

Unit 3 Instructional Strategies and Learning Activities

Learning objectives, instructional goals and standards outline what children will learn or be able to do. Instructional activities and progress indicators combine how students show or demonstrate receptive and expressive language skills and knowledge through a variety of learning approaches.

Learning goals and standards are tools to help instructors consider what learners should be able to perform as they move across the spectrum of language proficiency levels; however, this does not outline the many creative ways in which the instructor may move children toward more sophisticated levels of fluency. This domain points to the area of instructional strategies.

Instructional strategies refer to the ways in which activities are developed and presented to sustain student engagement and achieve learning goals. This may also be thought of as the “how to” part of instruction. A variety of instructional styles and strategies advance learners across a continuum of language progression. This may include using movement, dance, art, play or storytelling. Within Unit 3 of the Bridges program, TPR Storytelling is introduced as an instructional strategy. This approach has been shown to capture students’ interest and positively impacts student talk and participation. This is an active form of storytelling that highlights student participation through movement and speaking.

TPR Storytelling Overview

TPR Storytelling relies on providing comprehensible input. It is a nonthreatening instructional approach that promotes early production, or speaking. The instructor serves as a language model who introduces the story vocabulary, story characters, setting and plot. The instructor uses props and movements to tell the story. Children

act out the story with the teacher’s support multiple times. Students gradually are able to retell the story as they take turns playing different characters of the story script.

Before and during TPR Storytelling:

1. Become familiar with the story. Read through the script. Reference the cue cards - or Lesson Sample Story Sheets
2. Prepare all the props beforehand.
3. Present the story using the props and toys.
4. Provide turns for students to play the character roles of the story.
5. Provide turns for students to retell the story.

Assessment Tools

Before starting Unit 3, look over the unit outcomes and identify the target language. To help evaluate children’s linguistic skills before you start the language topic, refer to the unit assessment activities near the end of the manual. Consider using these tools as simple pre- and post-assessment instruments to gauge prior knowledge and illustrate student growth over the course of the instructional period. We encourage you to think about how this exercise supports the ways in which it may be best to modify the instructional presentation to meet the language level and needs of your students.

Instructional Outcomes

Instructional outcomes refer to what children are able to demonstrate and perform. While working to achieve instructional outcomes, point attention to the learning process, or HOW children experience learning so that the activities for instruction allow learners to reach their full potential in dynamic and creative ways. Create opportunities for

learners to express interests, prior knowledge and abilities. Integrate drawing and early literacy writing activities for children to create and share. Use pictures and other forms of media and technology to support children’s learning of the Unit 3 topics and students’ multiple learning styles.

Dramatic Play Area

To support children and their attainment of the vocabulary and concepts presented in Unit 3, turn your dramatic play area in your classroom into a play pet store or zoo. This will set the stage for the children to use their newly acquired knowledge in a non-threatening environment. Throughout Unit 3, teachers can add additional props based on language introduced in each lesson to spark new interest and allow children to build on what they know. The children will naturally use their growing vocabulary to explain what they are doing and to interact with other children. Intentionally creating a dramatic play area to support Unit 3 concepts will integrate the oral language development into other important learning domains, such as social emotional, cognitive and physical development, leading to deeper learning. Through observation teachers can assess the children’s growth and understanding of Unit 3 topics.

Family Connections

To enhance children’s learning, focus on supporting positive relationships with families. Take the time to share with families classroom experiences and resources available to support each child’s language acquisition and development. Refer to the Take Home resource tab and family session cards for ideas and ways to encourage family engagement.