

# Through the Lens of an English Learner: Making Content Comprehensible

Professional development resources for K-6 teachers  
to support achievement of English learners.

## Through the Lens of an English Learner: Making Content Comprehensible

A 9-module online resource to support teachers in Kindergarten through 6th Grade working in classrooms with English learners.

The online modules provide curricular ties to Houghton Mifflin Reading adopted materials to support quality English Language Development and Reading/Language Arts instruction.

### Professional development modules include:

- Overviews of specific instructional strategies (oral language fluency, activating prior knowledge, contextualization, graphic organizers, developing academic language, structured interaction)
- 50+ video clips explicitly demonstrating each strategy as part of a complete classroom lesson
- Background information on the lesson presented and Houghton Mifflin Reading story used in the lesson
- Introduction to California's English learners and considerations necessary to support language development and content knowledge
- Downloadable resources and images of classroom artifacts to replicate the lesson activity
- Classroom reflections to prompt discussion and further inquiry into the strategies and lesson examples

The screenshot shows the website's home page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Resources, Professional Development Content, Calendar, Standards, Discussions, and Contact. The main heading is "Through the Lens of an English Learner: Making Content Comprehensible". Below this, there is a "Table of Contents" section with a list of modules: Module 1: California's English Learners, Module 2: Addressing Academic Content and ELD Standards, Module 3: Using ELD and SDAIE in the Classroom, Module 4: Oral Language Fluency, Module 5: Activating Prior Knowledge, Module 6: Contextualization, Module 7: Graphic Organizers, Module 8: Developing Academic Language, and Module 9: Structured Interaction. There is also an "About This Resource" section with an image of a person and text describing the resource's purpose and content.

The screenshot shows the website's page for Module 2. The heading is "Module 2: Addressing Academic Content and ELD Standards". The text explains that most classroom teachers agree that CA Content Standards exist to support teachers with the content of what will be taught on a daily basis in California classrooms. It also discusses the linguistic needs of students and the importance of ELD standards. There is an image of a teacher in a classroom and a video player showing a classroom scene.

To access [Through the Lens of an English Learner: Making Content Comprehensible](http://www.myboe.org/go/content/name/ThroughTheLens), visit:  
[www.myboe.org/go/content/name/ThroughTheLens](http://www.myboe.org/go/content/name/ThroughTheLens)

WELCOME, GUEST! | REQUEST ACCOUNT

**BROKERS OF EXPERTISE**  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Home Resources Professional Development Content Calendar Standards Discussions Contact

### Through the Lens of an English Learner: Making Content Comprehensible

**Table of Contents**

- Through the Lens of an English Learner
  - Module 1: California's English Learners
  - Module 2: Addressing Academic Content and ELD Standards
  - Module 3: Using ELD and SDAIE in the Classroom
  - Module 4: Oral Language Fluency
    - Oral Language Fluency: 1
    - Oral Language Fluency: 2
    - Oral Language Fluency: 3
  - Module 5: Activating Prior Knowledge
  - Module 6: Contextualization
  - Module 7: Graphic Organizers
  - Module 8: Developing Academic Language
  - Module 9: Structured Interaction

Summary / About

**Oral Language Fluency: 1**

Teacher: Anna Pires, 2nd Grade

Houghton Mifflin Story: *Thunder Cake* by Patricia Polacco.

In this lesson, second grade students will practice the story retell strategy. The teacher scaffolds this activity by having students practice the skill in a variety of ways with different levels of support along the way. Let's watch as Anna crafts this lesson so as to get the most oral language production from her ELs as possible.

Here are the artifacts and resources from the lesson:

[Thunder Cake Retell Strips](#)

[Thunder Cake Sequence of Events](#)

Anna opens the lesson by tapping students' prior knowledge. She reminds them of the story that they have read before the spring break so as to prepare them for the learning that will take place. Notice how she begins by using wonderful visuals from the story to help create meaning for students. Listen how she uses her voice to contextualize the story and make it seem real for students. This helps keep them engaged with the content that is being presented.



**Through the Lens of an English Learner: Making Content Comprehensible**

is available as a Professional Development Content module on the Brokers of Expertise website from the California Department of Education.

Access this resource at:

[www.myboe.org/go/content/name/ThroughTheLens](http://www.myboe.org/go/content/name/ThroughTheLens)

In this portion of the lesson, Anna asks students to retell the story by forming their own sentences about the story's content. Watch how Anna uses both non-volunteers and pair/share to have students report out the main events of the story. This builds student confidence by giving them the opportunity to share in their pairs before they report out to the whole class.

**Classroom Reflection**

1. In the first clip, why is it important for Anna to use pictures from the story to retell with students? Would it have been so successful if she simply retold the story orally with no visual support?
2. In the second clip, why is it important to have students pair/share during the retell?
3. Notice in the third clip how Anna has students retell the story after she has modeled it for them on the board. How might the lesson be different if she had asked them to retell before she had modeled the strategy?

[Previous Page: Module 4: Oral Language Fluency](#)      [Up Level: Module 4: Oral Language Fluency](#)      [Next Page: Oral Language Fluency: 2](#)

**Through the Lens of an English Learner: Making Content Comprehensible** was created by the Butte County Office of Education as part of the K12HSN ARRA-Advancing Network Uses Grant (ANU).

For more information:

Holly Ahmadi, EL Coordinator  
Butte County Office of Education  
hahmadi@bcoe.org  
530.532.5713

Steve Klein, Professional Development Coord.  
Butte County Office of Education  
sklein@bcoe.org  
530.879.7475

