

PROMOTING EFFECTIVE HOME-SCHOOL INTERACTION

ALMA FLOR ADA & F. ISABEL CAMPOY

www.almaflorada.com

www.isabelcampoy.com

www.delsolbooks.com

MODEL I - WORKING DIRECTLY WITH GROUPS OF PARENTS

Children's Literature Based Family Literacy Projects

The Pájaro Valley Experience is based on:

- Large group discussion topics: parents as first and most lasting educators, the importance of the first language to transmit family history and values and to continue the role of educator and protector of children on the language the parents' can be more effective, second language acquisition, what parents can do to support school regardless of their level of formal education, discipline without violence, health considerations
- Small groups read selected children's picture books and dialogue using the Creative Reading Process to relate story conflict to their own reality and to make decisions for action
- Parents dictate their own thoughts that are written (on chart paper or transparencies) and later publish in book format to be distributed at future meetings
- Blank books are distributed to take home for parents and/or children to create their own books

An important element in the Pájaro Valley and similar programs conducted by Alma Flor Ada was that the sessions were videotaped and parents had the opportunity of viewing the sessions and re-visiting the issues.

The process is highlighted when recognized authors share the process of authorship.

An excellent on-going model of this process is the **Libros y familias** program in Independence, OR, directed by Dick Keiss.

Karen Kayser dissertation at the University of San Francisco (International Multicultural Program) studied a number of similar programs.

MODEL II - FAMILY INVOLVEMENT THROUGH THEIR CHILDREN

Authors in the Classroom Process

Teachers send daily questions/dialogue prompts to promote meaningful interaction at home.

Parents' experiences and life reflections are validated as fonts of knowledge. The parents' or relatives' words are transformed into books in the classroom.

“Our Families Wisdom” – collective books, each family provides content for a page:

- * Collections of saying, proverbs, riddles, rhymes, lullabies
- * Sentence completion: “*Friendship is...*”, “*Peace is...*”, “*Family is...*”, “*Learning is...*”
- * Reflections: “*My best advice for my children*”, “*Good and Difficult Things in My Life*”
- * Two part books “*My goals for my children’s future.../How I will help achieve them...*”
“*What I Know How to Do Well and How I Learned It*”

Posters with photos and words of wisdom from parents are placed on classroom & hallways.

The parents create their own authentic books or create books with the students at home:

- * Acrostics of the family, using positive adjectives
- * The family’s ABC book
- * “*The story of my name*”, “*A childhood memory*”, “*A moment that changed my life*”
- * The biography of the child, the parent autobiography

When these books are copied and sent to each home, parents emerge as authors and protagonists, and a true community of learners evolves around the classroom.

The parents work at home, in groups at school, or receive some after school assistance to create books with the students’ life as an Elementary or Middle School Graduation gift.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EASY IMPLEMENTATION

are found in the newsletter **Smiles and Butterflies**:

<http://almaflorida.com/publications-for-adults/smiles-butterflies-newsletter/>

If you are not receiving this newsletter you can subscribe by sending a request in www.almaflorida.com.

HOME-SCHOOL INTERACTION

The home plays an important role in a child's development. Language is not an exception. Parents and caretakers are meant to contribute the experiences that create children's language foundation.

Unfortunately, many parents are not aware of their essential role as language models. It is essential to emphasize the need that parents interact with their children one-on-one or in a small family group situation, in order to provide opportunities for children not only to listen, but also to speak. Children, as well as adults, need to be encouraged to ask and answer questions, to narrate their experiences, and to express their feelings.

It is tragic that Spanish-speaking parents, as well as other language-minority parents, motivated by their strong desire of seeing their children become fluent in English, avoid or limit their role as language developers.

Their attitude is understandable since, in most cases, they are trying to prevent their children from suffering, as many of them have, by a lack of a strong command of the English language. What's unfortunate is that they are sacrificing their children's opportunity to know their home language well, following a false premise: that children will not develop better English by losing their first language. The best predictor for academic success in English for an ELL student is a strong base in the home language.

True bilingualism, proficiency and literacy in two languages, is a powerful asset in life. Besides being an academic and professional asset, it is the instrument to function in two cultures. When one of those cultures is the one of the home, it provides a vehicle for preserving an identity, allows enrichment through the family cultural traditions, and develops closer ties with the family. Parents need to be alerted of these facts and should be encouraged to do what parents have done for centuries to maintain alive the gift of language.

Parents need to be encouraged to talk with their children, as frequently as possible, with engaging and meaningful topics. These include, but are not limited to:

Everyday experiences

- Share what you do each day: daily tasks as well as important moments of the day; interesting things you have seen or heard; new things you have learned to do, challenges you have encountered; people you have met.
- Ask children to share their day along the same lines.

Childhood

- Share memories of your childhood; compare and contrast your childhood with your child's childhood.
- Explain important moments of your childhood and the lessons you learned from them.

Family

- Explain who are the members of their family, talk about their personalities, their likes and dislikes, their skills, their efforts and sacrifices in life.
- Make sure children know about their elders, grandparents or other relatives that preceded them; help them understand how the lives of those relatives were different or similar to theirs.
- Facilitate that children become aware that they belong to a family, and reflect about those things they should be proud of as well as those that they would like to change or not repeat.

Real life stories and popular tales

- Tell stories to your children. Tell them real life stories of things that have happened in your family as well as the popular tales that you were told as a child.

Recommended books of folktales:

Cuentos que contaban nuestras abuelas

El gallo que fue a la boda de su tío

The Lizard and the Sun/La lagartija y el sol

Mediopollito/Half-chicken

Folklore

- Enjoy with your children the richness of the folklore: *trabalenguas* or tongue-twisters, *refranes* or proverbs, *rimas* or rhymes, *juegos* or games

Recommended books:

¡Pío Peep! Hispanic Nursery Rhymes. Book and CD.

Mamá Goose. A Latino Nursery Treasury.

MuuMoo. Animal Nursery Rhymes.

Ten Little Puppies/Diez perritos.

Canciones

- Singing frequently with your children any song you like will help develop their language and strengthen bonds with you.

Recommended:

Música amiga collection of 10 books and CDs. 120 songs.

Poetry

- Share with your children any poems you know. Enjoy reading and memorizing new poems.

Recommended poetry collections:

Salta, saltarín

Todo es canción

Pimpón, Antón Pirulero, Mambrú, Chuchurumbé

Recommended poetry that can also be sung:

Abecedario de los animales. Book and CD

Coral y espuma. Abecedario del nar. Book and CD

Gathering the Sun. Book and CD en español.

Cuéntame un cuento

Tres princesas

Life Wisdom

Parents are graduates from the University of Life and have accumulated valuable wisdom by living.

- Tell your children what you have learned from life. What are the things you have learned about family, friendship, work, effort, relaxation, enjoyment?
- You may want to share the wisdom of some *refranes*, like:

Haz bien y no mires a quien.

Dime con quién andas y te diré quién eres.

Quien a buen árbol se arrima, buena sombra le cobija.

El haragán, trabaja doble.

Or create your own sentences to help them remember your advice:

Confía en tus padres, porque queremos tu bien.

Respetar a tus maestros y aprende de ellos.

Respetar a los demás, para que ellos te respeten.

No impota si uno se cae, lo importante es levantarse.

Los errores son para aprender, no para repetirlos.

Reading

- Read with your children every day. Set aside some time. Turn off the TV and the telephone. Make it a fun and loving time. Read with enthusiasm, making the children want to know what is happening. Sometimes you can read, an older child can read, or a young child can "read" the pictures. Talk about the book you read together.

Recommended books for reading by parents and children:

Colección Cuentos para todo el año: No fui yo. La jaula dorada. La hamaca de la vaca. La piñata vacía.

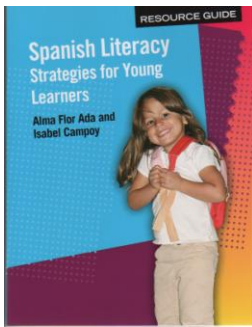
Colección Cuentos Para contar: Amigos. Una extraña visita. ¿Quién nacerá aquí? El canto del mosquito.

These books are also available in CD read by the author and retold in music form by Suni Paz

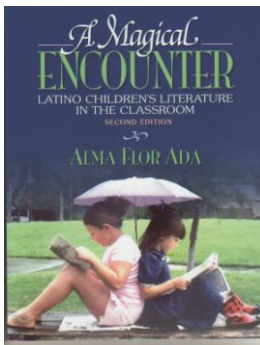
Parents need to realize that just as they would not allow the children to do things that would harm them, they ought not to allow children to make decisions concerning language usage.

Children choosing to speak only English do not realize they are losing the opportunity to learn their home language well. They are acting out of social pressure, whether they are aware or not. Just as a parent would save them from danger of getting burned or being in an accident, they must save them from the damage resulting from losing a language.

**THOSE WHO SPEAK TWO LANGUAGES
HAVE TWICE AS MANY OPPORTUNITIES IN LIFE
TO BE SUCCESSFUL
AND TO BE HELPFUL TO TWICE AS MANY PEOPLE.**

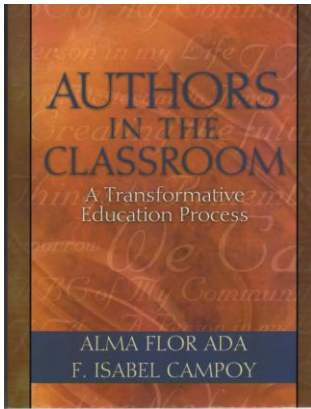


Learning to read in Spanish can be easy and enjoyable. This guide provides the supportive theory and a step-by-step guidance to the process. Includes rhymes, poems, and a brief story to support each of the syllabic combinations.

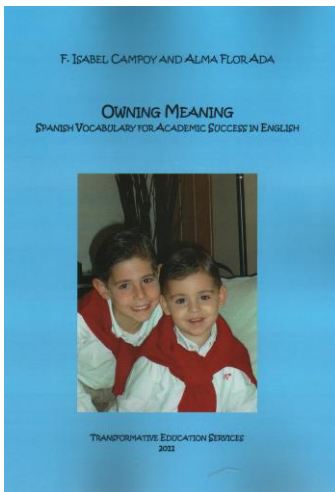


A Magical Encounter. Latino Children's Literature in the Classroom offers suggestions for all steps in the use of literature in the classroom, from the preparing to share a book, the various forms of reading and the creative dialogue to oral, written, artistic and dramatic responses to books.

Some highlights are the Creative Reading Methodology, The One Thousand Books Classroom and the suggestions for Culminating Activities, Author's Study, and on going Self-Evaluation.



For an expansion of the concepts in this section and guidance in developing them, as well as for examples of books made by teachers, parents and students see our book **Authors in the Classroom.**



Owning Meaning. Spanish Vocabulary Development for Academic Success in English

- * A clear theoretical explanation behind the principles to develop language for success.
- * Numerous effective processes for vocabulary acquisition through:
 - The use of folklore
 - Authoring books
 - A healthy home school interaction
 - Theatre in the classroom
 - Vocabulary in specific content

THANKS!!!



- For devoting your lives to children
 - For recognizing the importance of a home school interaction based on respect and solidarity
 - For valuing children's home language and culture
 - For recognizing the richness of diversity and its contribution to our society
 - For being who you are.
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