

The Character Based Literacy Program

The Character Based Literacy Program of the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University is a character education project, and it is a literacy project. As such, its first objective is to promote school practices that positively influence the processes by which school pupils become good people, good citizens. This can be accomplished by making use of effective and efficient methods to influence the values, thought processes and coping skills of students such that habits and choices result in pro-social rather than anti-social behavior. Because this development of character is a method rather than a subject, it must be accomplished through some definite and specific part of the school curriculum. CBL utilizes the English language arts curriculum because literacy is fundamental to success in school and in life for all students. It is also a natural place to pursue questions of value and character as they occur in literature, language expression and the writing and creative processes. This pursuit can continue into any content area, but is especially relevant in the history-social science and science curriculum areas.

CBL is also a project that intends to serve students who have had marginal success in school and are at serious risk for school failure and antisocial behavior. For this reason the program began in the court-community schools operated by the county offices of education. These schools are a safety net for students who are incarcerated, in foster or institutional care, homeless, hospitalized or in special community schools for expelled, delinquent and out of control youth. CBL began as the vision of teachers and administrators who believe that student character, literacy and school success can be markedly improved in the special schools serving youth who are the least likely to succeed by any school measure. Because this program serves students in public middle and high schools where credit will be awarded, the program also has to meet state standards, use acceptable instructional materials, and result in sufficient student progress to merit grade level credit.

CBL is an elementary, middle and high school program in the English language arts meeting California standards and using selections from California's *Recommended Readings in Literature*. It is organized in value themed units with activities that move students

away from anti-social thoughts, values and behaviors and into pro-social thoughts, values and behaviors. This is accomplished by engaging students in literature that is acceptable for grade level credit, but also engages their imaginations, connects them to characters they care about, and provides opportunities to discuss the value context of the literature.

Students read and write each day in integrated language arts lessons which utilize all six of the language arts: reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and visually representing. CBL consists of daily lessons rooted in a particular text which students prepare to read, read, respond and react to, explore more deeply and then extend to their lives and to the world; this is the sequence for the PRREE lesson plan: Prepare, Read, Respond, Explore, Extend. The phases in the lessons each consist of several short activities based on a collection of nearly a hundred literacy strategies which have been validated by research in the teaching of the English language arts and also found usable by teachers of our special populations.

Daily lessons also pay attention to particular values in the readings, and teach rational ways of thinking about problems and conflicts in the story. They also teach skills for coping with situations such as those faced by the characters in the day's reading.

CBL is a coordinated and coherent program. Every classroom using the program is reading literature from a limited list, and utilizing the core methods. In the most recent version of the High School Program, every classroom is teaching the same unit, reading the same book, and doing the same lessons in a given week. We serve students in alternative and special education programs; our students change schools frequently as a result of poverty, custody changes, court decisions, school problems, and a multitude of other reasons. Because the program is coordinated and coherent across the counties, districts, schools and classrooms that participate, students lose little if any ground when they move from one CBL site to another.

Extensive support is provided to teachers through initial training in the program methods, regular update session at sites called *CBL Next*, consultations with CBL staff, and through a wealth of program materials including daily lesson plans in English language arts and

social studies available on the program web site. The direct URL to reach the program web site is www.scu.edu/character

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Essentials of How We Teach the Language Arts

Visual-oral-written Push

- Oral, visual-leads to-written language
- We emphasize visual and oral language
- We introduce new skills in visual and oral language
- Then we transfer to written language

Strengths based model

- We build on what students do best

English is a school language

- We teach respect and use of
- home, school and community language

Writing, reading---thinking

- We build thinking skills
- even where reading and writing skills limit access

Comprehension vs. decoding

- Work on comprehension doesn't wait for decoding to catch up

Internal vs. external

- We teach language to communicate
- We teach language to mediate thoughts and emotions

Sequential vs. simultaneous

- We don't overwhelm memory systems
- One thing at a time

Cumulative and structured

- Major products are built from smaller ones

Build basic habits

- Show Up
- On Time
- Start Promptly
- Complete Tasks
- Follow Directions
- Get Along – Adults
- Get Along – Peers
- Good Hygiene

All of this requires careful, long term instructional planning

CBL PRREE Lesson Components

P	R	R	E	E
PREPARE	READ	RESPOND	EXPLORE	EXTEND
Key concept or value Background knowledge Vocabulary for the Word Wall* Set the conflict up	Review or Catch Up on the Timeline* or Introduce the story Shared Reading Partner Reading Choral Reading Silent Reading Taped Reading Round Robin Read Aloud Retelling Alternate Text Reader's Theatre Film/Drama	Fix the Facts on the Timeline* or Newline* Add to the Wall Open Mind Portrait* Map* KWL Chart* K W L know want to know learned	Visual and Oral Activities Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go deeper • 9 Kinds of questions Language Building Break or Skill Building Break	Daily writing from a prompt Snapshot Thoughtshot Quickwrite Postcard Journal Extend to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your life • the world

The Wall*	Timeline or Newline		
Word Wall	Open Mind Portraits	Map	KWL Chart

CBL PRREE Lesson Components – Independent Study

P	R	R	E	E						
PREPARE	READ	RESPOND	EXPLORE	EXTEND						
<p>Background for today’s reading: time, place or idea</p> <p>Vocabulary for the Word Wall</p>	<p>Review your Timeline and think about the setting and the main characters</p> <p>Read</p> <p>Stop every 2-3 pages to review what has happened and predict what might happen next</p>	<p>What happened? Fix the facts on the timeline.</p> <p>Add to the Wall: Open Mind Portrait Map KWL Chart</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">K</td> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="text-align: center;">L</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">know</td> <td style="text-align: center;">want to know</td> <td style="text-align: center;">learned</td> </tr> </table>	K	W	L	know	want to know	learned	<p>Go deeper with today’s discussion questions or visual/oral activity.</p> <p>Do today’s Daily Oral Language Activity using <i>Woe Is I</i></p>	<p>Write from today’s writing prompt</p> <p>Extend reading to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your life • the world
K	W	L								
know	want to know	learned								

work folder

outside	inside	contents
timeline	wordwall	visual oral products

writing folder

outside	inside	contents
contract	tracking sheet	writing products

Lesson Plan for Week Day Novel

Standards Focus:

PREPARE

1. Background knowledge necessary for today's reading

Introduce 5 important, useful words from today's reading.

2. Word Wall

- show, say, explain, expand, explode or buzz about the word briefly
- show, say and define the word quickly and add to the word wall

READ

3. Review the Timeline

Start at the beginning and review the story so far

- mention the setting and main character
- point to each timeline item as you quickly review it

4. Read today's story selection

- Shared Reading RRP: Read, React, Predict every 2-3 pages
- Tape Partner Choral Silent Round Robin Reading

setting	characters	pages

RESPOND

5. Add to the Timeline

Discuss the reading and add 3-5 events to the timeline

- discuss the story to *fix the facts*: who, what, when, where, why
- decide on the 3-5 most important events and add these to the timeline

Students might mention:

6. Add new information to ongoing whole class projects posted on the wall.

- new character information can be added to an Open Mind Portrait
- an answer can be added to a question from the KWL Chart
- a new location or change can be added to the map

EXPLORE

7. Explore today's story with visual and oral language activities

One possible activity:

Other possible activities for a class group or individual

- Bookmark Open Mind Portrait g6 Graphic Organizer
g7 Main Idea Graphic Organizer c1-12Cubing Postcard Prop
Poster Ad Map Retelling Reader's Theatre Cartoon
 Rap

8. Bridge to a language building activity

Teach a Mini Lesson using *Write AHEAD* pages #
 [The Write Ahead Activities are on individual work-pages in a separate file]

9. Explore today's reading

Key Questions

Remember to ask literal structural idea craft author literature
 life
evaluate and inference questions every day.

Key Paragraph

EXTEND

10. Prompt every student to write a short product tied to today's reading

11. Close with a short summary

Extend the reading to the student's lives or to the world

An English Lesson in a High School Character Based Literacy Classroom

Before

- 1. Instructor has lesson plans from the CBL web page for the current quarter.
- 2. Instructor has attended a CBL Next workshop for the current quarter.
- 3. Books are read in sequence and start within 2 weeks of the contract date.
- 4. All required books are read [contract weeks where books are in bold].
- 5. All 3 required writing products are produced by full quarter students.
- 6. Instructor uses daily written lesson plans of their own or from CBL.
- 7. The classroom has a word wall and timeline for the current text.
- 8. A variety of student visual products for the current text are in the room.
- 9. Every student's daily and cumulative work is in a writing folder.
- 10. Materials and texts are well organized for distribution and retrieval.

During

- 1. The lesson unfolded in a PRREE format.
- 2. Students prepare to read with a key idea and vocabulary for the word wall.
- 3. The timeline was used to review the sequence of the story so far.
- 4. Students read an appropriate length of the current text in fitting mode.
- 5. Students stopped briefly to image, react or predict every 2-3 pages.
- 6. Students clarified the facts and established them on the timeline.
- 7. Students used visual, oral and written language to explore the text in depth.
- 8. Literal, structural, idea, craft, author, literature, life, evaluate and inference?
- 9. Students learned and practiced language conventions using *Write AHEAD*.
- 10. Students wrote from a prompt requiring comprehension and transformation.

After

- 1. The value theme of the unit was clear in this lesson.
- 2. The tone, activities and discussions of this lesson form good character.
- 3. This lesson was positive, encouraging and success oriented.
- 4. This daily writing prompt will lead to the cumulative major product.
- 5. Students were engaged in the reading, discussion and exploration of the text.
- 6. Students learned 5 new words, 1 new concept and 1 new language convention.
- 7. The lesson moved at a brisk pace with clean transitions and few disruptions.
- 8. Students learned standards identified in this unit.
- 9. The level of ideas discussed in this lesson was appropriate for high school.

System

- 1. Instruction is available for students who need decoding instruction.

An English Lesson in a Middle School Character Based Literacy Classroom

Before

- 1. Instructor has lesson plans from the CBL web page for the current quarter.
- 2. Instructor has attended a CBL Next workshop for the current quarter.
- 3. Books are read in sequence and start within 2 weeks of the contract date.
- 4. All required books are read [contract weeks where books are in bold].
- 5. All 3 required writing products are produced by full quarter students.
- 6. Instructor uses daily written lesson plans of their own or from CBL.
- 7. The classroom has a word wall and timeline for the current text.
- 8. A variety of student visual products for the current text are in the room.
- 9. Every student's daily and cumulative work is in a writing folder.
- 10. Materials and texts are well organized for distribution and retrieval.

During

- 1. The lesson unfolded in a PRREE format.
- 2. Students prepare to read with a key idea and vocabulary for the word wall.
- 3. The timeline was used to review the sequence of the story so far.
- 4. Students read an appropriate length of the current text in fitting mode.
- 5. Students stopped briefly to image, react or predict every 2-3 pages.
- 6. Students clarified the facts and established them on the timeline.
- 7. Students used visual, oral and written language to explore the text in depth.
- 8. Literal, structural, idea, craft, author, literature, life, evaluate and inference?
- 9. Students learned and practiced language conventions using *ALL Write*.
- 10. Students wrote from a prompt requiring comprehension and transformation.

After

- 1. The value theme of the unit was clear in this lesson.
- 2. The tone, activities and discussions of this lesson form good character.
- 3. This lesson was positive, encouraging and success oriented.
- 4. This daily writing prompt will lead to the cumulative major product.
- 5. Students were engaged in the reading, discussion and exploration of the text.
- 6. Students learned 5 new words, 1 new concept and 1 new language convention.
- 7. The lesson moved at a brisk pace with clean transitions and few disruptions.
- 8. Students learned standards identified in this unit.
- 9. The level of ideas discussed in this lesson was appropriate for middle school.

System

- 1. Instruction is available for students who need decoding instruction.

An English Lesson in a High School Character Based Literacy Contract

Before

- 1. Instructor has lesson plans from the CBL web page for the current quarter.
- 2. Instructor has attended a CBL Next workshop for the current quarter.
- 3. Books are read in sequence and start within 2 weeks of the contract date.
- 4. All required books are read [contract weeks where books are in bold].
- 5. All 3 required writing products are produced by full quarter students.
- 6. Instructor has a system for producing weekly student instructions or contract.
- 7. The student has a word wall and timeline for the current text.
- 8. The student has visual products for the current text in a folder.
- 9. Every student's daily and cumulative work is in a writing folder.
- 10. Materials and texts are well organized for distribution and retrieval.

During

- 1. The lessons each day unfolded in a PRREE format.
- 2. Students prepare to read with a key idea and vocabulary for the word wall.
- 3. The timeline was used to review the sequence of the story so far.
- 4. Students read an appropriate length of the current text in fitting mode.
- 5. Students stopped briefly to image, react or predict every 2-3 pages.
- 6. Students clarified the facts and established them on the timeline.
- 7. Students used visual, oral and written language to explore the text in depth.
- 8. Literal, structural, idea, craft, author, literature, life, evaluate and inference?
- 9. Students learned and practiced language conventions using *Write AHEAD*
- 10. Students wrote from a prompt requiring comprehension and transformation.

After

- 1. The value theme of the unit was clear in the work of the week.
- 2. The tone, activities and discussions with the student form good character.
- 3. Meetings are positive, encouraging and success oriented.
- 4. This daily writing prompt will lead to the cumulative major product.
- 5. Students were engaged in the reading, discussion and exploration of the text.
- 6. Students learned 5 new words, 1 new concept and 1 new language convention.
- 7. The activities will be completed independently.
- 8. Students learned standards identified in this unit.
- 9. The level of ideas discussed in this week was appropriate for high school.

System

- 1. Students are able to complete reading independently.

Revision Prompts

Writing as Revision: The Seven Revision Prompts

1. Question Prompts

After you have read the composition, think of questions you would ask if someone had just told you this story or information in a conversation. What are the next things you would want to know? Write the 5 best questions you have at the bottom of the last page of the composition.

The writer can now revise by adding sentences that answer the questions, or revising sentences to incorporate the answers. The writer can decide to answer a question or not answer.

Variations:

1. You could ask a different number of questions, like 3. Or several people could read the composition and each ask 1 question.
2. The composition could be read aloud. The questions could be asked aloud instead of written down.

2. Addition Prompts

After you read the composition, think of where additional information could be added to expand the composition.

Could you add more information before the composition begins to tell the reader what happens before? Could you add more information after the composition ends to tell the reader what happens next? Could you add more information at an important point in the body of the composition to tell the reader what else happens? Or give more details, or create more interest, about something already in the composition? You could also randomly pick any point where more details would help.

The writer can now revise by adding sentences before, after or in the composition.

3. Tinting Prompts

After you have read the composition, think of the name of the emotion that is strongest in the composition, or that the narrator or writer is most experiencing.

The writer can now revise by re-writing sentences so that this emotion comes through strongly, or add sentences that bring this emotion out more clearly. The composition becomes more coherent when it is tinted with the same emotion throughout. Something like tinting a shirt green – green should come through all over the shirt.

Variations:

1. You could also tint with an idea, a particular point of view, a particular value, for a particular historical period, or the context of a specific culture, gender, or experience.
2. You can change the tinting in a longer composition to show a change in the character or ideas.

4. Listening Prompts

Read the composition out loud to yourself or another person. As you read you will notice things that can be improved. A word might be left out. A sentence might be unclear. The tense of a verb might be wrong. Something might not make sense.

The writer can then make changes where indicated. It is helpful to read out loud with a pencil in your hand.

5. Reduction Prompts

Put the composition down. In one minute, tell someone out loud the facts of the composition, like when the police officer on *Dragnet* tells the person describing a crime:” just the facts.” This way you will know what is essential in the composition. The composition will be stronger if everything relates to the essential.

Then the writer can read the composition one sentence at a time, and ask whether there is anything in each sentence that doesn't need to be there. Sometimes the whole sentence can go. The writer can remove anything in the composition that doesn't need to be there.

Variations:

1. Before you write, repeat the “just the facts” exercise with the story or information you are thinking of writing. Do this several times with different listeners. This way you can revise before you begin.

6. Prompts to Get Un-stuck

If you are stuck and don't know what to write next: try stating your composition as a problem. Then brainstorm solutions to this problem.

Then the writer can use this solution to guide adding more useful information to the composition.

Variations:

1. Imagine you are presenting this problem to a therapist or your best friend. What do you think they would say? You could incorporate this in your revision.

7. Strengthen the Whole

After you read the composition, underline the strongest sentence in each paragraph. Explain why you think this sentence is so strong.

Then the writer can revise by strengthening other sentences and the whole composition to be like its strongest parts.



Rhetorical Devices Scavenger Hunt [W2.4 # 2-9]

Thesis: One clean, clear, concise, precise sentence.

Evidence A fact, statistic, result of research, or result of data gathering that supports your thesis. Evidence is evident: more than one person can observe it.	Anecdote A story or short account of a humorous or interesting incident that supports your thesis. The story might or might not be true, but it must be interesting and make your point.	Quotation Something someone said or wrote that supports your thesis. Who said or wrote the quotation might or might not matter, but it must be well said and make your point.
Commonly Accepted Belief Common sense, or what almost everybody knows or believes, that supports your thesis. It may be the truth or may just pass for truth: history, geography, culture, religion, economics and politics condition commonly accepted beliefs.	Expert Opinion An opinion from someone or some group that supports your thesis, and is from someone who would know a lot about it and be believable. This means he, she or they have the knowledge, training or experience to have credibility in the area of your thesis.	Law A statement from code law or an opinion from case law that supports your thesis. It must be directly relevant and from a legislature or court with jurisdiction in the area where it is applied [both the region and the topic].
Appeal to Logic A statement or question that makes sense, or follows from, previous information to support your thesis. It must follow the rules of logic and not be a logical fallacy.	Appeal to Emotion A statement or question that provokes one or more emotion and results in the reader or hearer being more receptive to your thesis.	Agreements A statement that constitutes an agreement between persons or within a larger group, professional association, or other body, and supports your thesis.



Persuasive Essay Organizer [W2.4]

Introduction: Who cares?

Thesis: What do I think?

1. I think this because	which is true because
2. I think this because	which is true because
3. think this because	which is true because

You might think	but what about
Some people might say	but what about

Conclusion: So what?



Logical Fallacies Checklist [W2.4 # 10-12]

- 1. Hasty generalization**
A conclusion based on insufficient evidence.
- 2. Stereotyping**
Assuming members of a group think or behave alike without sufficient evidence.
- 3. *Either-or* thinking**
Limiting possible explanations to two.
- 4. Illogical causality**
Assuming an event is caused by another because one occurs after the other.
- 5. *Non sequitur*** [it does not follow]
A statement that does not follow logically from another.
- 6. Begging the question**
Assuming as true what needs to be proven.
- 7. Circular reasoning**
Asserting the same point in different words.
- 8. Special pleading**
Arguing without considering opposing viewpoints.
- 9. Red herring**
Introducing an irrelevant or distracting consideration into an argument.
- 10. Appeal to ignorance**
Assuming something is true because the contrary cannot be proven.
- 11. Playing prejudices**
Appealing to the prejudices of an audience.
- 12. Character attack**
Attacking a person's character rather than addressing the issue at hand.
- 13. False analogy**
Making an illogical connection based on irrelevant similarities.

Adapted from *The Scribner Handbook for Writers, Second Edition*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998

What?

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What are the parts?

So What?

If
Then

