



For the past six years we have used the YPQA (Youth Program Quality Assessment) to support best practices program quality and continuous improvement at East Side Learning Center.



Our Approach:
Continuous Improvement Plan

ESLC provides a welcoming atmosphere

Hear...

- learners greeted by name
- warm tone of voice
- genuine concern

When we first began using this process we focused on environment—ensuring safety and providing a warm, comfortable atmosphere in which to tutor. Visitors to our sites hear children being greeted by name. They would hear tutors using a warm tone of voice and engaging in conversations that are both quick and personal. “How are you today?” “What did you do last night or over the weekend?” “How is your day going?”

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See...

- smiles
- friendly gestures
- eye contact

Visitors would see smiles, and positive non-verbals: nodding, waving to a child, pulling out a chair or extending a hand to invite the child into the space. And of course making eye contact with the learner.

Our Approach: Continuous Improvement Plan

ESLC provides a welcoming atmosphere

Say...

- Name
- Correct pronunciation
- Phonetic spelling

This year when we greet a child we are going to focus on saying a child's name correctly. We know this can be a challenge because how a name looks may not be how it is pronounced. To ensure that names are said correctly tutors will find a student's name spelled phonetically on the spine of the three-ring binder. (ACTIVITY) If you are ever in doubt about how to say a child's name, ask the child first. If you are still in doubt, ask the Site staff.

Our Approach: Continuous Improvement Plan

Support youth with encouragement

Learner is affirmed with specific, non-evaluative language:

- I noticed...
- I saw...
- When you...
- You used the picture to help you figure out the word—that's what good readers do!

We have worked hard to affirm and validate specific strategies to support our learners. This year we are going to use Strategy Rings at all sites to help us accomplish this goal. The strategy rings support common language, assist tutors in formulating specific, non-evaluative language. “PAIR SHARE I noticed you pointing to each word when you read.” “I saw you look at the beginning letter of a word and then find a picture that starts with the sound.” “When you read that page you sounded like you were talking—you are a fluent reader! We might still say: “Great!”, “Good” or “I like...” but specific, non-evaluative language directly reinforces what a learner is doing effectively and motivates learners to repeat the use of a specific strategy.

Our Approach: Continuous Improvement Plan

Coaching

- Interactive process to develop skills & abilities
 - Observation
 - Conversation
- Provides support & guidance

Quality is everyone's responsibility

Coaching is another key concept in our improvement plan. We worked very hard on scheduling this year so that Site Coordinators and Site Assistants have time to observe and offer feedback to all tutors. Just as you are asked to use specific, non-evaluative language with learners we are committed to doing the same for you. We view this process as a means of supporting and guiding you.

Our Approach: Continuous Improvement Plan

Targeted Learning & Student Engagement

- Clear learning objective (skill focus)
- Guide learning of specific skill (scaffolding)
- Student engagement & demonstration (reflection)

We rewrote our lesson plans a few years ago to support targeted learning and student engagement. Every lesson begins with a lesson focus that is threaded through the lesson and ends with student reflection and demonstration of learning. Ex. What letter did we work on today? Tell me what sound that letter makes. Name three words that begin with that letter.

You will learning more about using the lesson plan at the Site Specific Trainings.

Our Approach: Continuous Improvement Plan

Higher Order Thinking

- Open-ended Questions
- Comprehension

Two years ago we emphasized **open-ended** questions to promote higher order thinking and more conversation on the part of the child. It became apparent from our deep data dive this summer that we need to push harder on comprehension skills this year.

Our Approach: Continuous Improvement Plan

Comprehension

- Eliciting Prior Knowledge
 - Questions
 - Experiences
- Building Background
 - Facts
 - Support materials

Eliciting Prior Knowledge: In order for children to understand story concepts we need to find out what they know or don't know about a given topic. For young children this most often happens by asking questions. For example, if they are reading about Fishing we might ask: Have you ever gone fishing? What did you take with you when you went fishing? Where did you go to fish? Tell me what you did. What would you do if you caught a fish?

With older children the lesson plan may direct you to use a concept web, KWL Chart, globe/map, pictures, as well as engage in conversation. In both conversation and questioning the word work begins. Tutors and students are most likely using some words that will appear in the story.

Building Background: If a child has little or no experience with a concept we need to provide missing information.

Let's go back to the fishing story--we might show them a fishing pole, tackle box, bobber, pictures or use iPads to introduce them to the concept. Whatever we can do to make a concept come alive will provide meaning and understanding.

Please don't skip over or race through eliciting prior knowledge or building

background on the lesson plan. These are critical steps in building comprehension.

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Our Approach: Continuous Improvement Plan

- Word Work (Vocabulary)
 - Content Words
 - High Frequency Words & Sight Words
 - Boing
 - Read-Alouds
- Short Break
- Comprehension Prompts

Word Work is more than just looking at a word and being able to say it. Many learners can decode words but have no idea what the word means or how to use it in a sentence. Remember, when children have a word list they don't need to go down each column word by word, ask them to tell you the words that jump out at them. When doing Boing words, you might randomly pick a few words to see if they can use the words in sentences or tell you what the words means. Other variations might be looking for all the words that start with the same letter, or have the same short or long vowel sound, or follow a specific vowel pattern such as CVCe. You will learn more about this at site specific trainings or as the year progresses.

We emphasize both high frequency words and content words when preparing for a story. The content words are typically words that surface in the time spent eliciting prior knowledge and building background. The high frequency words may or may not be words they have encountered before. Vocabulary words need to be reviewed and practiced often before reading a story.

Don't forget that word work is even addressed in your read-alouds. Sometime children will say "That's the word we are working on this week." In easy stories some

children enjoy saying the repetitive words in a story—like woof, or bow wow in the Biscuit books or flop, flop, flop in the Froggy series

We will take a short break. After that, Alyssa Hamel and Kymberly Miller will continue to address the area of comprehension.