



WHAT iGNITES US

ELLs and SIOP - An Educational Marriage for Success at
Kennett Middle School: Landenberg, PA

By Joy Rosser: jrosser@kcsd.org

Joy Rosser is currently serving as secretary on the DVR-PASCD Board, teaching sixth grade science at Kennett Middle School and serving on the Pennsylvania Don Eichhorn Schools To Watch State Team. Joy is expanding her research and writing; discovering ways people are being *ignited* within educational institutions, among student interactions, and within families affiliated with education.

Set on the southern edge of the Kennett Consolidated School District in Chester County, Kennett Middle School is changing lives through the strategies and support of its students. More specifically, the staff is *igniting* the ELL population (English-Language Learners) throughout the building in ways that are serving, embracing and encouraging. In their quest for excellence, teachers personally sought out research on the marriage of SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) and ELLs to improve best instructional practices in classrooms and to establish a framework for organized, high-quality instruction for all students. With a population of approximately 10% ELLs, Kennett Middle School recognizes the need for meeting these students where they are, and acquiring strategies to move them forward - socially, academically and emotionally. Teachers were creatively *ignited* by an Edutopia article entitled, “Strategies and Resources for Supporting English-Language Learners” (Edutopia, 2015). The richness of staff collaboration came alive when a sample of self-motivated teachers read the article, recognized its value and encouraged fellow staff members to consider the impact it would have throughout Kennett Middle School. The drive and desire for better teaching practices to benefit the students was and is prevalent.

SIOP training is in full swing at Kennett Middle School; teachers are focused on planning and delivering purposeful instruction that contains a Content Objective (what they want the students to know or learn), and a Language Objective (how the students will communicate or prove the learning) in daily lessons. All students benefit from SIOP instruction and all students benefit from the advanced instructional practices implemented. For a school which strongly believes that the needs of its students drive all decisions, SIOP and ELL are at the forefront of its journey, bound for greater success.

Most significantly, the teachers discovered that the list of strategies provided by the ELL article, mirrored teaching practices already alive in the Kennett Middle School classrooms, and afforded new ideas as well. Listed below are a few of the strategies for supporting all ELLs. The list in its entirety can be found in the article.

Speak slower, not louder.

Provide outlines, advanced organizers, or visual guides.

Integrate games.

Integrate listening centers.

Provide exemplars of successful projects.

Let students use their home language in the classroom to solve work.

Use pictures, sketches, and graphic organizers.

Make videos of presentations for ELLs to replay if needed.

Pair up ELLs with strong oral and written English skills.

Provide opportunities for low-stakes writing (Edutopia, 2015).

Evidence of teachers *igniting* themselves for their students at Kennett Middle School is having a successful impact on the instructional practices and on the learning environment. ELLs are fortunate to be members of a school that is utilizing the best strategies for learning with the interest of the students at the heart of the implementation. SIOP is currently shaping high-quality instructional practices with ELLs being just one cohort of the many prosperous recipients.

www.edutopia.org/blog/strategies-and-resources-supporting-ell-todd-finley