

KEY FINDINGS

- English language learners attain annual measurable achievement objectives
- *Inside* motivates students to take risks and increase oral language
- *Inside* engages English language learners

Inside Success Equals Gains for ELLs



Challenge

Mr. Forbes, a teacher at Taft Middle School in Oklahoma City Public School District, faced the challenge of finding a program that would help his 6–8th grade Beginning English language learners (ELLs) meet state Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). At the same time, he needed a program that would meet district expectations that students gain the academic skills needed to move into content classrooms.

His students were also culturally and academically diverse, representing seven different countries, including: Mexico, Guatemala, Vietnam, Iraq, Burma, China, and Ethiopia. He needed a program that would motivate and engage all of his students given their diverse range of needs.

Solution

Mr. Forbes piloted *Inside Language, Literacy, and Content*, an intensive Reading/Language Arts program designed to build literacy and move students through the stages of language acquisition, because it aligned extremely well with district curricular goals and standards. The building Principal also supported using *Inside* to meet the unique language and literacy needs of the teacher's beginning ELLs.

Inside was implemented as the core instructional program for an hour a day during the 2008–2009 school year. He used the *Inside* assessment tools to monitor the progress of his multi-level students and used this data to drive

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—Middle School ESL Teacher

instruction by utilizing *Inside's* reteaching lessons to ensure they were mastering the skills needed to achieve language and literacy success.

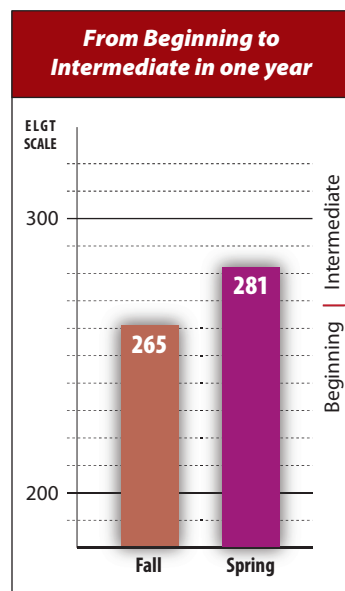
Inside captured and engaged students' interest with reading selections that reflected a diversity of cultures, perspectives, topics, and genres. Mr. Forbes stated, “The diverse student population of my class was represented by the diversity shown in *Inside*. It is not biased to any one culture and provides such an abundance of nationalities that everyone feels supported and therefore more confident in their learning environment.”

Results

As a result of using *Inside*, students made considerable language growth and met AMAO targets for progress. “The fact that our Beginning ELLs can move from basic language into academic language—that is what’s going to allow them to succeed in high school and beyond. *Inside* ended up being incredible for these kids,” said Mr. Forbes

To measure progress, *Inside* students took the English Language Gains Test (ELGT), a valid and reliable measure of adolescents' language proficiency over time, in late fall and again in late spring of the 2008–2009 school year. The ELGT reports scores on a common scale—score ranging from 200 to 400 so that test scores may be compared over time. The results showed that students increased their scores from 265 scale-score points (High Beginning) to 281 (Low Intermediate) in just one year. The teacher then used the ELGT results to gauge progress towards the AMAOs.

Inside supported the diverse mix of learners in this classroom and motivated students to take risks, grow academically, and increase their oral language skills. “*Inside* enriches the atmosphere of the classroom and lowers students' affective filters through use of vocabulary pictures and photographs giving them more courage and motivation to participate and experience their education rather than being ‘talked at.’ It motivates them.” Based on the success Mr. Forbes' students had with *Inside*, he is continuing to implement *Inside* in his classroom.



Language Proficiency Growth

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