

When English Learners Face Educational Challenges: Difference or Disability?

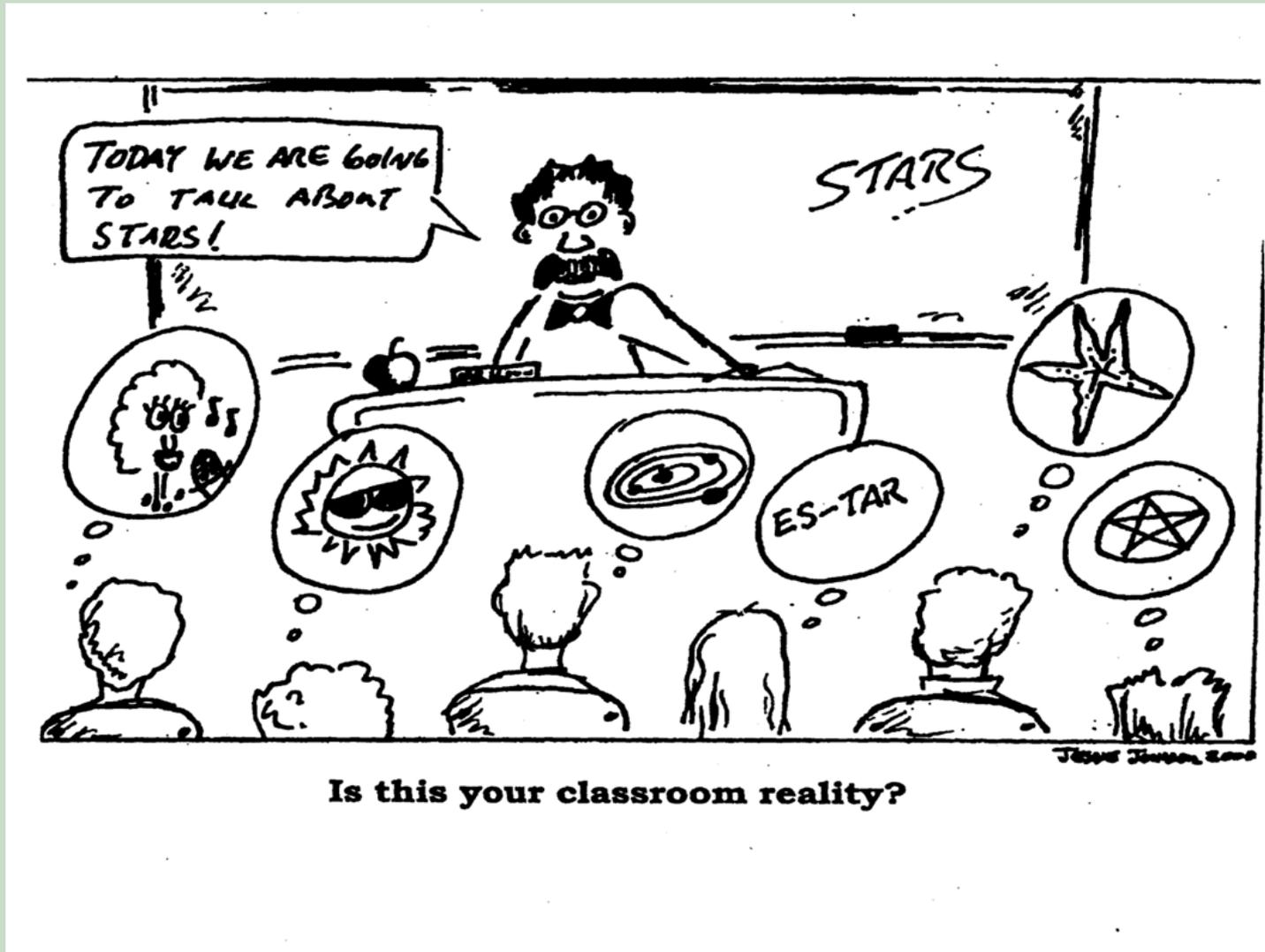


Dr. Julie Esparza Brown
PELL Conference, Phoenix, AZ
September 9, 2016

Session Outline

- I. Setting the Context
- II. Keys to Difference vs. Disability
- III. Five Things to Know About Your Students
 - I. Language Profile
 - II. Cultural Background
 - III. Educational Experiences
 - IV. Personal Characteristics
 - V. Life Experiences
- IV. Decision-making

Is This Your Classroom Reality?



Is this your classroom reality?

Today's EL Students



EL students who have exited ELD/ESL programs



Long-term ELs (more than 7 years in ELD/ESL programs)



Students with interrupted formal education



EL students in ELD/ESL programs (ranging from Levels 1 – 5)

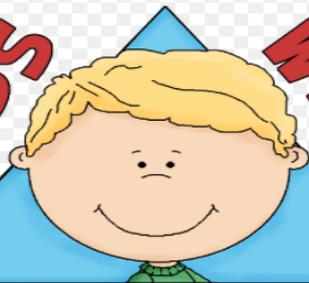


Newcomers to U.S. (less than six months in country)



ELs in special education

KIDS WITH



DISABILITIES ARE JUST KIDS



Learning



Speech & Language



Physical



Autism



Emotional



Visual



Hearing



Cognitive



Physical

Keys to Distinguishing Difference vs. Disability

- It is essential to understand the reason(s) for the child's struggle to begin distinguishing difference from disability.
- The key is to make appropriate comparisons to gauge whether a student's progress seems to be hampered by more than just cultural and linguistic differences.
- Must compare to "true peers," when possible.

True Peers

“True Peers” are those of the same age and grade who have similar language proficiencies, cultural and experiential background.

If several “true peers” are struggling, this is an indication that the instruction is less than optimal for that group of students.

Student Problem Solving Profile Form



- You have a copy of the form for reference.
- Feel free to use or adapt.
- We will be referring to various sections of the form throughout the presentation.

Language Development, Culture, and
Background

KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS: LANGUAGE



Five Things to Know About Your Students

Language
Profile

Cultural
Background



**Educational
Experiences**

**Personal
Characteristics**

Life Experiences

Language Concepts



Primary Language

Home Language

Language Child Learns First

Dominant Language

Depends on Context

Language Child Chooses to Speak in the Situation

Language Proficiency

Based on Opportunity

Ability, accuracy and fluency in a language

Home Language Experiences

What are the student's language experiences/development from birth until they entered school? (Kuhl, 2004; Kuhl, 2010; Paradis, Genesee, & Crago, 2011; Pinker, 1994).

Consider first, second, third language...

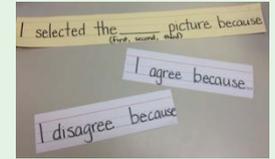
Typical vs. Atypical Language Development

Critical questions to ask families to determine if the students' language development seems typical or atypical for their specific context

Was the student's language development typical as compared to peers and siblings before they entered the school setting?

Was the child experiencing any delays in their home language (e.g., not understood by parents, not uttering first words until well past what would be considered typical) prior to entering school?

Language Knowledge/Profile



Know the English language and native language proficiencies of each of your EL students.

- Where do you get this information?
- What does it mean?

Identify appropriate teaching strategies for the proficiency stages of your students.

Identify appropriate ways for students to respond and demonstrate their knowledge based on their language proficiency stage.

Language Knowledge/Profile

- Remember, EL students' language reservoir is the sum of L1 and L2!
- Many U.S. born students (second generation) may have heard both English and their native language from birth.



Second Language Learner: Difference	Language Disability
<p>Language performance is similar to other EL students who have comparable cultural and linguistic experiences. (“true peer;” Brown & Doolittle, 2008)</p>	<p>Language patterns are unique to the student and unlike others in the student’s cultural community.</p>
<p>Limited vocabulary in the native language due to lack of opportunity to use and hear the native language</p>	<p>Student demonstrates limited vocabulary even when there are rich language opportunities in the native language.</p>
<p>Student shifts from one language to another within a single utterance</p>	<p>Word-finding problems are evident in both languages and often student substitutes with another language.</p>
<p>Communication may be impeded by an accent or dialect.</p>	<p>Student exhibits deficits in expressive and receptive language, which impedes communication.</p>

Adapted from Klingner, Hoover & Baca (2008)

Second Language Learner: Difference	Language Disability
<p>Age appropriate behaviors in interpreting facial expressions, appropriate physical proximity, and use and interpretation of gestures.</p>	<p>Student demonstrates difficulty using and interpreting nonverbal language, often leading to social problems.</p>
<p>Grammatical errors due to native language influences (e.g., student may omit initial verb in a question—You like cake? (omission of Do).</p>	<p>Grammatical structures continue to be inappropriate in both languages even after extensive instruction (e.g., student cannot produce the past tense in either Spanish or English indicating difficulty with grammatical tenses).</p>
<p>Word order in L1 may differ from that of English (e.g., in Arabic sentences are ordered verb-subject-object while Urdu sentences are ordered subject-object-verb</p>	<p>Student demonstrates limited phrasing and vocabulary in both languages (e.g., his/her sentences in both languages demonstrate limited or no use of adjectives and adverbs and both languages are marked by a short length of utterance).</p>

Adapted from Klingner, Hoover & Baca (2008)

Progress in English Acquisition

The general rule of thumb is that students progress through one stage per year.

- However, some students take more time to progress through Levels 3 and 4...

Language Proficiency Information

School:

Student Problem Solving Profile

District:

Language Proficiency Assessments:

Eng (state assessment) (Score/Level)	Eng: WMLS-R/_____ % of success in oral language	Span: WMLS-R/_____ % of success in oral language

Five Things to Know About Your Students

Language Profile



As Compared to “True Peers”: Language

- There are no other students who speak the particular dialect of Sergio’s primary language of Kanjobal.
- The true peer comparisons are to his siblings and cousins.
- With the exception of an older brother in special education, the children are making good educational progress.

Language Development, Culture, and
Background

KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS: CULTURE



Gay (2000) defines culturally responsive teaching as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students.

Culturally Responsive Teaching is...



the lens
through
which
teachers
see their
students
and their
students'
learning

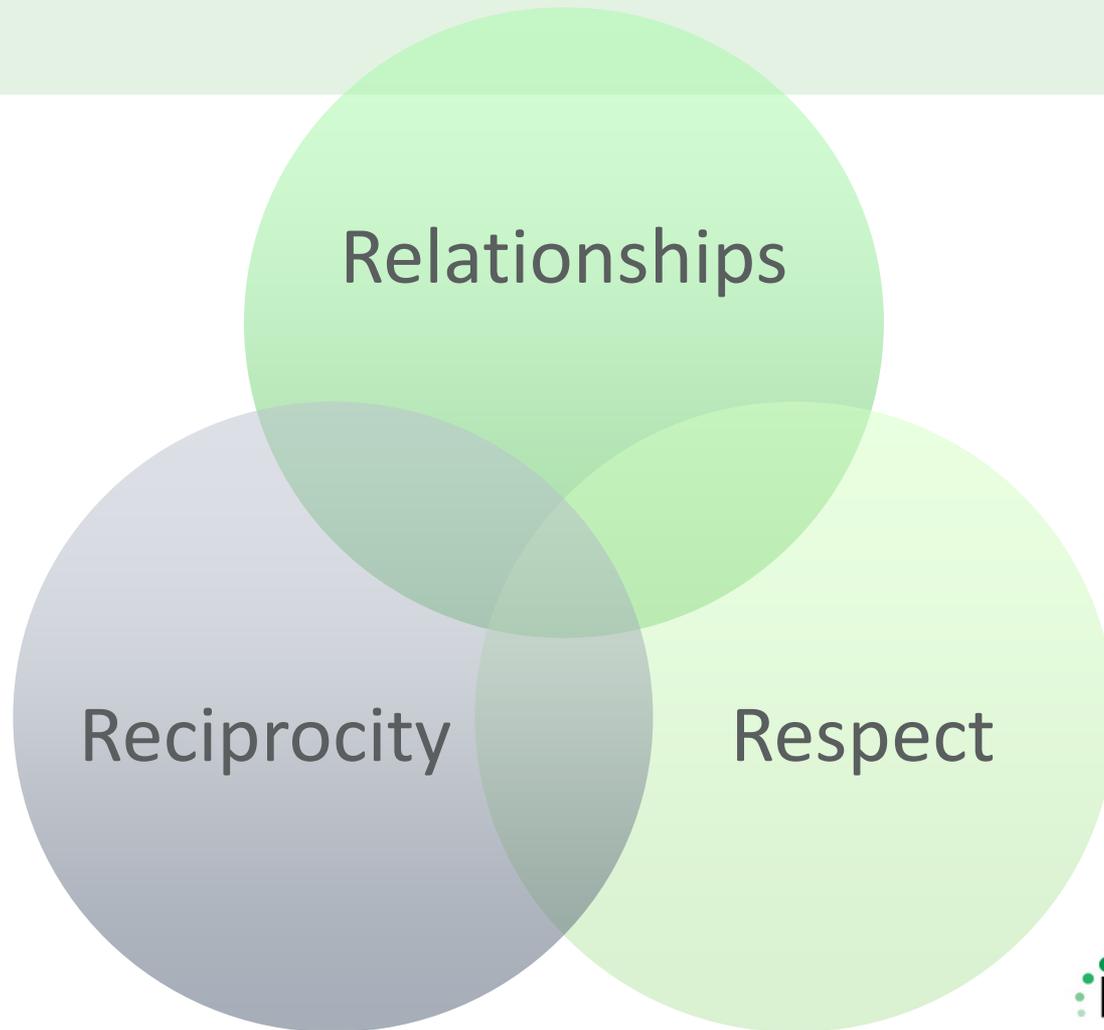


the filter
through which
teachers listen
to how students
express their
needs and
dreams



the way in which
teachers interact
with students when
delivering
instruction using
curricular materials,
and making
educational
decisions

The Three R's of CRI



Characteristics of CRI

- Climate of caring, respect, and the valuing of students' cultures.
- Bridges built between academic learning and students' prior experiences, knowledge, native language, and values.
- All stakeholders have high expectation for students and expect *and* support them to achieve high standards.
- Instruction is challenging, cooperative, active and hands-on.
- All school staff build trust and partnerships with families and communities, especially those historically marginalized by schools.
- The bottom line is that educators must make the curriculum and instruction relevant by learning about their students' culture and language.

CRI



Teachers *do not* need to be “insiders” in a particular culture in order to offer culturally responsive instruction.

Teachers *do* need to make an effort to learn about the cultures represented in their classrooms, respect students’ values, and view differences in students’ literacies as strengths, not deficits.

(Klingner, Sorrells & Barrera)

What Do Teachers Need to Know



What cultural knowledge do your students possess about their own culture and US culture?

What are each student's prior experiences in school and life?

What are the ways in which they are used to learning?

Five Things to Know About Your Students



**Cultural
Background**

Information from Parents

School:

Student Problem Solving Profile

District:

Information from Parents:

Mother's L1

L2

L3

Father's L1

L2

L3

Last grade attended:

Last grade attended:

Language primarily used when speaking to this students at home:

Language student primarily uses at home:

Developmental Milestones:

As Compared to “True Peers” : Culture

- Although Sergio was born in the U.S., his family does not engage much within the broader community.
- Parents believe teachers have the responsibility of educating their children and the family provides for their well being.
- Sergio, thus, is unfamiliar with many concepts within the curriculum.
- How can a teacher help bridge the differences?

Remember...

A wide variety of ethnically and culturally diverse examples, scenarios, and vignettes could be used to embody and demonstrate the concepts, principles, skills, and ideas being taught.

Language Development, Culture, and
Background

KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS: EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES



Five Things to Know About Your Students

Educational Experiences



Student's Educational Background

1. Student's Background

Attendance:

Days Absent/Tardy Kinder	Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 1	Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 2
Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 3	Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 4	Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 5

Hearing	Date	Results	Recheck needed
Vision	Date	Results	Recheck needed
Other			

Educational Background:

Preschool No Yes Language of Instruction: _____

Kindergarten Full-Day Half-Day Language of Instruction: _____

Early Intervention Program No Yes IEP Focus: _____

Retention No Yes If so, when? _____

Educational Experiences in Other Schools or Countries (include any concerns noted in file): _____

Was the school in an urban or rural setting?

Student Information

School: _____ Student Problem Solving Profile _____ District: _____

Student: _____ Date: _____ Grade: _____

Birthdate: _____ Typical Birthdate for This Grade is September 1, 20__ to August 31, 20__)

Student's L1: _____ Student's L2: _____ Student's L3: _____

Teacher (L1): _____ Teacher (L2): _____

Core Reading Program Eng: _____ Span: _____

Concerns (circle all areas): Reading Writing Math Other _____

What are the specific concerns regarding the areas circled above?

Concerns reported by:

Team Members:

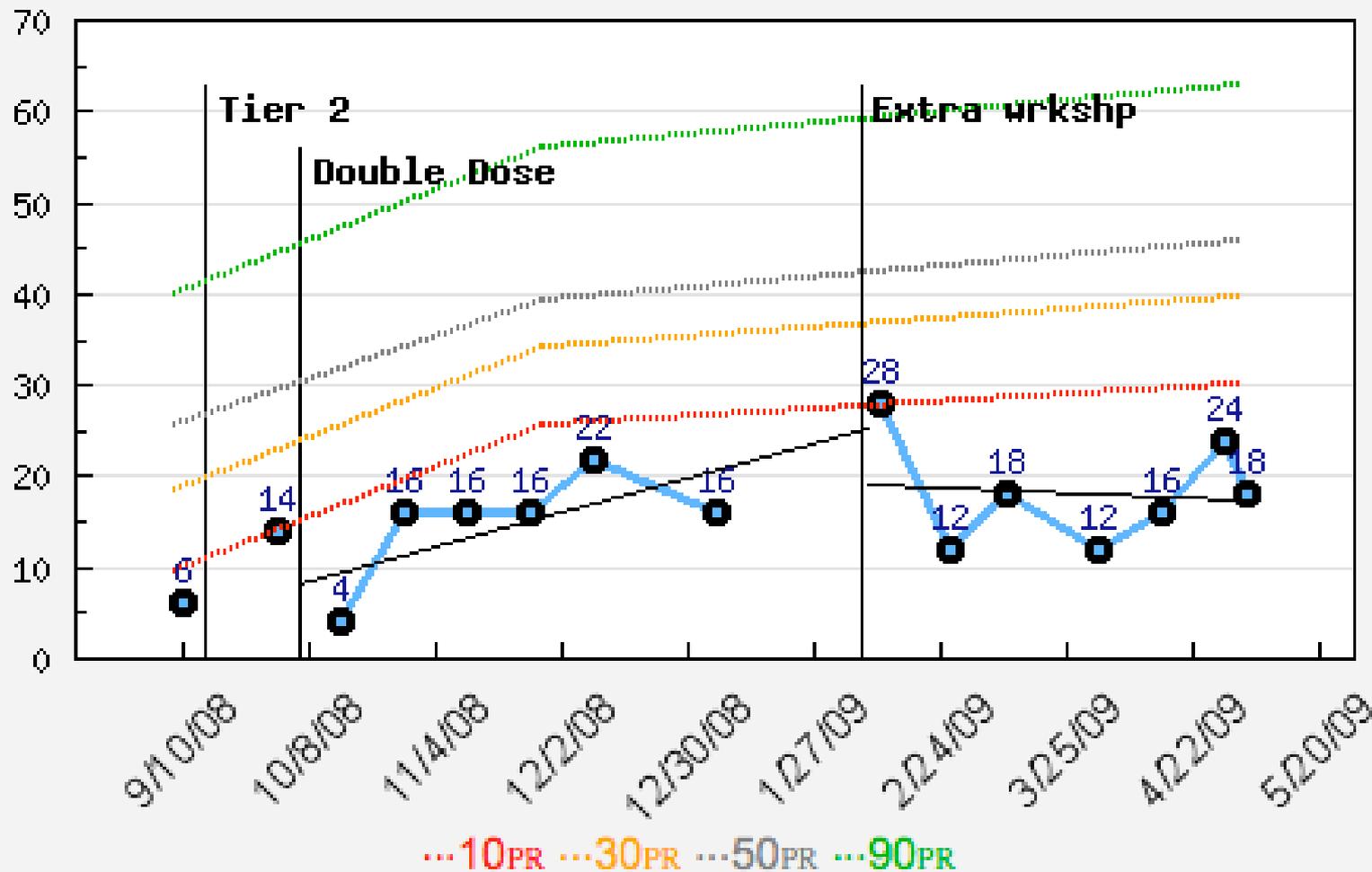
Bridges and Barriers

- What are the barriers for Sergio?
- What are potential bridges?
- Does Sergio need more scaffolding than “true peers?”
- If yes, could all of the reasons be based on his experiential background?
- If no, in what ways does he appear to need something different than peers?

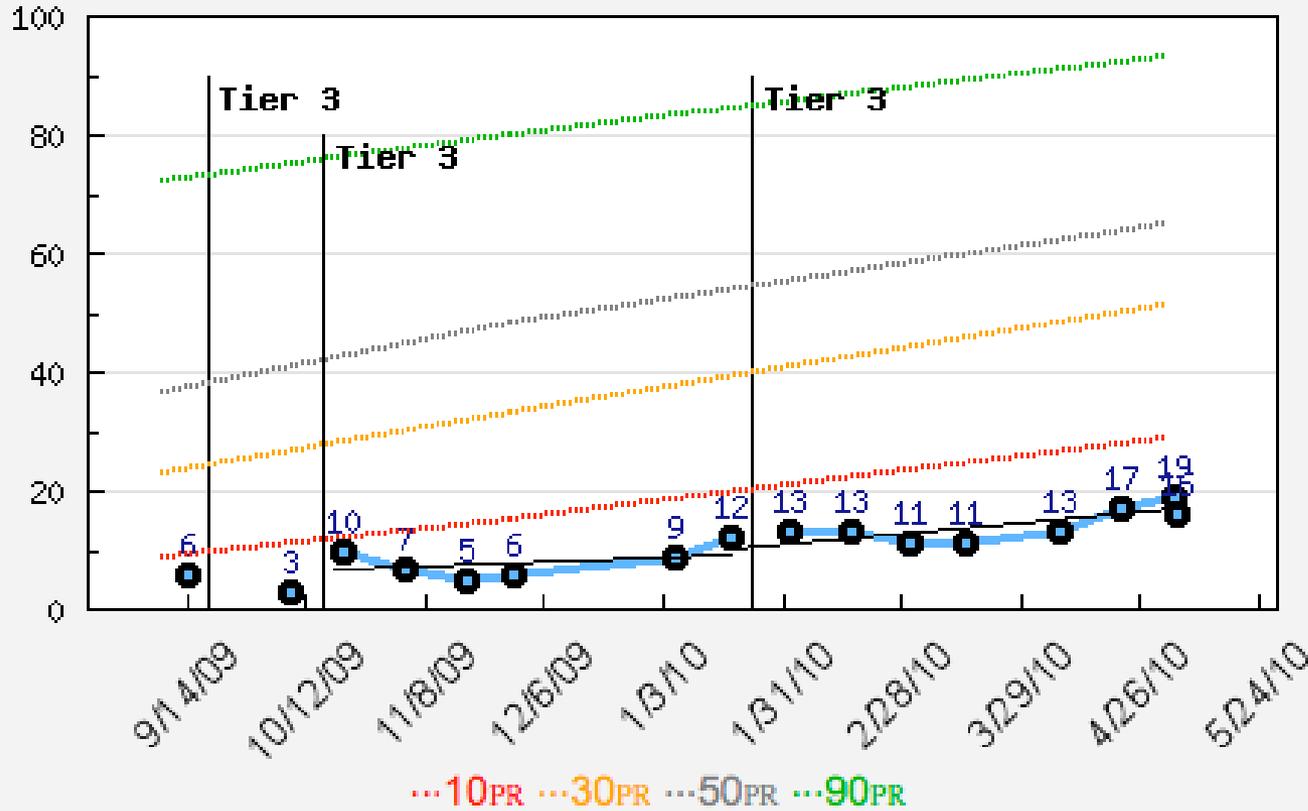
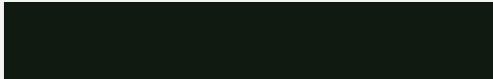
Progress Monitoring Data Crucial

- After understanding the child's context, provide appropriate, targeted interventions and closely monitor progress.

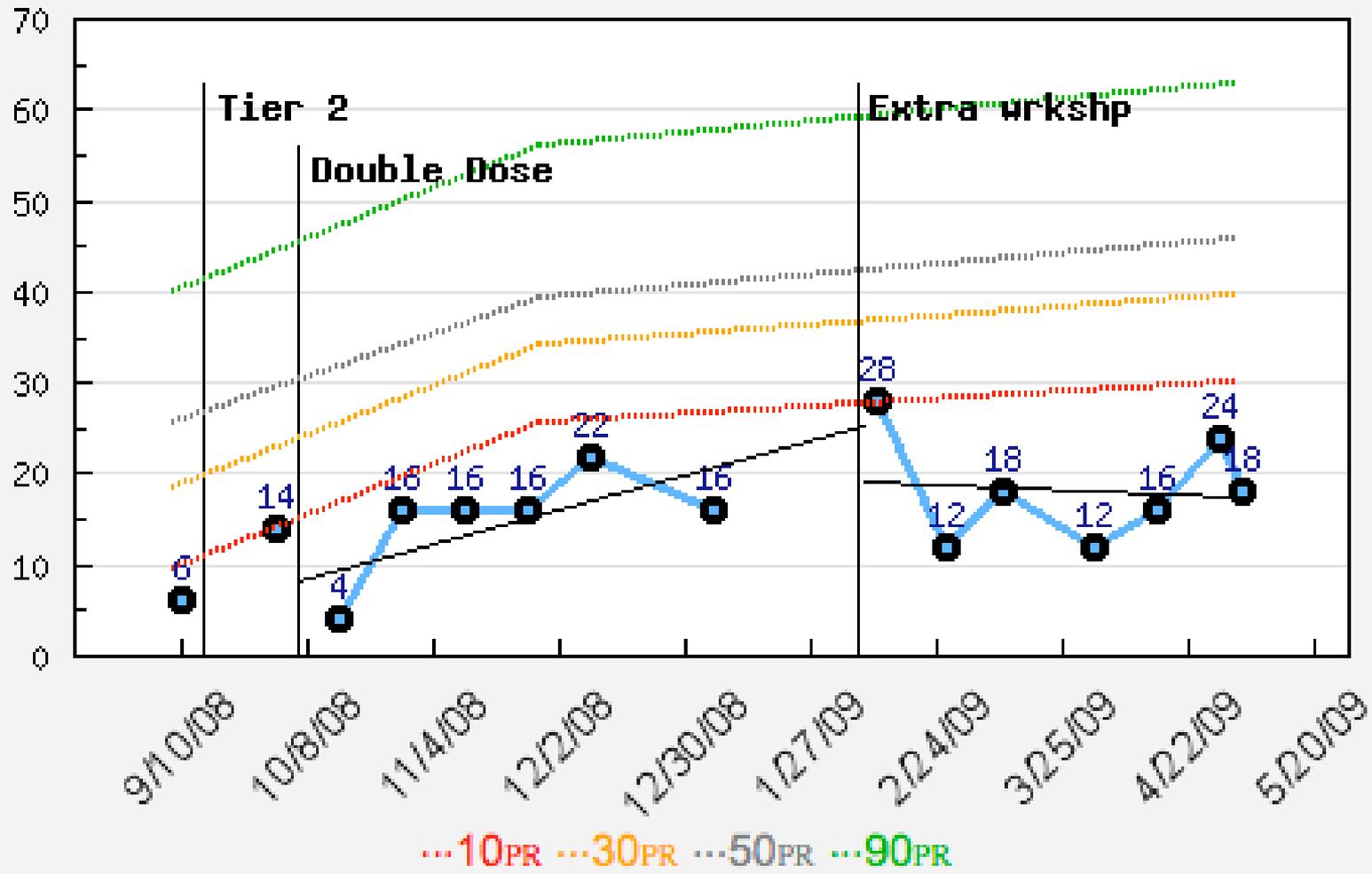
Grade 1, Letter Sounds:



Grade 2, Word Reading Fluency:



Grade 1, Letter Sounds:



Caution

- What data suggests the student is not making expected rate of progress as compared to true peers, do not delay a referral for a psychoeducational evaluation.
- OSEP Addressed this:

The regulations implementing the 2004 Amendments to the IDEA include a provision mandating that States allow, as part of their criteria for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability (SLD), the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention¹. See 34 CFR §300.307(a)(2). OSEP continues to receive questions regarding the relationship of RTI to the evaluation provisions of the regulations. In particular, OSEP has heard that some LEAs may be using RTI to delay or deny a timely initial evaluation to determine if a child is a child with a disability and, therefore, eligible for special education and related services pursuant to an individualized education program.

Language Development, Culture, and
Background

KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS: LIFE EXPERIENCES



Five Things to Know About Your Students



Life Experiences

1. Student's Background

Attendance:

Days Absent/Tardy Kinder	Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 1	Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 2
Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 3	Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 4	Days Absent/Tardy Gr. 5

Hearing	Date	Results	Recheck needed
Vision	Date	Results	Recheck needed
Other			

Language Development, Culture, and
Background

KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS: PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS



Five Things to Know About Your Students



Personal
Characteristics

Student Interview

|Student Interview – Secondary Level

1. Were you born in the U.S? If not, how long have you lived here?
2. How long have you attended this school? Where did you go before?
3. Are you involved in any special activities outside of school (e.g., sports, religious, volunteering, cultural groups)? If yes, what activities?
4. Do you read and write in your first language? If yes, how well?
5. Do either of your parents (or guardians) read and write in their first language? If yes, a little bit or very well?
6. What do you want to do after you graduate from high school?
7. What are you favorite subjects (or classes)?

Sergio: Difference or Disability?

- What would your team do???



Second Language Behaviors	Characteristics of LD	Cultural Differences
Difficulty following directions	Difficulty following multiple directions	Discourse styles different (e.g., overlapping talk vs. waiting for one's turn)
Difficulty expressing needs or answering questions		Differences in gender expectations
Poor attention and concentration	Difficulty concentrating	Anxiety and stress due to process of adapting to new culture
May be easily frustrated	Difficulty finishing work on time	Differences in ways of showing respect
Errors in speech, reading and writing	Slow in learning sound-symbol correspondence	Differences in writing patterns and rhetorical features

Adapted from Klingner, Hoover & Baca (2008)

Second Language Behaviors	Characteristics of LD	Cultural Differences
Slow processing	Difficulty remembering sight words	May view time differently
Confused by slang or idioms	Difficulty understanding social situations	Differences in behavioral expectations across settings
Poor auditory memory	Difficulty retelling a story in sequence	Focus on group achievement instead of individual

Adapted from Klingner, Hoover & Baca (2008)

Selected Resources

Brown & Sanford (2010) Practitioner's Brief

<http://www.rti4success.org/resourcetype/rti-english-language-learners-appropriately-using-screening-and-progress-monitoring-too>



Selected Resources

Brown & Doolittle (2008) Practitioner's Brief

http://www.niusileadscape.org/lc/Record/150?search_query=



Selected Resources

Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners, 13(1), 2012, 56–70
Copyright 2012, Division for Culturally & Linguistically Diverse
Exceptional Learners of the Council for Exceptional Children

Enhancing Instruction for English Learners in Response to Intervention Systems: The PLUSS Model

AMANDA K. SANFORD

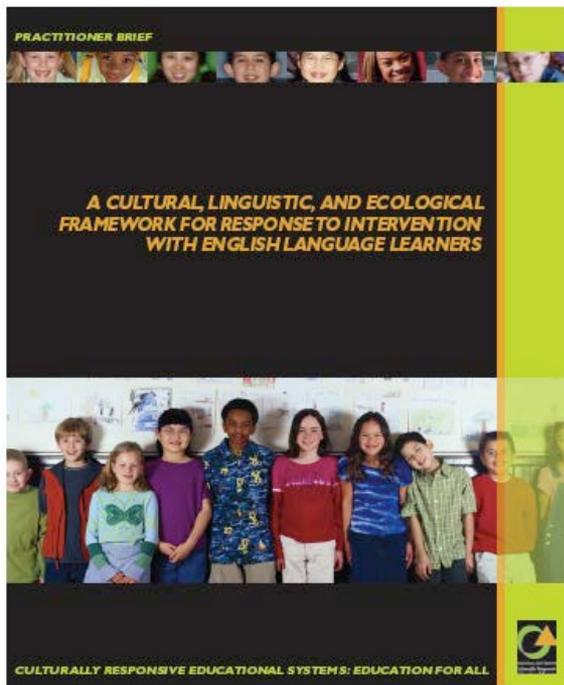
JULIE ESPARZA BROWN

Portland State University

MARANDA TURNER

Gresham-Barlow School District, Gresham, OR

Selected Resources



“The beauty of the world lies in the diversity of its people ” ~ *Unknown*



Contact Information

Dr. Julie Esparza Brown

jebrown@pdx.edu

360-281-8808

