each, every |
| 27. Decir to say | 61. Grande big | 95. Seguir to continue |
| 28. Este this | 62. Eso that | 96. Menos less |
| 29. Ir to go | 63. Ni neither | 97. Nuevo new |
| 30. Otro another, other | 64. Nos to us | 98. Encontrar to find |
| 31. Ese that | 65. Llegar to arrive | 99. Algo something |
| 32. La it | 66. Pasar to pass | 100. Sólo only |
| 33. Sí yes | 67. Tiempo time, weather | |
| 34. Me to me | 68. Ella she | |

German Story

Embedded Reading 1

Es gibt ein Mädchen. Das Mädchen ist Olga. Olga hat ein Problem. Sie hat kein Zimmer. Sie will ein Zimmer. Sie will ein Zimmer in Topeka, Kansas.

Es gibt ein Problem. Topeka, Kansas hat kein Zimmer. Olga geht nach Topeka. Es gibt kein Zimmer in Topeka. Olga hat ein Problem.

Es gibt ein Mädchen in Boston. Das Mädchen ist Marlene. Marlene hat ein Zimmer in Boston. Olga geht nach Boston. Olga sagt,

“Marlene, ich will ein Zimmer. Ich habe kein Zimmer.”

Marlene sagt,

“Es gibt kein Problem. Ich habe ein Zimmer.”

Marlene gibt Olga das Zimmer. Olga ist froh. Sie hat ein Zimmer.

Embedded Reading 2

Es gibt ein Mädchen. Das Mädchen ist Olga. Olga hat ein Problem. Sie hat ein Zimmer. Olgas Zimmer hat keine Maus. Sie will ein Zimmer mit einer Maus. Sie will ein Zimmer in Topeka, Kansas mit einer Maus.

Es gibt ein Hotel in Topeka, Kansas. Das hotel hat ein Zimmer. Das Zimmer hat keine Maus.

Olga geht nach Boston. Es gibt ein Mädchen in Boston. Das Mädchen ist Marlene. Marlene hat ein Zimmer in Boston. Marlenes Zimmer hat eine Maus. Olga sagt,

“Marlene, ich will ein Zimmer mit einer Maus. Ich habe kein Zimmer.”

Marlene sagt,

“Es gibt kein Problem. Ich habe ein Zimmer mit einer Maus.”

Marlene gibt Olga das Zimmer. Olga ist froh. Sie hat ein Zimmer mit einer Maus.

Extended Reading

Es gibt ein Mädchen. Das Mädchen heißt Olga. Sie hat ein Problem. Sie hat kein Zimmer und sie will ein Zimmer haben. Sie geht nach Burly, Idaho. Sie will ein Zimmer in Burley. Sie will ein Zimmer in das Burley Hilton haben.

Sie will ein großes Zimmer mit keiner Maus. Das Burley Hilton hat zwei Zimmer. Zimmer eins hat keine Maus und Zimmer zwei hat eine Maus. Olga will Zimmer eins. Sie will das Zimmer mit keiner Maus. Olga geht in Zimmer eins.

Sie hat das Zimmer aber es gibt ein problem. Es gibt eine Kuh im Zimmer. Die Kuh heißt Susie. Olga will ein Zimmer mit einer Kuh aber es gibt ein Problem mit der Kuh. Die Kuh stinkt. Olga stinkt nicht aber die Kuh stinkt. Die Kuh hat kein Kuh Deo. Olga will Kuh Deo für die Kuh haben.

Olga geht nach Singapore. In Singapore gibt es ein Deo-Mart. Sie geht im Deo-Mart. Im Deo-Mart gibt es einen Mann. Der Mann hat Kuh Deo und das ist wunderbar.

Olga sagt, "Ich will Kuh Deo haben." Der Mann sagt, "Warum?" Sie sagt, "Meine Kuh stinkt!" Der Mann sagt, "Ja, das ist ein Problem. Ich habe Kuh Deo für dich." Olga sagt, "Das ist gut. Ich will Kuh Deo für meine Kuh haben." Der Mann gibt Olga das Kuh Deo.

Olga geht nach Burley mit dem Kuh Deo. Sie geht in das Zimmer. Sie gibt der Kuh das Kuh Deo. Olga ist froh. Die Kuh ist froh. Die Kuh stinkt nicht. Das Ende.