

USING MEMOIRS AND TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOP READING AND WRITING  
SKILLS FOR TWELFTH GRADE ENGLISH STUDENTS

by

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## **Abstract**

This case study investigates why high school students use technology and how much access they have to it in different settings; it also investigates what reading and writing skills are particularly challenging for them. The research questions formulated for this study were: How do high school students in Puerto Rico use technology in and outside the classroom? What reading and writing skills are challenging for high school students in Puerto Rico? What innovative strategies can be integrated to the English curriculum to meet high school level writing and reading content standards in Puerto Rico? In order to answer these three research questions, data was collected with the help of student surveys, reading and writing needs assessment, classroom observations, and by taking ethnographic field notes. The results show that at home, these students employ the use of technology frequently, especially to socialize via social networks; and that they have little chances to use technology in their English classroom or at school. The results also demonstrate that students need writing and grammar practice. In accordance with these results a Curricular Unit was designed to help improve students' reading and writing skills.

## **Resumen**

Este estudio de caso investiga el porqué estudiantes de escuela superior utilizan tecnología y cuánto acceso tienen a ella en diferentes escenarios; también investiga que destrezas de lectura y escritura presentan más retos para ellos. Las preguntas de investigación formuladas para este estudio fueron: ¿Cómo utilizan los estudiantes de escuela superior en Puerto Rico la tecnología dentro y fuera del salón de clases? ¿Cuáles destrezas de lectura y escritura presentan retos para los estudiantes de escuela superior en Puerto Rico? ¿Qué estrategias innovadoras pueden ser integradas al currículo de inglés para alcanzar los estándares de contenido de lectura y escritura de escuela secundaria en Puerto Rico? Para poder contestar estas tres preguntas de investigación data fue recolectada con la ayuda de cuestionarios para estudiantes, estudio de necesidades de lectura y escritura, observaciones de clases y tomando apuntes etnográficos. Los resultados demuestran que en sus hogares, los estudiantes utilizan tecnología frecuentemente, especialmente para socializar vía redes sociales. El estudio también demostró que estos estudiantes tienen pocas oportunidades de utilizar tecnología en su salón de inglés o en su escuela. Los resultados también demuestran que los estudiantes necesitan práctica en la escritura y gramática. Los resultados fueron tomados en consideración para diseñar una Unidad Curricular para mejorar las destrezas de lectura y escritura de los estudiantes.

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## List of Abbreviations

Cursos en Línea	CEL
English as a Second Language	ESL
First Language	L1
No Child Left Behind	NCLB
Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico	PPAA
Puerto Rico Department of Education	PRDE
Second Language	L2
United States	US
United States Department of Education	USDE
Institutional Review Board	IRB

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## Chapter I: Introduction

Although “writing is an ability that is developed in formal instructional settings” (Carson, 2001) it does seem to come naturally to some people. For others it is a painstaking process where they have to work hard at it. This is the case with many English as a Second Language (ESL) students; they have to really work at producing a writing sample. The language barrier, the lack of vocabulary, and little motivation makes writing harder for them. It is even more difficult to accomplish the task when they have to write about topics they are not really interested in or they know little about. These issues affect students’ ability to communicate effectively through writing. Thus there is a connection between reading about issues students can relate to and writing in a second language. It is important to establish a reading/writing connection with our students. According to (Bushman and Haas, 2006) children learn to read from writing and learn to write from reading. It is true participants of this study are old enough to know how to read and write already, but there is always room to improve their skills, especially in a second language.

In addition, the Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) states one of the basic principles of the English program on the island is “reading and writing are integral aspects of the teaching/learning process and they require special attention” (PRDE, 2007).

All of these factors, combined with the fact that the *Pruebas Puertorriquetas de Aprovechamiento Academico* (PPAA) now evaluate students’ writing ability are reason to explore more in depth the fact that students need to be exposed to and practice more writing in the classroom. This becomes even more relevant for high school students because eleventh graders take the PPAA and seniors are potential college students who need to master writing skills to do well in their college courses.

## **No Child Left Behind and Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico**

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was signed into law by former United States President George W. Bush in July 2001. According to the U.S. Department of Education website (2004), the four pillars of NCLB are based on stronger accountability for results, more freedom for states and communities, proven education methods, and more choices for parents. In a letter to former Puerto Rico Secretary of Education Carlos A. Chardon, the Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education in the U.S., Kerri L. Briggs (2009) states that the “NCLB has focused... on closing achievement gaps and increasing the awareness of those students who have often been left behind: economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient, and students with disabilities.”

Because of its implementation, students in the public school system in all 50 states and U.S. jurisdictions and territories, must be evaluated by standardized exams which test student’s proficiency in various subjects. Puerto Rico, being a territory of the United States, must comply with the NCLB Act. Students from third to eight, and eleventh grades are evaluated each year by the PPAA (PRDE, 2008). These standardized tests are designed to meet NCLB requirements of yearly testing student achievement (PRDE, 2008).

According to PRDE (2008), PPAA’s are designed to evaluate student academic progress in English as a second language, Spanish, mathematics, and science; and PPAA’s are aligned with the new 2008 Content Standards and Grade Level Expectations PRDE has established for the English program (PRDE, 2008). In the past, PPAA evaluated students’ English language proficiency in listening and reading. From the 2008-2009 school year, PPAA included writing as part of student proficiency evaluation (PRDE, 2008).

The PRDE (2008) explains that “the reading section of the test also includes new *constructed-response* items which require students to answer open-ended questions in their own words.” Students can also respond to the writing items in Spanish, English, or a combination of languages (PRDE, 2008). Students’ written “responses will be holistically scored” using a rubric (PRDE, 2008). In the past, student writing was solely evaluated by the English teacher in his/her classroom utilizing the English Content Standards and criteria set by the PRDE. However, this new requirement demands new and more innovative forms of authentic writing activities and assessment of these skills.

According to Brown (2007), “In school, writing is a way of life. Without some ability to express yourself in writing, you don’t pass the course. Across the age levels from elementary school through university graduate courses we write in order to succeed in mastering the subject matter.” Students in high school, especially those in the eleventh and twelfth grades, may benefit from all the practice in writing they can get in order to help them master the required writing skills. Students need to be able to use language to communicate effectively and teaching them writing is one way that it can be achieved.

According to the official document of the PRDE English Content Standards (2007), the writing standard for eleventh and twelve grade seeks to accomplish that “The student effectively communicates to a variety of audiences in all forms of writing through the use of the writing process, proper grammar, and age-appropriate expressive vocabulary.” Writing content standard for both grades have five expectations; these are the skills students are expected to obtain and master at the end of each grade level. Teachers are expected to use the content standard and its expectations to guide them in their lesson planning stages and help them develop lessons and learning activities to use in their classrooms.

For eleventh grade, the grade level expectations for writing are:

W.11.1 Analyzes and selects appropriate words to convey meaning; incorporates transitions, correct grammar, syntax, and style.

W.11.2 Determines the purpose of writing; analyzes and constructs organizational patterns to connect ideas; writes narrative, expository, and persuasive essays.

W.11.3 Applies figurative language and develops voice to produce different styles of poems.

W.11.4 Compares and contrasts two forms of writing on similar topics to write a critical essay.

W.11.5 Applies editing marks, self-correcting methods, and reference sources to revise and edit; analyzes, organizes, and verifies information to write and revise; completes a final draft using the writing process.

Twelfth grade writing expectations:

W.12.1 Analyzes and assesses word choice to convey meaning; incorporates transitions, correct grammar, syntax, and style.

W.12.2 Evaluates and applies a variety of organizational techniques to write effective narrative, expository, and persuasive essays using the writing process; demonstrates a preferred style of writing.

W.12.3 Uses creative writing styles to produce poems and other literary forms.

W.12.4 Compares, contrasts, evaluates, and critiques two or more forms of writing on similar topics to write a critical essay.

W.12.5 Organizes, synthesizes, outlines, and evaluates information to write a research paper; demonstrates voice and knowledge of topic throughout the writing.

Twelfth graders also need the exposure and practice in writing but for other purposes. Even though these particular students are not being evaluated by the PPAA for their writing skills, they are potential college students who will need to have the ability to write essays, responses, presentation, and many other forms of writings in order to do well in their classes and complete a college degree.

The proposed study is two-fold. The first part consists of an assessment of reading and writing needs of High School Students. It must be noted that technology is used as a tool (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

The second part consists of the design of reading and writing activities that will facilitate teachers to meet the reading and writing needs of their students. This curriculum integrates the use of memoirs and technology to teach reading and writing skills. The following are the research questions and objectives of the study.

### **Research Questions**

1. How do high school students in Puerto Rico use technology in and outside the classroom?
2. What reading and writing skills are challenging for high school students in Puerto Rico?
3. What innovative strategies can be integrated to the English curriculum to meet high school level writing and reading content standards in Puerto Rico?

### **Objectives**

1. Determine the uses of technology, both in and outside the classroom, by high school students in Puerto Rico.

2. Determine what reading and writing skills are problematic to high school students.
3. Create a curricular unit for high school students based on strategies that will foster reading and writing connections with the integration of technology.



## **Chapter II: Literature Review**

The proposed study investigates how the integration of reading, writing, and technology help high school students improve their writing skills. It primarily explores the uses of memoirs when teaching writing skills to high school students. This study also incorporates the use of a collaborative approach to teaching and learning in order to design a unit based on the aforementioned elements. As such, the following literature review includes relevant studies in the areas of the teaching of writing to ESL students, the utilization of memoirs, technology in education, and the uses of technology in Puerto Rican classrooms.

### **Teaching of Writing to ESL Students**

Teaching writing can be a difficult task, especially when one is teaching writing to learners of English as a second language. Emig (2002) suggests that reading and writing tend to be learned initially only with the aid of formal and systematic instruction. According to Williams (2005), second language (L2) writing classes have two goals: enhance the language acquisition process and help learners improve their effectiveness in written expression.

As teachers, we have to take into consideration many factors which can affect positively and/or negatively our students' language acquisition process. According to Saville-Troike (2006), the knowledge an L2 learner begins with includes everything he or she has previously acquired as part of his or her general cognitive development and prior social experience, as well as his or her acquisition of L1. As teachers, we have to be aware of what the students' capabilities are in their L1 so we can build upon them and help them with their L2 acquisition.

Input is one of the factors that can help students' develop their skills in their L2. Language input to the learner is absolutely necessary for either L1 or L2 learning to take place (Saville-Troike, 2006). The author also suggests that "the nature and amount of input to learners

largely determines the degree of proficiency that they will attain.” This is why in writing classes students need to be exposed to different types of texts. These texts will serve as the L2 input they need to practice their reading skills and as L2 input and models for writing. Saville-Troike (2006) states that many L2 learners feel most secure if they are given a model to follow in early stages of writing.

As was mentioned earlier, teaching writing to L2 students can be a difficult task; this is mainly true when students have not mastered the L2 and they do not feel comfortable writing in it. It also can be because “writing involves far more than just linguistic knowledge; it also entails gathering ideas and information, analyzing and organizing this information, and presenting it in a way that effectively communicates those ideas to the reader (Williams, 2005); and an L2 student could not be ready to do so. It is our duty as teachers to help develop it and show our students the importance of acquiring this skill. For Saville-Troike (2006) writing is the most important productive activity for L2 learners to develop if they will use the language for academic purposes, or in certain types of service functions (e.g. providing reports to supervisors or clients). Writing in the students’ L2 is also important because it provides product uniquely available for immediate feedback (Emig, 2002).

### **Why use Memoirs?**

Writing about a subject or topic one knows little about or is not interested in is harder to accomplish than writing about something you are knowledgeable and interested in. Often, students find themselves trying to complete writing assignments that have little to do with their personal experiences, their interests or their wants.

I believe that at first, students need to write about things they know and are interested in and what better subject to write about than themselves. Students love to tell stories, especially of

funny and important events that have happened to them. By having students “tell” us their particular stories through a memoir, we are giving them an opportunity to express themselves and write about a topic they are experts in. Writing memoirs also allow students to be creative and reflect about the particular time in their lives they are writing about. By having students create their own memoirs, we are also defeating the popular belief that “only artists and geniuses create art” (Elbow, 2003) and we can demonstrate students do have the capacity to do so too.

Students need to be exposed to different types of readings, especially those they are required to write. If students only read from a text book and then asked to compose a poem, it is natural for them to have a difficult time completing the assignment because they have not had the exposure and experience of reading and appreciating poems.

Having students read memoirs will allow them to make connections and recognize the distinctiveness of the genre. According to Mendelowitz and Ferreira (2007), students can “...make direct links between what they were reading and writing, and [to] think about their own histories in relation to all the others to which they had been exposed.” Furthermore, Brown (2007) believes “students learn to write in part by carefully observing what is already written. That is, they learn by observing or reading the written word by reading and studying a variety of relevant types of text, students can gain important insights both about how they should write.” Reading memoirs will help the students in the creation of their own pieces of writing. They will draw on memoirs as an inspiration and “blueprint” for their own. Reading memoirs before attempting to write their own will serve as background knowledge to the students, so when they have to write their own they will know how to go about it. McPherson (2009) suggests that, “Building a background of knowledge through authentic learning experiences and audiences,

students develop confidence and interest in learning critical [thinking] for advancing to more complex concepts and higher levels of thinking.”

Writing can be a fun and meaningful experience, students need to enjoy it and wish to express themselves through it. Students need to feel a connection to what they write and memoirs can achieve that. According to Latta- Kirby & Kirby (2007) “memoir writing requires that the students write about their lived experiences, which they know far better than we. Life stories are too close to the bone and students care about them deeply. Amongst all the negative attention young students get from the media and society in general, students need to feel that what they write about, their ideas, wishes, and what they express is valuable. Mendelowitz & Ferreira (2007) suggest that “...using narratives in education signals a valuing of the personal, of individual experiences and a way of making sense of the world that is provisional and tentative.” In addition, reading and writing memoirs give students the space to look back and reflect on their lives or a particular situation they have faced and learned from it.

### **Why use Educational Technology?**

As we know, technology plays a big part in our daily routine. We use computers for entertainment and for work; we talk and text messages with our cell phones all day long. Although some more than others, our students have access to computers, video games, television, music players. We need to capitalize on the fact that students in technology rich environments experience positive effects in achievement in all major subject areas (Schacter, 1999) to enhance the teaching/learning experience.

According to Anderson and Roblyer (2006), educational technology is: “a combination of the processes and tools involved in addressing educational needs and problems, with an emphasis on applying the most current tools: computers and other electronic technologies.”

In this day and age where everything seems to be computerized, it is no surprise technology has made its way into the educational setting. Debates of the role of technology in the classroom, its effectiveness, benefits, and disadvantages are ongoing. Technology is not here to undermine or take the place of the educator, instead it should be viewed as a tool that can be used to enhance and motivate students' learning in the classroom. When educational technology is used in the classroom, students tend to respond better to what is being learned. As Schacter (1999) points out "students like their classes more and develop more positive attitudes when their classes include computer-based instruction." Educational technology and media resources are tools which can help students develop their basic literacy skills, as well as critical thinking and analyzing skills. There is also a "considerable potential for media to be used as means of communication and self-expression" (Buckingham, 2004); as well as "help meet the needs of students at varying levels of English development, supporting their acquisition of both oral and written skills" (Herrell, Jordan, & Roblyer, 2006).

Because of the technological advances the world has gone through and their implementation into school systems worldwide, as educators, we must look into developing and recognizing that today's students have other kinds of literacy besides basic reading and writing (Brown, Cummin & Sayers, 2007). Anderson and Roblyer (2006) wrote that "teachers are expected to provide new forms of literacy instruction so that students know how to locate, critically evaluate, use, and communicate through technology resources." If resources are available and teachers feel comfortable and know how to go about it, they should teach students to communicate using other forms of writing and publishing. These "new literacies require a high level of critical sophistication from our students, and it is only through instruction that they will develop these skills" (Anderson & Roblyer, 2006); which is why technology should be

included in the teaching process. The fact that “children are becoming multimodally literate whilst their schools more explicit practices remain stubbornly print-bound” (Millard, 2006) cannot be denied. This could be one of the explanations of why students get bored and discouraged when it comes to school work involving traditional means of instruction.

Means of instruction must change in accordance with changes elsewhere outside the classroom setting. According to Stein and Slonimsky (2006), “literacy is as much about playing games and inventing worlds as it is about getting information about how to function in the ‘real’ world.” Also, integrating educational technology into the classroom will help students familiarize themselves even more with different technological equipment and allow them to further develop their skills in using the devices. This will help narrow digital divides which our students display amongst themselves and in relation to the rest of the community in which they live in. Narrowing this divide is crucial to students’ academic and social development, because the “digital divide has become a pedagogical divide” (Brown, Cummin & Sayers, 2007).

Being technologically illiterate cripples the students’ ability to expand their knowledge and assure themselves a successful future. Gee (2003) states that “meaning and knowledge are built up through various modalities (images, texts, symbols, interactions, abstract designs, sound, etc.) not just words.” That is why educational technology should play a big role in the teaching/learning process. Technological equipment which can produce sound, display images, and allow students to interact and actively participate in class are the ones which need to be used in schools.

Using technology in the classroom defies the traditional way of teaching where teachers relied on direct instruction, memorization, and practice and makes room for progressive instruction, where the students inquiry and the social construction of knowledge is expected and

dialogue and collaborative inquiry is encouraged (Brown, Cummin & Sayers, 2007). This progressive instruction allows for students to be actively involved in the process and leads to benefits for them because, “when students take ownership of the learning process and invest their identities in the outcomes of learning, the resulting understanding will be deeper than when learning is passive” (Brown, Cummin & Sayers, 2007).

Students need instruction, but most of all they need to be involved in the learning process and participate. They also need to practice what they learn, because if they do not engage in practice they cannot learn on a deeper level (Gee, 2003).

While some teachers think using educational technology to put into practice a lesson will be harder than using traditional resources like textbooks, pencils, and notebooks; that may not be the case because “children and young people already possess quite high levels of functional literacy, that is, skills and competencies needed to gain access to media content using the available technologies and associated software” (Buckingham, 2004).

The following quote summarizes the importance of using computers specifically in the English classroom; the same principle could be used to explain why educational technology also needs a space in the teaching/learning process:

English learners need a variety of language experiences. They need to hear language, write language, speak language and read language. Computers can play an integral part in providing English learners with valuable language experiences as they are acquiring a new language (Ybarra and Green, 2003), as quoted by Herrell, Jordan, and Anderson and Roblyer (2006).

## **Educational Technology in Puerto Rican Schools**

English has been taught in the schools of Puerto Rico since 1900, when the United States installed a public school system. Since the first public schools were established, the teaching of the English language has been a priority. Various language policies concerning instruction in schools in English and Spanish have been installed by different Educational Commissioners. The Department of Education's efforts to teach the English language to Puerto Ricans was a comprehensive one which included the use of technological equipment and resources to accomplish the task.

Nowadays, technology integration in the English classroom is easier than before, but not all language classrooms have it. Many factors contribute to the fact that adequate technological resources are not being used to educate students. Some of those reasons include that schools do not always have the available technological resources or it is not up-to date equipment. It is also true that not all teachers are fully prepared to integrate technology in the classroom and do not know how to go about it successfully. Another reason is that some schools and/or English classrooms are not prepared to handle special technological equipment, which is the case in many places where schools are in older buildings and new and special electrical facilities have to be built to support computers, air conditioners, projectors, and other electronic equipment.

Furthermore, the centralization of the Department of Education is a major problem when it comes to the distribution of equipment and the assignment of funding; this is why many schools in rural areas do not have the same resources as bigger schools near metropolitan areas. Géliga Vargas (2006) mentions some factors that need to exist in order for students and teachers to access technology successfully. Among those are: economic resources, the development of technology managing skills, discriminatory navigational skills, and the development of



predispositions which allow the use of technology with confidence. All of these factors have to be in sync, which is why the Department of Education has increasingly been working to establish them and to make students more technologically literate and, despite the above mentioned obstacles and countless others, the Department of Education has made several efforts to promote the integration of educational technology in English education.

Early on, the Department of Education knew that if they wanted to instruct students to “develop effective students communication in the English language” (Department of Education, 2007), they needed to employ a variety of innovative ways to “reach” students, even those who were not necessarily still in the regular public school system. Like Algren De Gutiérrez (1987) points out “return migration and mass media exposure are providing an increasing reinforcement of English for island residents,” that mass media exposure is gain by utilizing radio, television, and other technologies to impact students with the target language.

According to Atkinson (1942), in September of 1935, the Department of Education began a project called *Escuela del Aire* (Airwaves School). The initial monetary funds for the project came from an \$11,700 grant from the Carnegie Corporation and it was carried out by the Legislature. The project entitled the development of radio programs intended to be used in the classroom for adult educational programs and for the general public enjoyment. The radio broadcasts were one of the first efforts of the Department of Education to use technology in the teaching/learning process in a ground-breaking method of instruction. The Department of Education thus clearly recognized, as early as 1935, the importance of using technological resources in order to enhance teaching and to capture students’ attention; this is further evidenced by Atkinson’s (1942) description of the broadcasts as adding “variety to classroom

teaching, and to provide students with more zest toward the school day by opening up a new world through radio listening.”

Puerto Rico’s *Escuela del Aire* (Airways School) offered a variety of programs which included social sciences, elementary science, arithmetic, folktales, games, stories, music appreciation, safety, health education, Spanish, and English (Atkinson, 1942). English broadcast lessons were given particular priority; a manual for the English language course was available as an aid to the students in preparing their lessons and for following the broadcast and people who completed the lessons in English were given a certificate testifying to the fact (Atkinson, 1942).

From 1948 to 1960 the Puerto Rican government in conjunction with the Department of Education intensified English instruction on the island. Some of the efforts made to promote successful English instructions included the creation of an English section, the departmentalization of English in the Department of Education, and the establishment of local English supervisors (Wolfe, 1962).

In May 1953, the Legislature of Puerto Rico approved a literacy program to deal with the masses of illiterate Puerto Ricans who had not benefited from regular day school (Ramirez, 1962). This literacy program also included the use of technology to instruct students on various subjects including English. Rodríguez Bou (1959) wrote of two programs within the literacy program which used technological equipment; the televised English and Reading programs. The televised English program enrolled an average of 3,500 students a year. Meanwhile, the televised reading program was created for new literates and enrolled 399 students (Rodríguez Bou, 1959; Wolfe, 1962). The educational television program was also meant to help teachers by televising programs aimed at different aspects of the teaching profession such as the presentation and interpretation of new textbooks (Ramírez, 1962).

With these two early attempts to eradicate illiteracy and teach English on the island by using educational technology resources, the government and the Department of Education understood education could be enhanced with technology, and technology could be beneficial to the teaching/learning process.

### **Recent Educational Technology Integration**

Over the years, the Department of Education has devised new projects and programs for promoting English literacy among public school students. Some projects were aimed at offering technological resources and equipment to schools and teacher professional and development programs, as well as offering online courses to students.

The 1990's brought educational reform characterized by an ambitious technology program at the Department of Educational (Ruaño, 2000). The Department of Education in conjunction with the Puerto Rican government designed a program to bring the public school system of the island up-to date with global technological changes. Approximately 500 million dollars would be spent toward this initiative. Some of the technological equipment the funds would buy included computers, school laboratories, and laptops for teachers across the island (Ruaño, 2000). He also stated the funds would also be distributed to build 84 technology centers which would be equipped with computers, photocopier machines, printers, and servers. School's electrical problems would also be addressed (Ruaño, 2000) in order to have proper infrastructure for the new technological equipment.

The Department of Education designed an integrated multidisciplinary program called *Proyecto para formar un ciudadano bilingüe* (Project to Create a Bilingual Citizen) (Fajardo Vélez, 1998). He also recognized the Department's past efforts to teach English in Puerto Rico

had not yielded the expected results; hence plans were made to implement the program in the public school system of the island and by 1999 around 400 schools had participated.

The project promised strategies, methods, and resources to finally develop a bilingual Puerto Rican citizen. It also promised professional development for teachers in English, as well as a focus on implementation of educational technology in the classroom. Fajardo's (1998) program proposed the use of computers and English laboratories to supplement classroom instruction in English and develop the students' communicative language skills in both Spanish and English.

In addition to the computer laboratories and other technological resources some of the island's schools have, the Department of Education offers online courses for public school system students. *Cursos en Línea* (CEL) (Online Courses) began in 2003. It is open to high school students who have a grade point average of at least 2.50. Students can access online courses using the school computers and internet connection or access them from their own homes. Among the courses offered by CEL are Italian, French, Calculus, Puerto Rican Literature Online, and Conversational English; the latter allowing students to further their knowledge and develop their English language communicative skills.

Furthermore, in the year 2005 the Department of Education introduced *Operación Éxito* (Operation Success) to the public school system on the island. *Operación Éxito* (Operation Success) is an online program aimed at high school students. Participating students engage in an online knowledge gaming competition where the student who answers the most correct items on a specific subject and lesson wins. Students compete for prizes, adventures, and a car. Not every school is participating in *Operación Éxito* (Operation Success), thus not every student in the school system can participate. Students who do have the opportunity to participate and have

access to a computer with an Internet connection, be it at school or at home, use the program website to access tutorials, lessons, and review different school subjects including English.

*Operación Éxito* (Operation Success) provides participating students the chance to utilize computers and the internet to develop and further strengthen their skills in various subjects. With *Operación Éxito* (Operation Success) and online courses, the Department of Education recognizes the internet is a helpful tool which can be used to impart instruction to its students and that the “Internet is the prime mechanism for the globalization of knowledge including knowledge about knowledge” (Nichols, 2006).

In 2009, PRDE and *Operación Éxito* (Operation Success) created the program *Tratamiento Intensivo* (Intensive Treatment). According to a PRDE press release, the program has been created to improve the results and participation of schools in the PPAA and would run for about four months before the PPAA administration (PRDE, 2009). *Tratamiento Intensivo* (Intensive Treatment) is an online program which offers PPAA handbooks, weekly exams aligned with the PPAA’s, and free tutorial for students and teachers among many other special resources available to the participants of *Operación Éxito* (Operation Success). When explaining the initiative, former Secretary of Education Dr. Odette Piñeiro, stated it “capitalizes on the habits and customs of our students,” she also expressed the program would be implemented in approximately a thousand schools of all grade levels in 2010 (PRDE, 2009).

One important factor which cannot be overlooked is teacher preparation in educational technology use. Teachers, and more specifically for the purpose of this research, English teachers, need to be trained on how to successfully integrate technology into the educational process. Many universities and colleges in Puerto Rico currently have teacher preparation programs which offer courses on educational technology. Nevertheless, the Department of

Education's duty is to offer up-to date instruction and professional development to teachers in their specialty areas and technology integration mainly because educational technology is ever changing and educators need to be knowledgeable of new emerging strategies and methods.

The Department of Education in conjunction with public and private universities and entities provide professional development on technology integration. This is the case of the Department of Education and the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey 2003 project *Escuela Digital* (Digital School). The project's website states that *Escuela Digital* (Digital School) "Provides a physical and virtual space to develop, implement, evaluate, and reflect on new strategies and pedagogical process, as well as disseminate best practices and experiences in the fields of education and technology."

Over 45 schools participated in the project and benefited from having their teachers of every subject engage in technology integration programs, workshops, and professional development. *Escuela Digital* (Digital School) also provided some schools with technological equipment, computer laboratories, and technical assistance. Teachers attended monthly meetings in their school zones and twice a year island-wide meetings.

*Escuela Digital* (Digital School) also has a website where participating teachers can access online tutorials, databases, and other resources which can be used for technology integration in the classroom. The program also enabled participating teachers to present lessons or projects they had developed with their students and share these with other teachers of the same subject.

Furthermore, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 has a program which deals directly with technology integration in the classroom and teacher preparation. This program is

*Title II: Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals, part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology.* The main goal of part D is to improve student achievement through the utilization of technology in elementary and secondary schools and help all students become technologically literate, as well as integrate technology in both teacher training and curriculum development (USDE, 2007).

The Department of Education makes use of funds available through this program from the Puerto Rican Legislature, from programs of the No Child Left Behind Act, and from private and public sources to buy materials, instruct teachers and students, and to implement technology programs in schools.

Clearly, many technological resources and equipment are being used to teach English in the Puerto Rican public school system. School teachers write project proposals to the Department of Education, private and public organizations and entities in order to obtain funds and equipment and establish technology enhanced learning programs.

Although more recent attempts to integrate educational technology into the school and English curriculum have been made by the Department of Education, reality is they fail to create an island-wide program which impacts every student to help them develop their English proficiency.

The Department of Education should reference earlier and more recent efforts of integrating educational technology and pull out examples of what seemed to work, what definitely did not work, and what can be done now to successfully engage the whole island in a technologically enhanced educational English program. As Ramírez (1962) stated: “Experience will signal the route to follow.”

## **Cooperative Learning**

According to Richard and Rodgers (2001), Cooperative Learning (CL) “is an approach to teaching that makes maximum use of cooperative activities involving pairs or small groups of learners in the classroom”. The authors also suggest that with Cooperative Learning the students have an “opportunity for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities” (2001). Richard and Rodgers also believe that CL could be helpful, and serves “to enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate” (2001). In addition, Brown states that CL is the benefit of a community of learners capable of teaching each other something (2007).

Students who participate in the curricular unit will engage in Cooperative Learning because they will be working in small groups, especially in the stage when peer review is conducted. Brown defines group work as two or more students that are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self-initiated language” (2007). He suggests that one of the benefits of group work is that it provides “opportunities for student initiation, for face-to-face give and take, for practice in negotiation of meaning, for extended conversational exchanges, and for students adoption of roles that would otherwise be impossible” (2007). The author believes that “as students work together in pairs and groups, they share information and come to each other’s aid” (2007).

Although the participating students did not get a chance to work on the curricular unit, those who have the opportunity will be working on writing individual memoirs, and at the same time they will be engaged in CL. They will be taking part in peer review of their classmates’ writings. Students will make comments and/or suggestions to their classmates’ work. Together



they will work to complete the Digital Memoir Class Anthology to share their writing with the rest of their classmates.

Cooperative Learning is encouraged by allowing the students to interact, read, and comment on their work. Williams (2005) states that “a peer can offer ideas in a less threatening manner than a teacher can. In addition, learning to give helpful feedback to a peer can help writers become better judges of their own writing.” This sort of dynamic also allows the students to feel comfortable working because they are doing so with peers who can offer help along the reading and writing processes, as well as provide feedback and recommendations for their final product.

### **Chapter III: Methodology**

The methodology chosen for the study is discussed in this section and justifications presented. Details of the teaching context, research site, and time period of the study are provided, as well as a description of the participants. A brief example of how the methodology will be applied is also presented in this section.

#### **Case Study**

According to Creswell (1998) a case study “is an exploration of a “bounded system” or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context.” He also stated that “this bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied –a program, an event, an activity, or individuals.” This research is a case study because I worked closely with a specific group of students for a determined period of two weeks and used different methods (anonymous surveys, classroom observations, ethnographic notes, and pre- assessment exercises) to collect data.

#### **Teaching Context**

The target population were students enrolled in a twelfth grade English class in a public school in Puerto Rico located on the West side of the island. They had been learners of English as a Second Language for approximately 11 or 12 years. According to a U.S. Census press release (2008), “from 2000-2006, Puerto Rico’s high school completion rate increased from 60% to 66.1%.” Even though there has been an increase in graduation rates, “Puerto Rico has a lower high school completion rate than any State.” None of the students who participated were at risk of abandoning school or flunking their classes.

In addition, the New America Foundation states in its web site that student poverty rate in Puerto Rico in 2008 was 54.5% in sharp contrast to the National rate of 13.2%. The web site also

highlights the state graduation rate reported was 99% and the National calculated rate was of 67%.

Public high school students use the same literature book. Each grade level has a different book from the Prentice Hall 2000 collection: *Literature: Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes*. Tenth graders use the copper edition, eleventh graders the bronze edition, and twelfth graders the silver edition. In addition, all teachers are required to use the PRDE English Content Standards when developing their lesson plans.

This is not to say there are no exceptions when it comes to materials available and skills taught. Teachers who teach Advanced Level English to twelve graders receive additional resources, including different textbooks, and supplementary materials from the College Board office on the island.

Teachers also have the liberty of choosing what skills to focus on and what materials to use. There is no assurance all high school English teachers use the same materials and teach the same skills to their students.

In the 2008-2009 school year, 31, 626 public school students enrolled in the eleventh grade were evaluated by the PPAA of which 30, 390 took the PPAA that evaluates their English as a Second Language proficiency (PRDE, 2009).

## **Participants**

Students who will benefit from these reading/writing learning units are high school students, especially those enrolled in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade English classes. Students need all the reading and writing exposure and practice they can get, especially in the target language, to develop the reading and writing skills to become proficient in English. Eleventh graders also need the additional reading and writing practice because their writing skills will be evaluated by

the PPAA. Twelfth graders who are potential college students need to be prepared for the academic demands of higher education courses, especially those courses taught in English.

The site for this study was chosen by convenience since it is in my hometown; I had already taught there for one semester; and I am familiar with the surroundings and staff. The participants were 15 students from a public high school in the Western part of Puerto Rico. Participants were enrolled in a heterogeneous twelfth grade English class. Students' ages range from 16 to 18 years old. At the time of the study these students would have been English Second Language learners for approximately 11 or 12 years.

In order to conduct the study with human subjects, permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was requested. Permission to conduct the study in the classroom was also requested to the school principal and the regular English teacher (see Appendixes A and B). Also, students voluntarily signed the consent form, as well as their parents because they were minors at the time of the study (see Appendixes C and D).

### **Data Collection for Research Question # 1**

#### **Technology Needs Assessment** (see Appendix E)

Participating students answered a questionnaire about technology resources they have access to and utilize most. The questionnaire also helped determine with what frequency they utilize technology in their classes and outside of school, and for what purposes.

### **Data Collection for Research Question # 2**

#### **Needs Assessment of Reading and Writing Skills** (see Appendixes F and G)

Before designing the reading/writing learning units, participating students completed a needs assessment of their reading and writing skills. Students were asked to read a short memoir

and answer questions related to the assigned reading. This reading needs assessment focused on the PRDE Reading Content Standard and the following grade level expectations:

- R.12.3 Classifies genre, analyzes plot, establishes cause and effect; makes connections, predictions, and inferences in a variety of texts; draws conclusions; analyzes and determines conflict and resolution; uses text evidence to validate responses.
- R.12.4 Distinguishes between fact and opinion, infers and supports the main idea in a variety of texts; debates the theme or topic using text evidence to justify and validate position.

In addition, students were also asked to complete a short writing prompt where they wrote about a significant memory they had about growing up. Once they read, answered questions, and completed the writing prompt, their work was evaluated. The answers for the comprehension questions were evaluated for correctness and their written piece was evaluated using a rubric constructed for this specific purpose (see Appendix H). The results from this reading and writing assessment helped determine which areas are of particular difficulty to the students and how the units were going to be structured to help them improve their reading and writing skills.

### **Ethnographic Field Notes**

As part of the methodology, ethnographic field notes were utilized as a data collection instrument. These field notes were taken daily when I interacted with the participants. According to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995), “Field notes are accounts *describing* experiences and observations the researcher has made while participating in an intense and involved manner.” They can also be described as a “method for capturing and preserving the insights and

understandings stimulated by these close and long-term experiences” (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw, 1995).

They also explain that the “researcher writes down in a regular, systematic way what she observes and learns while participating in the daily round of life of others.” This means that the “researcher creates an accumulating written record of these observations and experiences.”

Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) also suggest that “field notes provide distinctive source for preserving experiences close to the moment of occurrence and hence, for deepening reflection upon and understanding of those experiences.”

Taking daily ethnographic field notes enabled me, as a researcher, to look back on the day’s work and reflect on the findings. They provided me with the chance to ‘remember’ details which may be forgotten over time. They also served as evidence of the daily tasks participating students worked on.

### **Classroom Observations**

Classroom observations were made every day I met with the students. To aid in this process, an observation protocol was designed. Specific aspects of the classroom activity were observed (see Appendix I). As a participant-observer I helped students when necessary with the reading and writing tasks the regular English teacher assigned them.

### **Researcher’s Classroom Reflections**

A daily log based on classroom observations was kept. The log details activities the students took part in. This log, along with my experience in the classroom with the students, and the ethnographic field notes helped me reflect on my observations at several levels. The teaching/learning process was evaluated, as well as the materials chosen for this unit.

### **Data Collection for Research Question # 3**

#### **Student Survey** (see Appendix J)

Students also completed a socio-demographic survey in order to determine their reading, writing, and English backgrounds. The survey also helped determine what type of literature students were exposed to and read as well as what topics they preferred.

To answer this question, I employed the data collected to answer research question #1. I used data from question #2 to design a sample unit which integrates reading and writing based on the academic standards of the English high school curriculum in Puerto Rico. The sample unit integrates reading and writing memoirs with the aid of technology.

#### **Data Analysis**

Technology and Ethnographic Surveys were administered to the students. They were also given Reading and Writing Needs Assessments to complete. For the surveys, the results were tallied by counting answers and calculating their percentages. The survey's open ended questions were evaluated by looking for common responses and counting the answers for each group of common responses.

Students Reading and Writing Needs Assessments were also evaluated. The results of the Reading Needs Assessment were tallied by counting their answers and calculating a percentage for each needs assessment item. As for the Reading Needs Assessment, the students' short personal narratives were read and scored using a rubric specially designed for the task. The scores from their writings were tallied and also calculated into percentages.

Classroom observations were conducted and ethnographic field notes were taken during those classroom observations. The data of the classroom observations and the ethnographic field

notes was analyzed and grouped together into the Researcher's Classroom Reflections. The results of the data analysis are presented in chapters four and five.



## **Chapter IV: Results and Discussions**

This chapter presents and discusses the results for research questions one and two. It also presents and discusses the classroom observations and ethnographic field notes taken during the study in the form of the Researcher's Classroom Reflections, as well as introduces the reading and writing curricular unit designed and developed for this study.

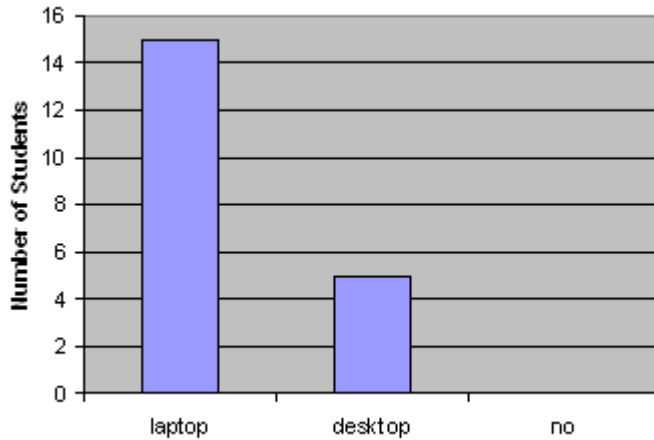
### **Research Question #1: How do high school students in Puerto Rico use technology in and outside the classroom?**

In order to answer research question #1 a Technology Survey was administered to the participating students. They had to answer 13 items, a combination of multiple choice and open ended questions. A total of 15 students participated in answering the Technology Survey.

The Technology Survey's questions provided information on how often students used technology in their past and present English classrooms, school, and home, and for what purposes they utilized technology.

As shown in Graph 1 all of the students answered that they owned a computer, be it a laptop or a desktop computer; some students even owned both types. The survey shows that 14 of the students answered that they had internet access at home and only 1 said that they did not have any internet access. The same number of students answered that they had internet access at school.

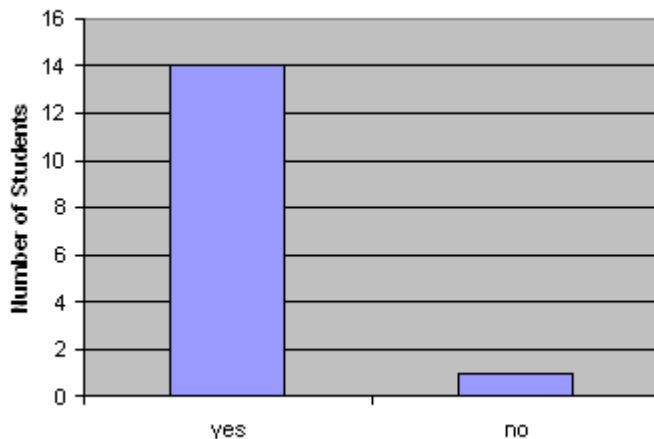
**Graph 1: Use of Computer by Students**



Technology Survey questions one and two help us understand that the majority of the participating students have access to a computer and internet access at home and that they are lacking access to those technology resources at their own school.

Survey questions three, four, and eight asked students about past and present technology use in their English and other subjects classrooms. It is evident that the bulk of the students, 14 of them, had encountered past English teachers that used some form of technology in their classrooms, as evidence by Graph 2. While only 12 had had teachers of other subject areas use technology in the classroom.

**Graph 2: Past English Teachers Use of Technology**



As for their current English teacher's use of technology in the classroom, 10 of the participating students answered affirmatively and 5 answered that she did not use any technology. The students reported that their English teacher used her overhead projector and transparencies in class and that no other technological device was used to give her lessons.

Students were also asked about having access to technology in different settings, like their English classroom, school, and home. Of the 15 students who answered the Technology Survey, only 1 said that they had access to technology in the classroom, while 6 said that they had access to technology at school, and 15 said that they had access in their homes.

Students that answered they had access to technology in school reported only having access to computers; on the other hand, students had access to many more technological equipment at home that include, but are not limited to: computers, video games, televisions, DVD players, radios, iPods, and cell phones.

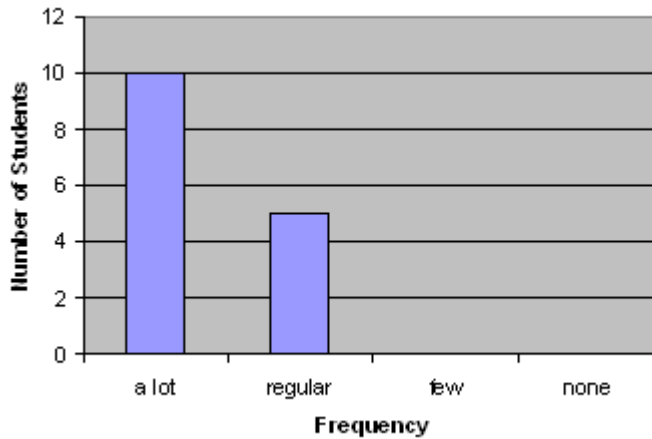
It is evident that students have access and are exposed to many technological devices, especially at their homes, which creates the space for students to use technology in ways that are not necessarily educational. That is why it is no surprise that 11 of the students answered that their purpose for using technology is to socialize and communicate through social networking sites, and that 4 uses their technology to play video games.

This could be the same reason why learning, reading, and researching are at the bottom of the list of purposes for using technology.

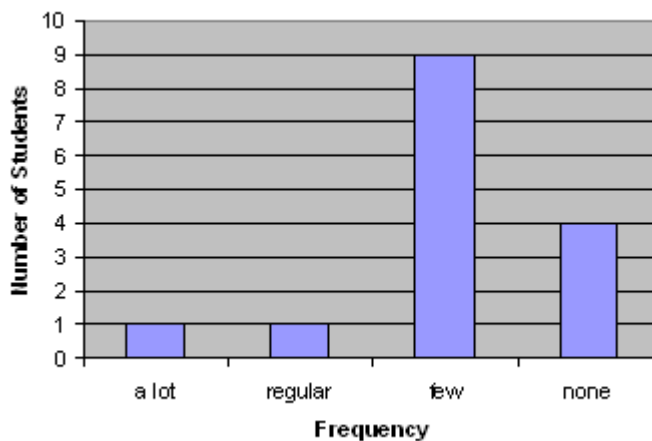
Furthermore, when asked with how much frequency they used technology in the classroom and at home, 10 of the participating students answered they used technology a lot at home, as evidenced by Graph 3, and only 1 said the same about their use of technology in the

classroom. Meanwhile, Graph 4 shows that 4 of the students stated they never used technology in the classroom, while the majority, 9 of them reported using technology only a few times.

**Graph 3: Frequency of Technology use at Home**



**Graph 4: Frequency of Technology use in the English Classroom**



Survey questions nine and 11 asked the students if they thought technology helps in the English learning process and what languages they use when they utilize technology.

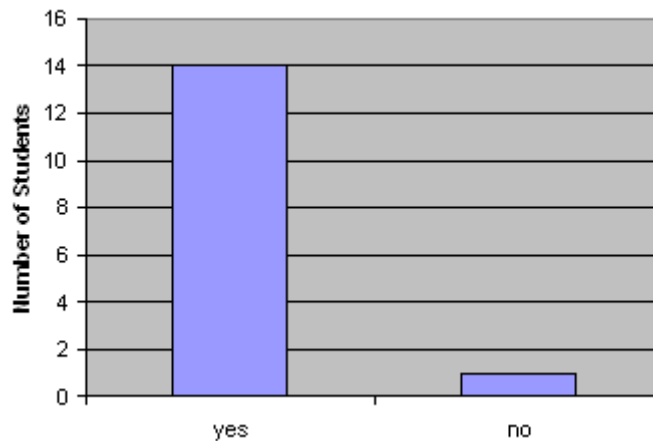
Survey item number nine, a combination of a multiple choice and an open ended question, asked the students “Do you think technology helps you learn English? How?” when it

was tallied up, only 1 of the participating students thought that technology does not help in the learning process, in sharp contrast to the other 14 who answered affirmatively to the question.

Some of the answers for the open ended question were that technology helps the English learning process because most technology equipment is programmed in English and it helps with vocabulary acquisition.

Other reasons given by the students were that it is more fun and entertaining to use technology to learn and that it is a different way of capturing their attention.

**Graph 5: Technology to Help Students Learn English**



In addition, students were asked about the language they use when they utilize technology. Of the 15 students who participated in the survey, the majority, 8 of them stated that they used English and 7 answered they used Spanish. This survey question also reveals that some students used both languages when they used technology. None of the students reported using another language besides Spanish and English when making use of technology.

The Technology Survey sheds light into how and for what purposes students access technology, as well as how much access they had to it at home, their school, and past and present English classroom.

All participating students had computers, laptops and/or desktops, at home and the majority of the students had internet access at home. Some students reported that their past and current English teacher used technology in the classroom, especially their current teacher, who used her overhead projector and transparencies to teach some of her lessons. They agreed that some of their teachers of other subjects also used technology in their classrooms as well. Students reported accessing technology in their homes on a regular basis, while in school and their English classroom they did not have much opportunity to do so.

Among the technological equipment they had access to at home were computers, televisions, iPods, radios, and cell phones; in sharp contrast to only having access to computers at school.

The Technology Survey also brought forth information on the purpose students accessed technology and the languages they used with it. The majority of the students used English when utilizing technology or a combination of English and Spanish.

As for the purposes, the top answers were using technology to communicate via social networks and playing video games; while reading, learning, and researching were at the bottom of the answer list.

### **Research Question #2: What reading and writing skills are challenging for high school students in Puerto Rico?**

As part of this study and the teaching unit creation process, students were asked to complete reading and writing needs assessments. Participating students completed a writing assessment in order to determine what skills they were lacking on and needed help improving. They were asked to write a short personal narrative about an experience they had had in school. The majority of the 15 participating students completed the task, except for three students who

did not write their personal narratives. The 12 students who completed the task understood what it was asked of them to do; they wrote about their school experience and were able to get their messages across. The student writings were evaluated using a rubric designed for it. All of the students who completed the task got scores of 10 or more, but none got perfect scores. The majority of the students obtained scores of 12 and 14 points for their writing.

In general, students' writing was good, they were able to communicate their message across with good organization and coherence, but as the short narratives were read and evaluated with the help of the scoring rubric, some common errors were found. The most common errors students made were grammatical and mechanical ones. An error analysis of the students' writings was conducted and is evidenced in Table 1.

**Table 1: Writing Prompt Error Analysis**

Criteria		Students											Total of Errors
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	
Mechanics	Capitalization		*								*		2
	Verb Tense			**	*	****	****			*****	*****	**	34
	Spelling	**	*	*	***	***	***	*	*	*	****	*	24
	Pronouns						**			*	*	*	4
Content	Introduction												
	Organization												
	Main Idea												
	Reflection			*					*		*		3
	Transitions		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			8
Total of Student's Errors		2	3	5	5	11	13	2	3	8	18	4	

The error analysis evidences that students had major problems choosing the correct verb tenses and with spelling words. The majority of the students had more than one verb tense and/or spelling error.

In the case of the regular verbs, the mistake was leaving the verb in its base form and not adding the suffix *ed* at the end when they were supposed to write it in the past tense, with the irregular verbs they also left the verb in its base form or wrote them as past participles.

It was also common to encounter incorrect use of pronouns, subject-verb agreement, and progressive tense mistakes. Table 2 provides some of the students' writing samples with errors pointed out and those same errors corrected. In terms of content, students had difficulties utilizing transition words, even though they had studied them with their regular English teacher

**Table 2: Student Writing Samples**

Students' Writing Samples	Corrected Errors
When we <b>finish eaten</b> we always put the trays one in top of another.	finished, eating
I was <b>eaten</b> breakfast.	eating
When I finished I was so <b>relax</b> because I finally <b>scream</b> to the world that.	Relaxed, screamed
It <b>start</b> to rain harder and I decided to run.	started
It all <b>happen</b> when I was 14 years old.	happened
I <b>feel</b> horrible.	felt
I <b>open</b> the door of the car...	opened
...he <b>stop her</b> march and <b>wait</b> ...	stopped, his waited
When the party was over my grandfather <b>goes</b> to pick me up.	went

In addition, participating students were assigned to read a short memoir and answer ten multiple choice exercises about the text to check for reading comprehension. Of the 15 students



who read the memoir and answered the ten items, the majority got a score of nine or ten points. Their points range from five to perfect scores of ten. Even the students who did not answer the writing needs assessment got perfect scores on the reading assessment. The Reading Needs Assessment gives us an idea what reading skills students need help with.

Although the majority of the students answered the reading comprehension items correctly and 7 of the students got perfect scores, there still were some common items students answered incorrectly. Items number five, six, seven, nine, and ten of the reading needs assessment were the ones students had the most problems with.

Item six read: Is the line “Apparently Jane Austen’s Emma was written so no one would like the protagonist.” a fact or an opinion? Students had to identify it as a fact or an opinion; 2 of them answered the item wrong. Reading Comprehension item nine was answered incorrectly by 2 of the students, this one too dealt with identifying if a sentence from the text, in this case, “I used to think of Germany: guttural language, lederhosen, and potatoes.” was a fact or an opinion.

Item seven asked for the students to choose the main idea of the short memoir from a multiple choice exercise; 3 of the participating students answered this item wrong. Items five and ten dealt with interpreting and identifying specific details from the text; 3 of the students answered item five wrong and item ten was answered incorrectly by 2 of the participating students.

### **Classroom Observations**

In order to see the classroom dynamic and interactions during English class, classroom observations were conducted. During a period of six days observations were made and ethnographic field notes taken. The Observation Protocol, previously designed was employed to help with the classroom observations.

Special attention was paid to eight specific aspects; such as the classroom arrangement, technology and reading materials available, and interactions between students, teacher, and the texts.

What follows is a summary of the classroom observations, subdivided by the questions on the Observation Protocol.

### **How is the Classroom Arranged?**

There were ten rows of seats arranged diagonally and two rows in the middle facing the front of the classroom where the two boards were. The teacher's desk was at the back of the classroom, so are two file cabinets and two bookshelves. Around the room there were tables with stacks of boxes, books, and students' works piled on top of them. There were bookshelves filled with English work and textbooks.

### **What Technology Equipment is Available for Students? Does it Work?**

At first glance, when you come into the classroom you notice various technological equipments available; there was a TV, a DVD player, a radio, an overhead and a digital projector, and two printers that also function as scanners and photocopy machines. All of these are functioning equipments. The teacher also had an old computer stashed in a corner of the room, which was obsolete and did not work. Even though there were technology equipments available, none were for student use.

### **Are There Books and Other Reading Material Available for use?**

The classroom is filled with different books. There were textbooks and writing books for her Advanced English course, there were a few novels around, mostly classics. The teacher also had many texts photocopied. Even though the classroom had many books and reading materials available, during the time of the classroom visits students only used some photocopied materials.

They did not use any of the textbooks or workbooks available, nor did they use the novels that were there.

### **Do Students use the Technology Available?**

Although the teacher had a TV, a DVD player, a radio, and a digital projector; during the classroom visit she only used her overhead projector and transparencies. From what I saw and some students answered in the Technology Survey, the overhead projector is her teaching tool of choice. In the majority of the classroom visits she used the overhead for some portion of the class. It was mainly used to project material that the students copied in their notebooks.

Students never had the opportunity to use any technology while the observations were conducted. It is evident that there was no other technology equipment the students could use. They did not have any computers/laptops in the classroom and the teacher did not have an electronic board, there was not even a computer lab at school that the teacher could take them to and use the technology there, the one they have is intended for the technology teacher to give her classes there.

### **How is the Interaction Between Student and Text?**

During the days of the classroom observations, students interacted with different texts in different ways. Although the classes observed were not the type of writing classes I was hoping to see, they did have some element of reading and writing in them.

Most of the time students worked with the text by copying it into their notebooks and working with it there. Once they had to copy a paragraph, look for grammar errors, and correct them in their notebooks. When they worked on correcting the paragraph some students began by first reading the whole paragraph and then correcting the errors, while others began by revising and correcting the errors and then when they were finished read the paragraph as a whole.

Once students worked on an exercise as a group; only then did they get a chance to read the text out loud to the rest of their classmates.

### **How is the Interaction Between Student and Teacher?**

The teacher had 21 students in this particular group, her homeroom group. She seemed relaxed around them and they did too. They had a very casual, friendly relationship; she treated them lovingly and with respect. When they interacted she did not act like she knew it all or like she was better than them. Students responded well to her, they paid attention, and participated in the class discussions.

The teacher answered all her students' questions and was very open to dialogue. Every class began by reviewing the material and having a short discussion with the students about it. Only once did she have to call students attention because they were talking too much amongst themselves, the room had gotten a little too loud, and they were paying little attention to what she was trying to discuss.

The teacher spoke mostly English and some of her students respond in English too, that is not to say that Spanish was never used in the classroom. Sometimes the teacher and students used Spanish, there were lots of times when the teacher asked or talked about something and the students responded to her using Spanish rather than English.

### **How is the Interaction Between Students?**

This homeroom group is very united. They had known each other for years and got along well together. Some students were very quiet, but the majority liked to socialize and talk amongst themselves. When it was time to work, they mostly worked individually, but sometimes they helped each other out. I never saw them being disrespectful to each other or the teacher.

Some days students worked quietly and independently on their tasks, but this was not the norm. They liked to talk amongst themselves and had no problem helping their classmates out when they need it. They mostly interacted with each other in Spanish and very little interaction was in English. Some students read each other the texts and compared their answers/work with that of others.

### **How do Students go About the Writing Process?**

During the classroom observations students did few writing tasks. They mostly worked on grammar exercises, reading, and correcting paragraphs or sentences. Only once did they have an exercise that dealt with stages of the writing process. Students had to complete a brainstorming exercise and write an introductory paragraph using their brainstormed ideas. The majority of the students worked alone, only a few asked the person besides them for help.

Students did not work on any more writing tasks during the time of the classroom observations, mainly due to the fact that they worked with their writing at home and then handed in their completed writing assignments to their teacher.

### **Researcher's Classroom Reflections**

Researcher's classroom reflections are an important part of this study. These were based on the Observation Protocol established for the classroom and the ethnographic field notes taken, as well as other things I noticed while visiting the classroom. The observations were made during the course of six classroom visits to a twelve grade English class. What follows is a list of important aspects noted during the classroom observations.

### **Teacher Relationship with the Students**

The teacher was respectful to her students; she never disrespected or talked down to them. She always listened and validated her students' comments, questions, and concerns. She

was always eager to for help or clarify any doubts. Sometimes she gave special attention to help students and offered to help at other times besides her class period. She always answered questions and volunteered information on the material being discussed.

The teacher was eager to share and teach her students, even when they did not seem too enthusiastic about English class. She was also open to dialogue and communication, most mornings she began the class by having a discussion and dialogue about the material covered on the previous class, as well as dialogue about any new material she is presenting that day.

### **Type of Technology Used by the Teacher**

One thing that particularly stood out and was previously mentioned in the Classroom Observations was that the teacher only used her overhead projector and transparencies to teach. It seemed like she preferred using it to anything else. Even though there were other technology devices in the classroom like a TV with a DVD player and a digital projector, the teacher used her overhead projector exclusively. She knew how to use the digital projector, but seemed more comfortable with her old overhead.

### **Students Work Together**

Another particularity noticed was that students were inclined to help each other and work together, even when the task was designed to be worked on individually. When students were asked to work on any task, they began working on it individually, but some found themselves quickly talking amongst themselves and asking for help to their classmates. Students had no problem helping each other out or asking for help or guidance from their classmates. Some students helped each other by reading the texts out loud to their classmates and others compared their answers to those of their friends.

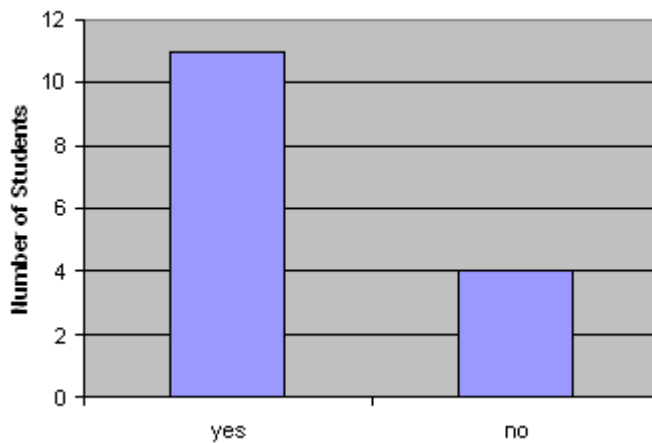
**Research Question # 3: What innovative strategies can be integrated to the English curriculum to meet high school level writing and reading content standards in Puerto Rico?**

The third objective of the study was to design a curricular unit based on the English standards of the Department of Education concerning reading and writing for high school students in PR. The unit integrates the use of technology and memoirs. It was designed to help students learn about the genre of memoir and how to write their own as a form of learning and reflecting on their personal experiences.

**Student Survey**

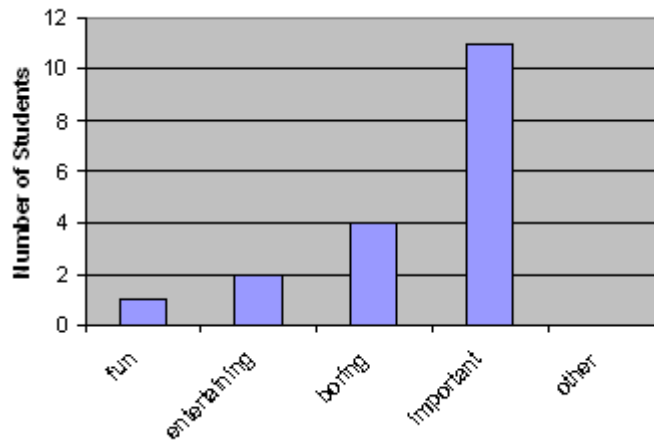
Of this particular group of twelve graders, six had lived outside of Puerto Rico in the United States; some for as little time as a couple of months, others up to 13 years. The greater part of the students, 11 of them, considered themselves bilingual (see Graph 6). It should be noted that some of these students considered themselves bilingual even if they had not lived outside of Puerto Rico in an English speaking country.

**Graph 6: Students who Consider Themselves Bilingual**



When asked about what they thought of their current English class, the majority agreed that it was important, while 4 considered it to be boring and only 1 thought it was fun; 2 students believed that their English class was entertaining. The graph below illustrates the survey findings for this question.

**Graph 7: What Students Think About Their English Class**



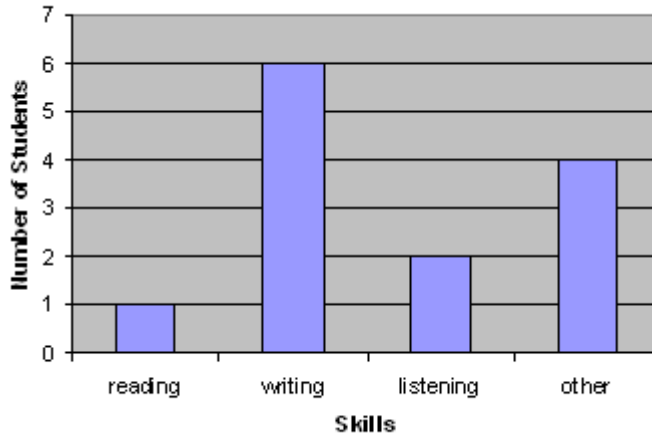
Students were also asked to point out their strengths and difficulties in English class, as well as what they thought was the most difficult area of the PPAA's. The bulk of the students considered speaking to be their major difficulty within the English language. The skill is followed closely by writing (4 students). Some students stated that they did not have difficulties performing any of the tasks.

As far as what students thought were their strengths, 10 of the participants agreed on reading. Listening and speaking came closely behind and at the last spot was writing. The skill measured on the PPAA's that the students believed was more difficult for them was writing, and in second place listening (see Graph 8). One student answered that she had no problems performing the skills measured, but did so with the amount of time they were allowed to answer the standardized test. It is no surprise that students thought the most difficult part of the PPAA's



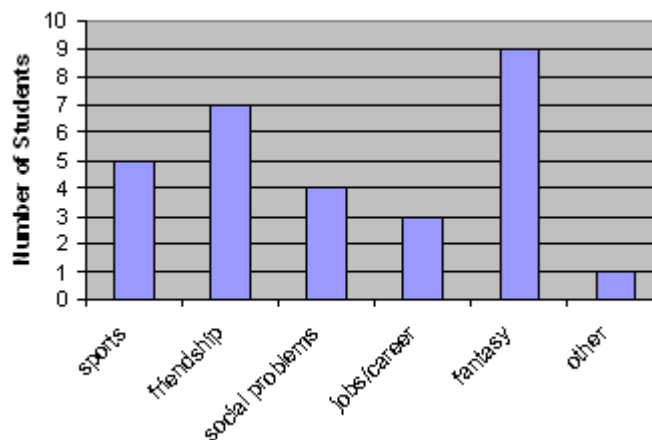
was writing; because that is one of the skills they reported having more difficulties with in English class.

**Graph 8: What is Most Difficult in the PPAA's**



This survey also served to determine what kind of themes the students would like to read about in English class, if they read and wrote for fun or entertainment purposes, what were their preferences in terms of language use and genre, as well as how much writing they had done in their current English classroom. According to the students' answers they would like to read fantasy and about the themes of friendship and sports. The themes of social issues, jobs/careers, and others came in after (see Graph 9).

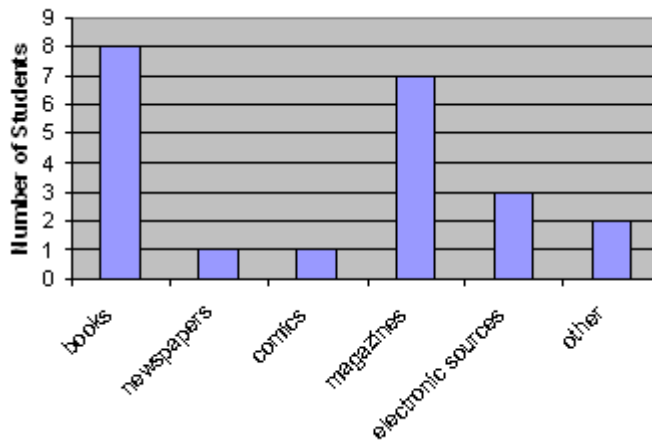
**Graph 9: What Students Want to Read About in English Class**



As far as reading habits, the majority of the students reported they read for fun or entertainment purposes in Spanish. There were also students who answered they read in both languages, English and Spanish.

Books and magazines were what most students read; on the other hand, 2 students also read electronic sources and only 1 of the students who answered the survey liked reading graphic novels and sport related news (see Graph 10).

**Graph 10: What Students Like to Read**



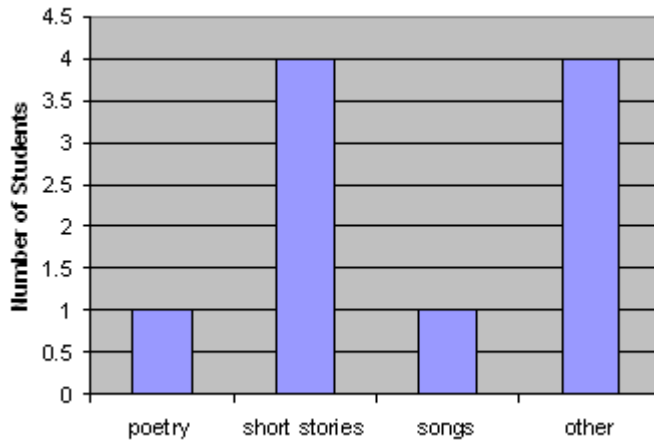
Furthermore, the survey served as means to gather information on students' writing habits. Most of the participants, 11 of them reported they did not write for fun or entertainment, only 4 answered yes to that same question.

Of those students who answered they wrote for entertainment purposes, only 1 stated that they wrote in English only and 2 students answered they wrote in both English and Spanish.

When asked what type of writing they did, most of the participants answered short stories, 1 of them answered that they wrote poetry and songs.

Others reported writing letters, essays, and only one student kept a diary (see Graph 11).

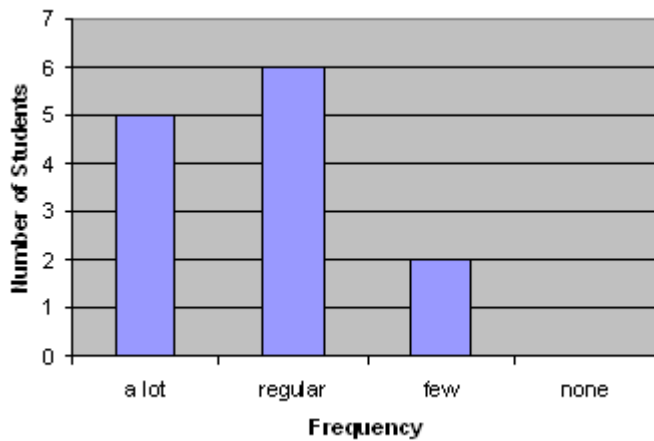
**Graph 11: What Students Write for Fun or Entertainment**



Graph 12 illustrates the answers students gave when they were asked about how much writing they had done in their English class. The majority of the students, 6 of them, answered that they would classify the quantity of their writing as regular.

On the other hand, 5 of the students agreed that they had written a lot while taking the English class. Only 3 of the students thought they did few writing in their class.

**Graph 12: How Much Writing Students Have Done in English Class**



## Summary of Findings

Based on the results and the discussion of the data elicited by the survey, observations, and assessments answered by the students, the following are the main findings:

The reading and writing assessments identified the skills students had more difficulty in, these were the skills addressed on the daily lessons. The PRDE recognizes the importance of literacy, it states that “reading and writing are integral aspects of the teaching/learning process and they require special attention” (PRDE, 2007). That is why reading and writing are the main focus of the curricular unit and the lessons were planned around that idea.

When evaluating the writing assessment it came forth that students had difficulties choosing the right verb tenses, as well as pronouns. Other common mistakes found in their writing were misspellings and little use of transition words. All of these common writing mistakes were addressed when designing the curricular unit, there is one lesson developed for each and every one those writing mistakes that were identified in the assessment.

On the other hand, while the reading assessment was evaluated common mistakes were identified. Students had trouble distinguishing statements between facts and opinions. They also had difficulties recalling important details and the text’s main idea. Separate lessons were also planned to address and assess these skills.

When developing lesson plans memoir genre and writing were also taken into consideration. Brown (2007) believes “students learn to write in part by carefully observing what is already written. That is, they learn by observing or reading the written word by reading and studying a variety of relevant types of text, students can gain important insights both about how they should write.”

Furthermore, Mendelowitz and Ferreira (2007), state that students can "...make direct links between what they were reading and writing, and [to] think about their own histories in relation to all the others to which they had been exposed." That is why students were assigned to read three short memoirs; their purpose was to serve as "mentor text" for students to see what a memoir looks like and what they are expected to produce at the end of the unit. As they read different memoirs, they will be working towards writing their own. These short memoirs also serve the purpose of helping students identify the main idea and final reflection in them.

Lessons on poetic devices, adjectives, identifying details, and drafting were designed to help and guide students through the memoir writing process step-by-step.

The writing activities developed for the unit were specially designed to get students interested in writing. The final product is developed during the course of a series of shorter writing tasks, this is done so that students do not become overwhelmed and feel like what they are being asked to accomplish is not an impossible feat.

The lessons were designed and aligned to weave together into the final project, the Digital Memoir Class Anthology.

### **Rationale for Curricular Unit Based on Results**

The lesson plans in the curricular unit follow the directions of the new PRDE Policy Letter regarding lesson planning (see Appendix K). It states that each lesson plan is required to have at least 11 items, included in those are the lesson's topic, content standard and expectation to be developed, and a description of the initial, development, and closing activities, among others (Rivera Sánchez, 2010).

For the purpose of these lesson plans, only ten of those 11 items were utilized, leaving the Teacher's Reflection out because of the fact that the lessons were not carried out. That section

serves as a space for the teacher to reflect and document the successfulness of the lesson; as well as record any other comments or impressions he/she might have concerning the day's work.

The complete list of Assessment Techniques utilized to develop the daily lesson plans is available as an appendix. It was not placed within the actual lesson plan because of space issues (See Appendix L).

All of the reflections used in the lesson plans were taken from *African American Quotations* (Newman, 2000). These quotes are meant to be read and discussed briefly at the beginning of each class period. Most of them serve as an introduction to the lessons because their topics coincide with the topics presented each day. Although the reflections used here were all taken from the same resource, it does not always have to be that way. There are plenty of other resources, both electronic and in print, which could be researched to find quotes relevant to the lessons.

In the following chapter I present the curricular unit that was designed to answer Research Question # 3 based on the data elicited from the students. The following learning activities can be adapted to suit other students' needs and interests. It is recommended that a needs assessment and survey be administered to the students, to collect data that will aid in the creation /adaptation of the lessons presented here.

The reading material and topics of the lessons could also be adapted or modified. Also, lessons are meant to be covered daily, but some of them, particularly on the last week of the unit, when students are preparing the digital presentation and presenting the Class Anthology, could be extended to two or more class periods.

## **Chapter V: Curricular Unit**

### **Digital Memoir Class Anthology**

#### **Week 1: Introduction to Memoirs**

Students and teacher orally discuss what a memoir is. They will discuss what they think is the meaning of the word and any other concepts or words they associate with a memoir. They will also focus on the characteristics of the genre to find out and learn what the components that make up a memoir are. Students will also be introduced to proofreading marks and practice with prewriting and proofreading techniques. These activities were chosen because they would aid students in the memoir writing and editing process.

In addition to learning what a memoir is and discussing what the characteristics of the genre are, students will read a short memoir dealing with the topic of friendship, which was one of the topics chosen by the participating students to read about. They would also take part in a lesson on adjectives and identifying important/specific details in a text. Since writing a memoir requires the author to write as many details about the event he/she wants the reader to know about, a lesson to review adjectives could help the students when writing their own memoir. Students should also work on identifying important details from a sample text to help them realize specific details are important in memoir writing.

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Memoir

Strategy: Reading Trilogy

Phase: Before Reading

Reforming Strategies: Curricular Integration (Health)

Reflection: “Be loving enough to absorb evil.” by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Content Standard	Expectation
Reading	R.12.3 Classifies genre, analyzes plot, establishes cause and effect; makes connections, predictions, and inferences in a variety of texts; draws conclusions; analyzes and determines conflict and resolution; uses text evidence to validate responses.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

Recall (I)

Skill/Process (II)

Strategic Thinking (III)

Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	After being presented with the nucleus word “memoir”, students will mention words related to the concept adequately.
Process	After guided reading of the memoir, students will use the text to provide evidence of memoir characteristics in them successfully.
Attitude	At the end of the written exercise, students will successfully participate in a class discussion about bullying and how they or someone they know felt when they were bullied.



### Assessment Techniques:

- Group Discussion
- Graphic Organizer

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students will brainstorm words and phrases to answer the question: “What is a memoir?”
- Students will be introduced to the concept of memoir and its characteristics

#### Development

- Students will take part in a group discussion about bullying and identifying the risks involved in this practice and how they felt when bullied or they bullied someone
- Students will read memoir #1

#### Closure

- Students will identify the characteristics of a memoir in the text and use the same as evidence to justify their answers

#### Homework (Elaboration):

- Students answer the following questions about the memoir in their notebooks:
  - What is the main idea?
  - What is the final reflection?

Materials/ Resources: memoir handout, graphic organizer, pencil, pen

## **Memoir 1**

The school year started out the same as all school years do in Ohio, the day after Labor Day and still too warm to be sitting in a classroom. Most of us had grown up together that went to the middle school and lived in the same neighborhood. Whenever a new person came to our school we noticed and at least made an attempt to make them feel at home. This particular year, 1974 to be exact, brought a lot of changes to our little community and to my life especially.

Standing outside talking to friends after lunch, deciding what we were going to do for the first weekend after the start of school, we noticed some of the other kids that liked to cause problems huddled around a new girl. Being that I was almost 13 and the bravest of our little group, I wanted to know what was going on. What I found was a young lady standing by a tree, a little afraid because she didn't know anyone and wasn't sure that she should stand up to this group of older teens. A couple of girls had started to threaten her as was their custom with new students. I decided to stand up for the new kid because I didn't like to see anyone take a beating for no reason, there was enough fighting going on in the world at that time.

When the ones who wanted to fight left and we had a chance to sit and talk for a few minutes, I found out the new girl's name was Tracee and she had just moved in with her mother and step father. I introduced her to my friends and made plans that we would meet after school and walk her home, safety in numbers and all. We became fast friends.

It's amazing to me that this happened 33 years ago, Tracee and I are still best friends. We have seen each other through all that life has had to offer, marriage, divorce, children and the death of both our fathers. We meet a lot of people in this world but only a handful can be called "friend". I am very lucky to have found Tracee, even though we still have our differences on many subjects. I'm sure as we grow older we will look back and laugh at some of the stupid and

sometimes dangerous things that we've done, and wish that we could still do some of them. I won't bore anybody with details, well just say that skinny dipping at 80 may not be pretty. I'm thankful for all that I've been given, a wonderful husband, 2 great kids and the best friend that anyone could have.

by Amy Phalen

### Exhibit One: Memoir Characteristics

Now that you have discussed the characteristics of the genre of memoir and read short memoir #1, you should be able to easily identify them within the text. Use this graphic organizer to help you with your answers. Inside the stars, jot down the memoir characteristics you found and write in the banners to provide evidence from the memoir to support your answers.

The graphic organizer consists of three stars and three banners. Each star is connected to a horizontal banner by a vertical line with a scroll-like end. The stars are positioned to the left of the banners. The banners are intended for writing evidence, and the stars are intended for writing characteristics.

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Adjectives, Identifying Details

Strategy: Reading Trilogy

Phase: After Reading

Reforming Strategies: Curricular Integration (Spanish)

Reflection:

“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom.” by George Washington Carver

Content Standard	Expectation
Reading	R.12.3 Classifies genre, analyzes plot, establishes cause and effect; makes connections, predictions, and inferences in a variety of texts; draws conclusions; analyzes and determines conflict and resolution; uses text evidence to validate responses.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

Recall (I)

Skill/Process (II)

Strategic Thinking (III)

Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Through the study of adjectives, students will identify adjectives and specific/important details in the text adequately.
Process	Given enough information about syntax, students will demonstrate knowledge of skill by completing graphic organizers correctly.
Attitude	At the end of the lesson, students will successfully share what they felt when they called someone or were called a negative or positive adjective.

### Assessment Techniques:

- Group Discussion
- Graphic Organizer

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students will discuss homework
- Students will have a conversation about the concept of adjectives and classify different adjectives into positive, neutral, and negative ones
- Students will review Spanish and English contrastive grammar and proper syntax

#### Development

- Students will complete the Important Details and Adjectives graphic organizers using the memoir
- Students and teacher orally discuss important details and adjectives found in the text

#### Closure

- Students will discuss how they felt or made someone feel when they called them a negative or positive adjective

#### Homework (Practice):

- Students translate sentences in order to practice proper syntax, keeping in mind Spanish and English contrastive grammar

Materials/ Resources: memoir, Important Details and Adjectives graphic organizer, contrastive grammar graphic organizer, pencil, pen

**A is for Adjectives and D is for Details**

Reread memoir #1 carefully. Work on identifying some of the important/ specific details and adjectives the author used and list them on the table below.

Identifying details and adjectives will help you come up with your own when writing your memoir piece. Remember that adjectives are words that describe the subject.

**Important /Specific Details and Adjectives Worksheet**

Important/Specific Details			
Adjectives			

## English and Spanish Contrastive Grammar

Read each sentence carefully and translate it to English or Spanish. Keep in mind the rules for proper syntax and contrastive grammar we discussed in class. Come prepared to discuss your answers next time the class meets.

Spanish	English
	Rosa and Angel are very good friends.
La vaca azul caminaba rápidamente por el río.	
Roberto tiene ojos azules como el mar.	
	The crazy aunt had a million dollars in coins.
El escritorio marrón y negro estaba destrozado.	
	Every year I wear the same black and red cape.
El libro nuevo de García Márquez esta muy bueno.	
Necesitamos papeles blancos y bolígrafos de tinta azul.	
	Randy loves green apples covered in caramel.
El Festival de Luces comienza el 3 de enero.	
Jane ama la música lenta y romántica.	
Ramón prefiere sábanas y almohadas blancas.	



## Lesson Plan

Topic: Adjectives, Details

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Conceptualization, Application

Reforming Strategies: Cooperative Learning

Reflection: “One writes out of one thing only- one’s own experiences.” by James Baldwin

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.2 Evaluates and applies a variety of organizational techniques to write effective narrative, expository, and persuasive essays using the writing process; demonstrates a preferred style of writing.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

Recall (I)                       Skill/Process (II)  
 Strategic Thinking (III)             Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	With the use of a timeline, students will recall and list ten events/situations that happened in their lives in chronological order.
Process	Having concluded listing the events, students will elaborate with details and adjectives the important events/situations chosen correctly.
Attitude	While working on the practice exercise, students will successfully ponder about important events/ situations they have lived and how they have changed their lives or thinking after they happened.

### Assessment Techniques:

- Graphic Organizer
- Group Discussion

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students discuss homework
- Students will verbally brainstorm about events/situations that an author can write a memoir about while the teacher writes their ideas on the board

#### Development

- Students will think about 10 significant events/situations they have lived to complete a timeline
- Students will complete the What's the Story? worksheet with three events chosen from the timeline

#### Closure

- Students will narrow down their choices of events to one and write important details and adjectives using the worksheet provided

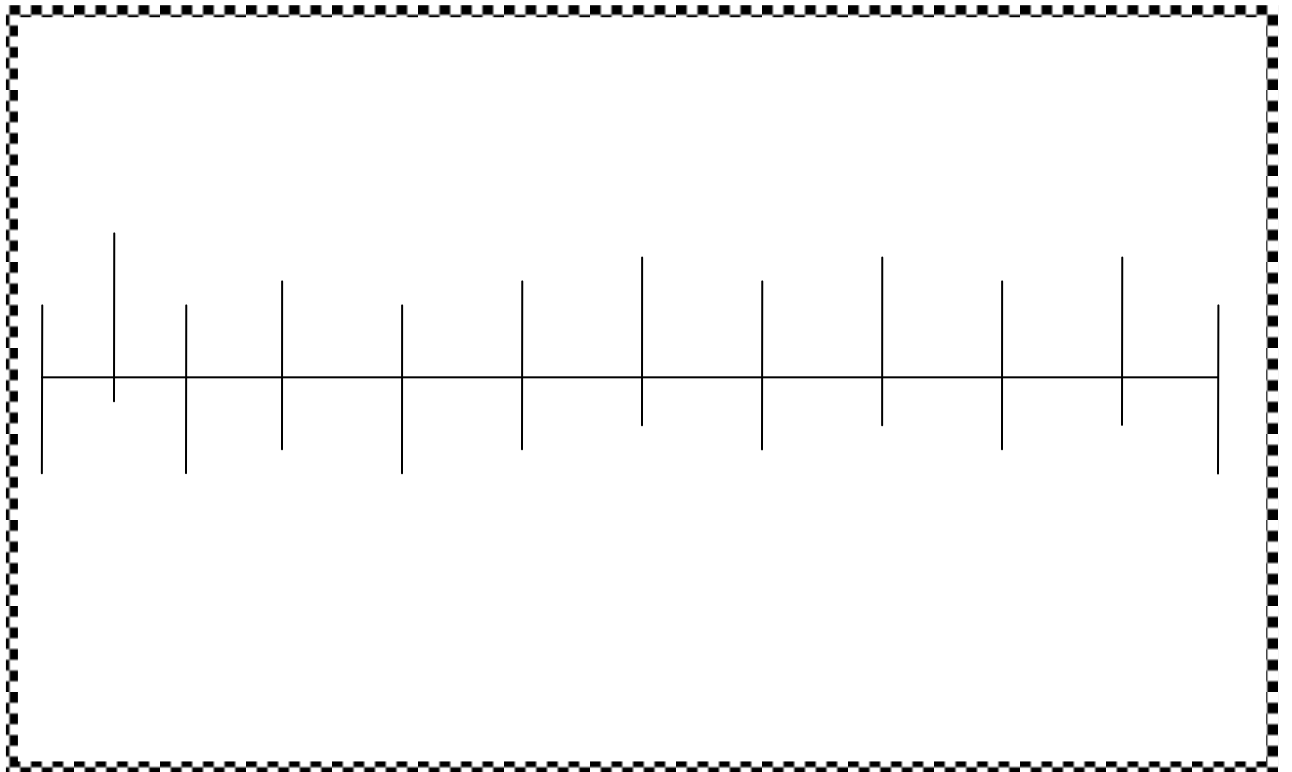
#### Homework (Preparation):

- Using the school library's resources (electronic or in print) research to answer these three questions:
  - What are proofreading/editing marks?
  - What are they used for?
  - Do you think you could benefit from using them? Explain your answer.

Materials/ Resources: What's the Story? graphic organizer, timeline, pencil, pen

## Timeline

Think about 10 significant events/situations that you have lived through. Use the timeline to help you organize them in chronological order. Start with your date of birth, then add the ten events and end the timeline with today's date. You can list sad, embarrassing, adventurous, or humorous events, not just those that were happy. Remember, you are going to have an audience; the events chosen should be ones you feel comfortable sharing with other people.



## What's the Story?

Use your timeline to choose three events that you might want to write about for your memoir. Remember you are going to have an audience; the events chosen should be ones you feel comfortable sharing with other people.

Example:

Event/situation 1: when I got my puppy Lelolai as a gift (happy)

Event/situation 2: the time I got lost in New York City (adventurous)

Event/situation 3: the day my grandmother Gloria died (sad)

Now it's your turn to write...

<b>Event/situation 1</b>	
<b>Event/ situation 2</b>	
<b>Event/situation 3</b>	

Now that you have thought about three significant events, narrow down your list to just **one**. Write down the event/situation and jot down important and specific details you remember about it. Also, find adjectives and details which describe the situation.

Example:

Event/situation	Important details	Adjectives
the time I got lost in New York City	I was alone. I took the wrong train. It was almost nighttime.	dark endless fun jittery cold

It's your time to remember and write ...

Event/situation	Important details	Adjectives

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Editing/Proofreading Marks

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Exploration, Conceptualization, Application

Reforming Strategies: Integration of Technology, Cooperative Learning

Reflection: “The line of progress is never straight. For a period of movement may follow a straight line and then it encounters obstacles and the path bends.” by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.2 Evaluates and applies a variety of organizational techniques to write effective narrative, expository, and persuasive essays using the writing process; demonstrates a preferred style of writing.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

Recall (I)

Skill/Process (II)

Strategic Thinking (III)

Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Given enough information about proofreading marks, students will identify spelling and grammar errors in sentences with the aid of the proofreading marks correctly.
Process	Given a series of incorrect sentences, students will use proofreading marks and re-write sentences correctly.
Attitude	At the end of the written practice exercise, students will analyze the benefits of using proofreading marks successfully.

#### Assessment Techniques:

- Review
- Group Discussion
- Online Game (<http://www.spellingconnectionsonline.com/game3.php>)
- Worksheet

#### Activities

##### Initial

- Students verbally review the Writing Process
- Students discuss homework and the Proofreading Marks is introduced

##### Development

- Students work on using proofreading marks to identify grammar, usage, and spelling errors in sentences and re-write the sentences
- Students have a class discussion of written exercises and doubts are clarified

##### Closure

- Students participate on analyzing and expressing the benefits of using proofreading marks in the writing process.

##### Homework (Practice):

- Students play an online game where they identify mistakes in sentences and use proofreading marks to fix them (<http://www.spellingconnectionsonline.com/game3.php>)

Materials/ Resources: Digital projector, computer, Proofreading Sentences worksheet, pencil, pen

## Proofreading Sentences

Read each sentence carefully. Use the information on proofreading marks you researched and what the teacher gave you to identify with proofreading marks mistakes in the sentences.

Re-write the sentences paying close attention to fixing the mistakes.

SENTENCES

FIXED SENTENCES

That was one of the most embarrassing moments in my life.	
It all happen when I was 14 years old.	
I was eaten breakfast.	
Thoose braids look great.	
The boy that I like it was laughing at me.	
In that moment I want to dissapear.	
Went I go to the classroom my notebook it fell.	
It was discusting.	
One day at the spanish class there was a test.	
We had been playing untill the school bus arrived.	
She beleaved me and call him.	



### **Additional Activities**

The following activities are variations or alternatives which can be used during the first week of implementing the Curricular Unit. These could be utilized as homework, special assignments, or as part of the daily lessons.

1. Students identify the state of Ohio on a map of the United States. They are introduced to basic information about the state, and the following questions are answered:
  - When did Ohio become a state? What state number is it?
  - How are people from Ohio called?
  - What is Ohio famous for? Give at least three examples.
2. Students research when is Labor Day celebrated and why. They also find out if there is a difference in how it is celebrated in the United States and in Puerto Rico.
3. Students research a Puerto Rican memoirist and bring an excerpt of their writing to share with the rest of the class.
4. Students reflect and write a short composition about a particular situation where they or someone they know had been affected negatively or positively by an adjective they were called.
5. Students create their own graphic organizers to use as pre-writing techniques and share them with the rest of their classmates.
6. Students create their own book marks with proofreading marks printed on them to use when reading and as aid when working on the proofreading stage of the writing process.

## **Week 2: Starting Up**

During the second week of this Curricular Unit, students will read short memoirs. They will also review fact and opinions and work on identifying them in the read texts.

In addition, the students will also be introduced to different poetic devices. Once they have enough information on the topic, they will work on identifying them in the texts they read and be able to write their own sentences to employ them during their memoir writing process.

The Reading Needs Assessment points out students had some difficulties distinguishing between facts and opinions from the sample text. These exercises will help them review and practice the skill, which could serve as guide for when they write their memoir.

Also, practice in poetic devices is included into this Curricular Unit because memoirs employ the use of poetic language and students need to become familiarized with it, to utilize them on their own memoirs.

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Transitional Words

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Conceptualization, Application

Reforming Strategies: Cooperative Learning, Curricular Integration (Health)

Reflection: "When you're poor, you grow up fast." by Billie Holiday

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.1 Analyzes and assesses word choice to convey meaning; incorporates transitions, correct grammar, syntax, and style.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

Recall (I)

Skill/Process (II)

Strategic Thinking (III)

Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Students review the topic of transition words and the different types there are successfully.
Process	Given enough information on transition words, students will write sentences using correct transitions and grammar.
Attitude	Having concluded the initial activity, students will successfully participate in a class discussion about the topic of homelessness.

### Assessment Techniques:

- Graphic Organizer
- Group Discussion

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students write their first impressions of different illustrations depicting homeless people
- Students have a group discussion about the misconceptions on poor or homeless people

#### Development

- Students discuss transition words and their different types

#### Closure

- Students work on writing sentences using correct transitions and grammar

#### Homework (Elaboration):

- Students read memoir #2 and answer the following questions in their notebooks:
  - What is the main idea of the text?
  - What is the final reflection of the text?

Materials/ Resources: computer, digital projector, index cards, memoir handout, pen, pencil, notebook

### **Initial Activity: Homelessness**

These are the steps and instructions for the initial activity.

1. Each student will be handed index cards numbered from one to six.
2. With the aid if the digital projector, six images, all numbered from one to six, of homeless or people in need will be projected for the class to see.
3. Students will use their numbered index cards to write down the first thing they thought of when seeing the images.
4. Students will compare their index cards with that of their classmates and look for similarities and differences in their answers.
5. Students discuss the issues around homelessness and brainstorm facts and misconceptions society has about poor or homeless people.

## **Memoir 2**

The thing I remember most about the weirdest summer holiday, was the fact that I got, unintentionally, acquainted with a rather batty, strange, lady.

I was out in my Aunt Sheryl's great garden; there was a small bush of deep blue and light purple roses set neatly to one side of the grass lawn; with pots of dandelions in another. I was waiting patiently out in the garden, for Aunt Sherryl to bring out the freshly baked bread, jam and cheese. That was our Saturday treat, as she so humbly called it. I really think she just liked to spoil me, though.

Aunt Sheryl was in her late fifties; with graying black hair done up in a bun. Her eyes were large, and rounded green. She never liked wearing make-up; which made the outlines of her wrinkles blossom like the gentle swaying red roses from the easterly winds. Down below, I could hear the thunder of the waves crash rigorously against the rocky cliffs; the edge deep, and vertical. A small pathway zigzagged in and out of many different fields for about three miles to the nearest town.

"Gillian, tea's ready, sweetheart!" called Aunt Sheryl from the kitchen.

Sighing, I turned, and sauntered in to the house. To my right, there was a polished red and brown mahogany colored desk top; pictures of Aunt Sheryl when she in her graduation robes from Princeton; holding her scholarship; a large, beautiful smile stretched on her mouth. The flooring was finely swept, with a long, rectangular carpet leading up to the front door; red and golden sheets embroidered in to the intricately designed rug; and a large, isolated grandfather clock located to the left of the front door.

Aunt Sheryl was just finishing off the last pieces of making up the afternoon "treat", as I came gallivanting in to the kitchen, smiling at her as she acknowledged my presence. Aunt

Sheryl handed me a small mug of pineapple juice. I took it from her, thanking her as I sipped it down. If Aunt Sheryl hadn't been so compulsory in her formalities in the dining etiquette, then the pineapple juice would have been wolfed down the moment it had been handed to me.

"Come on..." said Aunt Sheryl, glancing out of the kitchen window, a piece of buttered bread perched in her right hand, "let's eat outside." My face shone at that thought. Hurriedly, I gathered up some of the ornaments in the kitchen, and helped carry them out to the garden, Aunt Sheryl following in line.

"Hey, what the hell...?" Aunt Sheryl said, moments later, her head snapping to the immediate right. I turned in her appointed direction, seeing something slightly odd.

An old lady, dressed in hideous, mothball eaten robes, lingered at the corner of the garden, trying to reach out - presumably - to the black birds in one of the apple trees. "Hey!" hollered Aunt Sheryl, lurching up from her solitary stance, and gliding towards the crazy person at the foot of the garden. Unless she hadn't heard Aunt Sheryl's call, she had done a fine good job of turning Aunt Sheryl into a rather suspicious, skeptical individual now, with me bringing up the rear, glancing momentarily at Aunt Sheryl, and then back at the old lady.

The lady's face was covered in soot; like that hideous, black stuff that people got covered in when they had been involved in a fire, or something. Her eyes were small, graying brown; her left eye slightly lower than her right. Her nose was bulbous, making her soot covered cheeks smaller in comparison to her scarred chin. Her hair was dark, long, and unkempt; and she smelled like bird droppings. Aunt Sheryl had to force herself not to wince with the overwhelming draft of bird droppings.

"Are you alright?" asked Aunt Sheryl calmly, glancing at me sideways on.

"Oh! Oh, my apologies, sweetheart. I didn't mean to intrude. But...My bird" - she gestured to one of many black birds nestled in the high apple tree - "has flown off again." I rolled my eyes at Aunt Sheryl, indicating that she was rather batty. Aunt Sheryl shot an unimpressed expression in my face, but smiled at me reassuringly.

"Any particular one?" I asked half-heartedly.

The old lady looked at me awkwardly. Suspiciously, I stepped back from her. I didn't like the way she looking at me, and neither, apparently, did Aunt Sheryl, as she was quick to intercept the distance between Crazy Lady and myself. Like lightning flashing in front of my face, the Crazy Lady snatched up my hand, and began tracing her little, dirty index finger along the lines of my right hand, mumbling something incoherently.

"Wonderment. Uncertainty; kindness, and care are your features, Gillian Mckingsley." I gaped at her; incredulity written in bold capital letters right across my forehead. Aunt Sheryl looked at me uncertainly. "Call me Crow...for that is all I go by."

And that summer was how Aunt Sheryl and I got acquainted with the weird, friendly companion of The Crow.

by Ian Black



## Lesson Plan

Topic: Fact and Opinion

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Conceptualization, Application

Reforming Strategies: Cooperative Learning

Reflection: “Knowledge is power, and power is the key to changing things.” by Jill Nelson

Content Standard	Expectation
Reading	R.12.4 Distinguishes between fact and opinion, infers and supports the main idea in a variety of texts; debates the theme or topic using text evidence to justify and validate position.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

\_\_\_ Recall (I)

√ Skill/Process (II)

\_\_\_ Strategic Thinking (III)

\_\_\_ Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Students will talk about facts and opinions and identify facts and opinions in the memoirs successfully.
Process	Through the study of facts and opinions, students will read sentences and classify them as facts or opinions correctly.
Attitude	When the lesson is finished, students ponder about positive or negative opinions they have formed or others have formed about them and how listening to them made them or someone else feel successfully.

### Assessment Techniques:

- Crossword Puzzle
- Group Discussion

### Activities

#### Initial

- Discuss homework
- Students work in pairs and later on as a group to discuss these two questions: What is a fact? What is an opinion?
- Students will read sentences written on the board and identify if they are facts or opinions

#### Development

- Students will work on Is it a Fact or Opinion? worksheet by selecting sentences from the read texts and classifying them into facts or opinions

#### Closure

- Students ponder about positive or negative opinions they have formed or others have formed about them and how listening to them made them or someone else feel

#### Homework (Practice):

- Students will work on completing a fact or opinion crossword puzzle

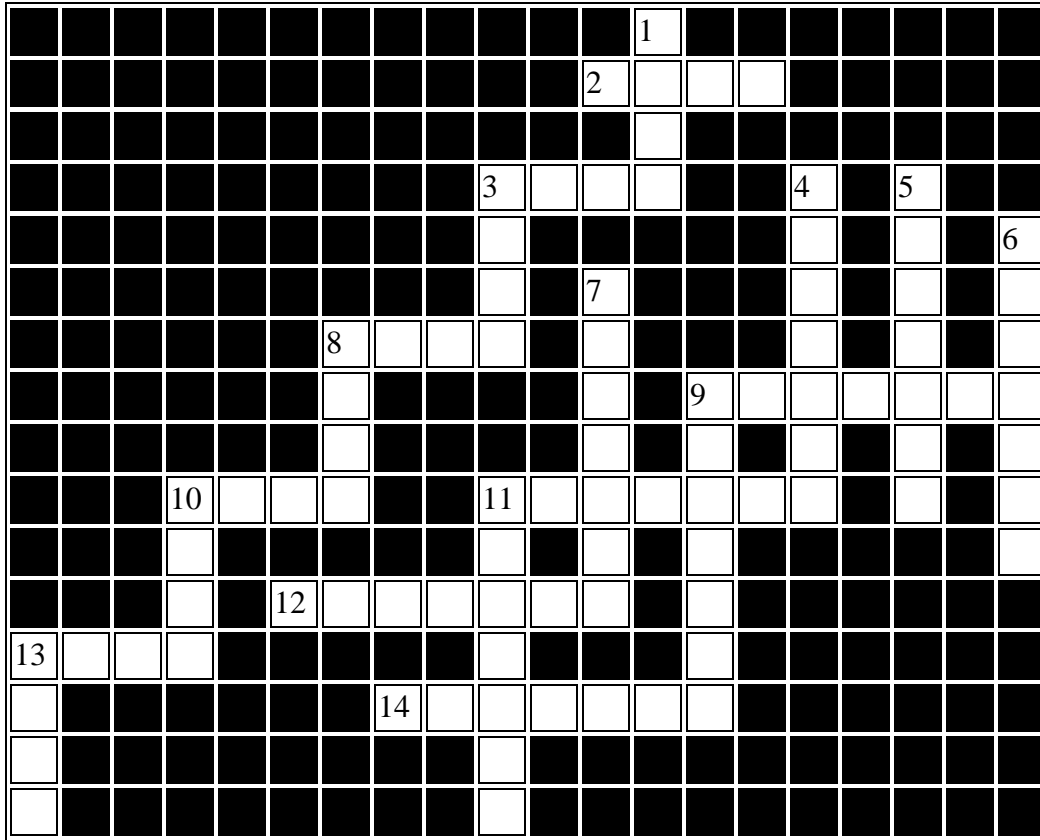
Materials/ Resources: memoirs, Is it a Fact or Opinion? worksheet, Fact and Opinion Crossword Puzzle, pencil, pen

## Fact and Opinion

Is it a Fact or an Opinion?		
Memoir 1	Fact	Opinion
Memoir 2	Fact	Opinion

## Fact and Opinion Crossword Puzzle

Read the Across and Down clues and decide if they are facts or opinions based on what you have learned in class and have practiced before. Complete the puzzle using your answers.



### Across

2. George Washington was the first president of the United States.
3. Pronouns are used to substitute nouns.
8. Love is stronger than hate.
9. Luis Munoz Marin was the best governor Puerto Rico has had.
10. Esmeralda Santiago is a Puerto Rican writer.
11. Wearing black means you are sad.
12. Writing poetry is harder than writing novels.
13. When mixed, yellow and blue form the color green.
14. I believe you are the greatest dad.

### Down

1. Columbus discovered Puerto Rico in 1493.
3. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in 1968.
4. It is healthier to eat rice than beans.
5. Wearing pants is better than wearing skirts
6. Sunday is the day before Monday.
7. Chocolate ice cream is the best flavor.
8. Jose Campeche was a painter.
9. Red shoes are appropriate for church.
10. London is the capital city of England.
11. Memoirs are easy to write.
13. Memoirs are written in first person.

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Poetic Devices

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Application

Reforming Strategies: Cooperative Learning, Peer Assessment

Reflection: "Poetry is more like improvisational jazz, where each person plays the note that she hears." by Alice Walker

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.3 Uses creative writing styles to produce poems and other literary forms.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

\_\_\_ Recall (I)

\_\_\_√ Skill/Process (II)

\_\_\_ Strategic Thinking (III)

\_\_\_ Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Given enough information about poetic devices, students will identify sentences in the texts that have poetic devices in them and provide evidence from the text accurately.
Process	Through the use of poetic devices, students will construct sentences using poetic devices correctly.
Attitude	At the end of the written practice exercise, students will ponder if they felt comfortable giving and receiving feedback from their peers successfully.

Assessment Techniques:

- Graphic Organizer
- Group Discussion
- Reflective Journal

## Activities

### Initial

- Students will discuss poetic devices and identify sentences from the text that have poetic devices

### Development

- Students will use the What's the Story? worksheets to complete the Poetic Memoirist worksheet by writing sentences utilizing poetic devices

### Closure

- Students will share their work with their classmates and they in turn will provide them with feedback and recommendations

### Homework (Elaboration):

- Students write a short Reflective Journal about how they felt when getting and receiving feedback from their peers.

Materials/ Resources: What's the Story? worksheets, Poetic Memoirist worksheet, Poetic

Devices in Memoirs worksheet, pencil, pen

## Poetic Devices

As part of the memoir writing process, the students will learn about different poetic devices they can utilize on their writing. An oral discussion of the different poetic devices will take place, as well as identifying them in the memoirs they have already read.

- Imagery
  - visual
  - auditory
  - olfactory
  - gustatory
  - tactile
- Metaphor
- Onomatopoeia
- Personification
- Simile
- Symbol

## Poetic Memoirs

Use the two memoirs you have already read to identify poetic devices in them.

Remember to classify the images as visual, tactile, olfactory, auditory, and gustatory.

Memoir 1	Poetic Devices

Memoir 2	Poetic Devices



## Poetic Devices Practice

Do you know what poetic devices are? Do you know how to identify them in a text? If the answer is YES, then you should be able to use them in your own writing. Use the event/situation, details and adjectives you chose and work on writing sentences using different poetic devices to be added to your memoir.

Example:

Event/Situation: the time I got lost in New York City		
Details	Adjectives	Poetic Devices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I was alone</li> <li>• Took the wrong train</li> <li>• It was almost nighttime</li> </ul>	dark	The street signs were like giant beanstalks, so tall I could barely see the street names.
	fun	(simile)
	jittery	The train was dancing and jittery as we passed through a dark tunnel.
	endless	(personification)
	cold	The cold, icy train seat was uncomfortable.
		(imagery: tactile)

You have seen the example provided by the teacher, now it's your time to try it...

<b>Event/Situation:</b>		
<b>Details</b>	<b>Adjectives</b>	<b>Poetic Devices</b>

### **Additional Activities**

The following activities are variations or alternatives that can be used during the second week of implementing the Curricular Unit. These could be utilized as homework, special assignments, or as part of the daily classroom lessons.

1. Students research information and statistics about homeless people in Puerto Rico and design a brochure to distribute at school and their communities to create awareness of this social problem.
2. Students organize a food and clothing drive at school to distribute among the town's homeless or people in need.
3. Students volunteer time, food, clothing, and toiletries at a shelter or non-profit organization that helps people in need.
4. Students choose one of their favorite songs (in English or Spanish) and re-write the chorus or one of the verses to include at least two of the poetic devices studied in class. Students present their song's lyrics and classmates join them in a sing-along.
5. Students write their own poetry or songs using the poetic devices studied in class and perform them in a class Open Mic activity.

### **Week 3: Practice Makes Perfect**

During this third week of lessons and activities for the Curricular Unit students will be introduced and practice using the Movie Maker computer program. It is important for students to utilize technology in the classroom and become literate in that field. The lesson on Movie Maker will help them understand and work with the program.

On the other hand, they will work on lessons about pronouns and verb tenses, identifying them in texts and writing sentences with them. The lessons were developed because the Writing Needs Assessment reflected that the participating students had problems with pronouns and also encountered difficulties with verb tenses. Practicing these skills will help them further develop them.

In addition, they will begin writing their memoir's first draft and use the Peer Review Checklist to evaluate their classmates' written work.

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Movie Maker Practice

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Application

Reforming Strategies: Integration of Technology, Cooperative Learning

Reflection: “Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.” by Malcom X

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.1 Analyzes and assesses word choice to convey meaning; incorporates transitions, correct grammar, syntax, and style.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

Recall (I)

Skill/Process (II)

Strategic Thinking (III)

Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Before beginning the lesson, students will talk about what they think are the benefits and/or drawbacks of using technology in the English classroom successfully.
Process	Given enough information about the uses of Movie Maker computer program, students will use the computer and Movie Maker program adequately.
Attitude	Having concluded the Movie Maker workshop, students will participate in answering a short survey to rate their technological abilities successfully.

### Assessment Technique:

- Group Discussion
- Student Survey

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students will have a discussion about the benefits and drawbacks of utilizing technology in the English classroom
- Students will be introduced to the Movie Maker computer program

#### Development

- In pairs, students will practice using the program, saving their practice work, using the computer microphone, and digital scanner

#### Closure

- Students work in pairs to compare work, discuss, and share information about the process they feel it is important and could help their partner
- Students answer the student survey on technology use and understanding

#### Homework (Practice):

- Students who have the opportunity and facility should practice the technology skills learned in class, if applicable.

Materials/ Resources: Computers with Movie Maker program, computer microphone, digital scanner, student survey

### **Practice, Practice, Practice**

Students will use the computers to practice using the Movie Maker program and become accustomed to using the computer programs for when they work on the Digital Memoir Class Anthology. They will also learn to use the computer microphone and practice speaking and saving their voice recordings. Students will also have the opportunity to use the digital scanner to learn to digitalize pictures and drawings to use in their presentation.

They will also practice typing, arranging pictures, editing, and saving their work. At the end, when everyone has had the opportunity to practice and save their work, students will be paired with a classmate to compare their work, discuss the process, and share any information they feel could help their classmate in the use of Movie Maker, the digital scanner, and/or computer microphone.

### **Student Survey**

Reflect and rate your technological abilities using this scale:						
1. agree						
2. somewhat agree						
3. do not agree						
<b>I have reflected and ...</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>1</b>	I feel comfortable using technology.					
<b>2</b>	I know how to type and save my typed work.					
<b>3</b>	I know how to search for and save pictures or images.					
<b>4</b>	I know how to conduct research on the internet.					
<b>5</b>	I know how to use the digital scanner and save the document/picture scanned.					
<b>6</b>	I know how to use the computer microphone and save my voice recordings.					

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Pronouns

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Conceptualization, Application

Reforming Strategies: Cooperative Learning

Reflection:

“You diminish a person’s humanity when you call him out of his name.” by Cornel West

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.1 Analyzes and assesses word choice to convey meaning; incorporates transitions, correct grammar, syntax, and style.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

Recall (I)

Skill/Process (II)

Strategic Thinking (III)

Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Given enough oral and written practice on pronouns, students will identify proper and common nouns in sentences.
Process	Finishing the activity of identifying nouns, students will use correct pronouns to substitute proper and common nouns and construct sentences that include correct pronouns successfully.
Attitude	At the end of the lesson, students will consider using pronouns as substitution for proper and common nouns.



### Assessment Techniques:

- Graphic Organizer

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students will review the pronoun's list and practice making sentences with the correct pronouns

#### Development

- Students work on the What a Pronoun! worksheet by identifying proper and common nouns on a sentence, writing the corresponding pronoun, and re-writing the sentence using the correct pronoun

#### Closure

- Students use the sentences they have already written for their memoir to identify the nouns and re-write them using pronouns to correctly substitute the nouns found

### Homework (Elaboration):

Students answer the following questions about the memoir in their notebooks:

- What is the main idea?
- What is the final reflection?

Materials/ Resources: What a Pronoun! worksheet, Pronoun worksheet ,pencil, pen, memoir handout

## Pronouns

Students review a list of pronouns. They orally practice making sentences with pronouns. Students work on a pronoun exercise in which they have to substitute common and proper nouns in a sentence for the correct pronoun. Students also use some of the sentences they have already worked to include in their memoir to practice correct pronoun usage.

Pronouns	
<b>I</b>	I might see you later.
<b>you</b>	You have to call right now.
<b>she</b>	She lives in Nebraska.
<b>he</b>	He makes me angry.
<b>it</b>	It just might work.
<b>they</b>	They caught the last train.
<b>we</b>	We can't see the end.

## What a Pronoun!

Pronouns are an important part of your writing, it is important you know which pronoun to use when substituting a noun. Complete the table below like the example shows and re-write the sentence using the correct pronoun.

Sentence	Nouns	Pronoun
Joshua and Luis are cousins.	Joshua Luis	they
They are cousins.		
My friends and I love to eat vanilla ice cream.		
Arnaldo is my brother's best friend.		
My grandmother came to visit and stayed.		
The students read and wrote about love.		
The car has shiny black and white tires.		
Lila cares a lot about the environment.		

Use some of the sentences you have already constructed in the previous writing exercises to use in your memoir and re-write them using the correct pronouns. Do not forget to point out the nouns and pronouns.

Example:

Original Sentences	Nouns Pronouns	New Sentences
The train was dancing and jittery as we passed through a dark tunnel.	train/it	It was dancing and jittery as we passed through a dark tunnel.
The street signs were like giant beanstalks, so tall I could barely see the street names.	street signs/they	They were like giant beanstalks, so tall I could barely see the street names.

It's your time to try it...

Original Sentences	Nouns Pronouns	New Sentences

## **Homework:**

Read memoir 3. Pay special attention to the poetic devices, specific details, and adjectives. Also, be aware of the memoir ending. Do you notice anything different from the rest of the text? Is the author's attitude the same at the beginning and at the end of the memoir? What is the main idea of the text?

## **Memoir 3**

### **Childhood**

I remember walking through Wal-Mart. I would see kids along with their dads and the kid's faces would be full of joy. They just did not know that what they had in front of them was the one thing I lack the most, a father.

My childhood years were my worst years. Every school event that I went to, I was always alone. My mom couldn't come see me because she had to work late to make up for the lacking father.

I remember the night I performed at the school play in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. At the end of the play, the crew stood still, admiring the cheer from the crowd while smiling and looking back at their mom and dad. I in the other hand, had to walk home with tears running down from my cheeks because I had no one there to admire the hard work I had put into the play.

I don't know why I let it get to me. Some people can go on with their lives without ever meeting their father. It's been ten years since I've seen my father and the years that I did see him, he wasn't there much, if at all. I feel like a part of me is missing, a part of me that only he can fill.

by an anonymous writer

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Verb Tenses (Simple, Past, and Progressive)

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Conceptualization, Application

Reforming Strategies: Cooperative Learning

Reflection:

“The past is a ghost, the future is a dream, and all we ever have is now.” by Bill Cosby

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.2 Evaluates and applies a variety of organizational techniques to write effective narrative, expository, and persuasive essays using the writing process; demonstrates a preferred style of writing.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

Recall (I)                       Skill/Process (II)  
 Strategic Thinking (III)             Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Given enough information about different verb tenses, students will point out past and progressive verbs in sentences correctly.
Process	Given enough written practice of verb tenses, students will re-write past and progressive verbs to their simple tense adequately.
Attitude	At the end of the lesson, students will share why their families are special or ideal by writing a paragraph employing correct grammar and spelling.

### Assessment Techniques:

- Review
- Graphic Organizer
- Targeted List

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students discuss homework and work together to make a Targeted List on the topic of families
- Students will review a list of regular and irregular verbs and practice making sentences with them

#### Development

- Students will practice verb tenses by identifying and circling past and progressive verbs in sentences and writing the simple form for every verb circled

#### Closure

- Students will use their Targeted List to write a paragraph about what makes their family special or ideal

#### Homework (Practice):

- Students will work on the Verb Table worksheet by filling it out with the simple, past, and progressive tenses of the verbs chosen

Materials/ Resources: Regular-Irregular Verb List handout, Verb Table and Sentence-Verb, worksheets, pencil, pen

## Verb Tense Review

Past and progressive verb tenses are revised. A list of regular and irregular verbs is provided, as well as a discussion of examples for each verb tense in sentences. Students will work on converting regular and irregular verbs into past and progressive tenses. They will also work on identifying these two tenses on the memoirs they have read in class.

<b>List of Regular Verbs</b>		
<b>Base Form</b>	<b>Past/ Past Participle</b>	<b>Progressive</b>
answer	answered	answering
behave	behaved	behaving
alert	alerted	alerting
balance	balanced	balancing
hope	hoped	hoping
grab	grabbed	grabbing
breath	breathed	breathing
harm	harmed	harming
clean	cleaned	cleaning
cover	covered	covering
visit	visited	visiting
listen	listed	listening
welcome	welcomed	welcoming
destroy	destroyed	destroying
dream	dreamed	dreaming
decorate	decorated	decorating
examine	examined	examining
follow	followed	following
use	used	using
yell	yelled	yelling



<b>List of Irregular Verbs</b>				
<b>(Major Groups, arranged by sound, not spelling) (Baker-González &amp; Strodt, 1998)</b>				
<b>I. Tree Forms</b>				
<b>A.</b>	<b>Base Form</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Past Participle</b>	<b>Progressive</b>
	begin	began	begun	beginning
	drink	drank	drunk	drinking
	ring	rang	rung	ringing
	shrink	shrank	shrunk	shrinking
	sing	sang	sung	singing
	sink	sank	sunk	sinking
	swim	swam	swum	swimming
<b>B.</b>	bear	bore	born	bearing
	tear	tore	torn	tearing
	swear	swore	sworn	swearing
	wear	wore	worn	wearing
	break	broke	broken	breaking
	wake	woke	woken	waking
	freeze	froze	frozen	freezing
	speak	spoke	spoken	speaking
	steal	Stole	stolen	stealing
	choose	chose	chosen	choosing
	weave	wove	woven	weaving
<b>C.</b>	drive	drove	driven	driving
	ride	rode	ridden	riding
	rise	rose	risen	rising
	write	wrote	written	writing

<b>D.</b>	bite	bit	bitten	biting
	hide	hid	hidden	hiding
<b>E.</b>	blow	blew	blown	blowing
	grow	grew	grown	growing
	know	knew	known	knowing
	throw	threw	thrown	throwing
	draw	drew	drawn	drawing
	withdraw	withdrew	withdrawn	withdrawing
<b>II. Two Forms-parts II and II the same</b>				
<b>A.</b>	deal	dealt	dealt	dealing
	dream	dreamt	dreamt	dreaming
	feed	fed	fed	feeding
	feel	felt	felt	feeling
	hear	heard	heard	hearing
	keep	kept	kept	keeping
	lead	led	led	leading
	leave	left	left	leaving
	mean	meant	meant	meaning
	meet	met	met	meeting
	read	read	read	reading
	sleep	slept	slept	sleeping
	speed	sped	sped	speeding
	sweep	swept	swept	sweeping
	weep	wept	wept	weeping
<b>B.</b>	bend	bent	bent	bending
	lend	lent	lent	lending
	send	sent	sent	sending

<b>C.</b>	bring	brought	brought	bringing
	buy	bought	bought	buying
	catch	caught	caught	catching
	fight	fought	fought	fighting
	teach	taught	taught	teaching
	think	thought	thought	thinking

**III. One Form (no change)**

bet	bet	bet	betting
let	let	let	letting
set	set	set	setting
spread	spread	spread	spreading
upset	upset	upset	upsetting
fit	fit	fit	fitting
hit	hit	hit	hitting
split	split	split	splitting
quit	quit	quit	quitting
cut	cut	cut	cutting
shut	shut	shut	shutting
put	put	put	putting
cost	cost	cost	costing
broadcast	broadcast	broadcast	broadcasting

Complete the following table with the simple, past, and progressive tenses of regular and irregular verbs.

<b>Verb Base Form</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Progressive</b>
		eating
walk		
	drew	
	spoke	
forget		
see		
		looking
study		
	jumped	
		cooking
	spat	
love		
		talking
	forgiven	

Read each sentence carefully; identify the verbs in the past tense by circling them and the ones in the progressive form by underlining them. Remember to also write the base form for every verb circled and underlined.

Example:

Sentence	Base Form
Are you <u>thinking</u> the same thing Ana <u>thought</u> when she it <u>started</u> <u>raining</u> ?	think start rain

Now it is your time to try it...

Sentence	Base Form
Guadalupe is working night and day; she is saving to buy a car.	
Do you still think we are going to the movies tomorrow?	
Jane never thought about her lost puppy until she saw him walking in the park.	
Jason read and wrote love letters to Gina everyday he was away at war.	
I never thought my dream of becoming a pilot would come true.	
Every time I see you I remember the times we spent running at the park.	
Raymond and Lucy got married in Vegas last weekend.	
We walked and walked for hours until we found an old cottage.	
Painting and sculpting, those are Janet's favorite hobbies.	
Today I remembered that my brother is coming to eat dinner with us.	
They believed aliens and monsters were invading and attacking the Earth.	
No wonder she is full, she drank two glasses of water and ate a giant apple.	
Manuel loves reading and writing love letters to his wife Beatriz.	
Jason yelled, "It was you who broke and hid the vase."	

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Drafting

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Application

Reforming Strategies: Peer Assessment, Cooperative Learning

Reflection: "If the writer exists for any social good, his role is that of preserving in art those human values which can endure by confronting change." by Ralph Ellison

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.3 Uses creative writing styles to produce poems and other literary forms.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

\_\_\_ Recall (I)

\_\_\_ Skill/Process (II)

√ Strategic Thinking (III)

\_\_\_ Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	After guided reading of the peer review checklist, students will understand the uses of the checklist adequately.
Process	At the end of the written work, students will produce the first draft of their memoir in a legible form.
Attitude	Finished the activity of writing the first draft, students, as a group, will reflect on the process and how they felt when completing the task successfully.

Assessment Techniques:

- Essay, Draft
- Checklist

## Activities

### Initial

- Students discuss homework
- Students will be instructed on the importance of writing a first draft and how to use the Peer Review Checklist

### Development

- Using all the worksheets completed, students will write the first draft of the memoir

### Closure

- Students will participate in a class discussion about what they felt when writing their first draft

### Homework (Elaboration):

- Students re-read the Peer Review Checklist and evaluate their classmates' first draft.

Materials/ Resources: Memoir worksheets, paper, Peer Review Checklist, pencil, pen

### First Draft

Using all the worksheets you have completed write the first draft of your memoir. Remember to include as many details and adjectives possible. You want your audience to “see” what you are telling them. Also, use the sentences with the poetic devices you have practiced and include a reflection at the end.

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Give your first draft to a classmate for peer review. Use the **Peer Review Checklist** to check your classmate's first draft.

### Peer Review Checklist

I have checked for...

	paragraph indentation	I really liked...
	capitalized words	
	correct punctuation	
	misspelled words	
	use of poetic devices	You can improve...  by
	use of adjectives	
	specific details	
	final reflection	
Revised by:		

### **Additional Activities**

The following activities are variations or alternatives that can be used during the third week of implementing the Curricular Unit. These could be utilized as homework, special assignments, or as part of the daily classroom lessons.

1. With the help of the school's librarian teacher, students research Educational Technology and write an informative composition of approximately 200 words, about the benefits of using it at school and in the English classroom. They can send their compositions to be published in the local newspaper and/or in an educational web site.
2. Students use the skills they learned about computers and Movie Maker to give a mini technology workshop to younger students at their school.
3. Students type their drafts and e-mail them to their classmates and teacher for peer review and feedback, or they could publish them online if the class has a blog or web page.
4. Students survey fellow students in their school by grades to determine the different family compositions present in their community. The data could be used to educate students on tolerance and acceptance of people and their family's differences and uniqueness.
5. Students read an additional short memoir, discuss it, and paraphrase its final reflection.

#### **Week 4: Almost There**

During the final week of the Curricular Unit, students will work on writing their memoir's second draft and evaluating their classmates' with the Peer Review Checklist. They will also work on writing and selecting a memoir title, as well as draw or find an illustration to accompany their written work.

In addition, students will work on making and assembling their Digital Memoir presentation and sharing it with their classmates. At the end of the process, the students' presentations are evaluated by their peers with the help of the Presentation Checklist and by the teacher with the Presentation Scoring Rubric.

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Drafting

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Application

Reforming Strategies: Fine Arts Integration, Peer Assessment

Reflection: "A writer should not talk, a writer should write." by Ann Petry

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.3 Uses creative writing styles to produce poems and other literary forms.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

\_\_\_ Recall (I)

\_\_\_ Skill/Process (II)

√ Strategic Thinking (III)

\_\_\_ Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	After writing the first draft of their memoir, students will list possible titles adequately.
Process	After having written the first draft of their memoir, students will produce the second draft of their memoirs and make an illustration related to their memoir successfully.
Attitude	Finished writing their second draft, students will successfully reflect on how they felt having their draft evaluated by a peer by writing a one minute paper.

### Assessment Techniques:

- Graphic Organizer
- Illustration
- Essay, Draft
- Checklist
- One Minute Paper

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students will discuss the importance of revising and editing

#### Development

- Students will use their first draft and Peer Review Checklist to write their second draft

#### Closure

- A different classmate will evaluate the second draft using the Peer Review Checklist

#### Homework (Elaborate):

- Students will brainstorm four possible memoir titles
- Students will look for or draw an illustration to accompany their memoir

Materials/ Resources: paper, Peer Review Checklist, pencil, pen

## Second Draft

Work on improving your first draft using your Peer Review Checklist as a guide. You can add details to make your second draft more complete. Have another classmate review it using the same checklist.

Once you have your second draft ready and reviewed begin thinking of a title and illustrations/pictures to go with your memoir.

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<b>Possible Titles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
<b>Drawing/Picture/Illustration</b>	

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Digital Memoir

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Application

Reforming Strategies: Integration of Technology, Peer Assessment

Reflection:

“To do something together without a whole lot of jealousy or envy, we’ve got to keep our eyes on something bigger than us.” by Cornel west

Content Standard	Expectation
Writing	W.12.3 Uses creative writing styles to produce poems and other literary forms.

Depth of Knowledge Level:

\_\_\_\_\_ Recall (I)

\_\_\_\_\_ Skill/Process (II)

\_\_\_\_\_ Strategic Thinking (III)

  ✓   Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	While reading their memoirs, students will successfully evaluate their own writing with a checklist.
Process	Given enough practice with Movie Maker computer program, students will make a short video clip successfully.
Attitude	At the end of the lesson, students will reflect on the process of working on the Digital Memoir Class Anthology successfully.

Assessment Techniques:

- Special Project
- Checklist



## Activities

### Initial

- Students review and discuss the Digital Memoir Checklist

### Development

- Students work on making the Class Anthology by using Movie Maker. While some record the narrations, others type their memoirs into the presentation, and others work on scanning the drawings into digital form
- Students use the Digital Memoir Checklist to make sure their work is complete
- Classmates make sure each Digital Memoir is complete and watch out for any corrections that need to be made

### Closure

- Digital Editors make sure each memoir has a title and one illustration, as well as that the Anthology has a table of contents with the memoir titles and the authors' names

### Homework (Elaboration):

- Students write a short reflection about working on the Digital Memoir process

Materials/ Resources: computer with Movie Maker program, digital projector, computer microphone, digital scanner, Digital Memoir Checklist, pencil, pen

## Digital Memoir Class Anthology

The memoir is to be turned into a short video clip using the Movie Maker computer program, during no more than three minutes each. The video clip should include the memoir title, the digitalized illustration, the text, and the voice recording of the students narrating their own memoirs.

Two or three students are appointed Digital Editors. They make sure that every student has a short video clip, that each digital memoir has a title and at least one drawing/illustration, and that the voice recordings are working. The Digital Editor also makes sure that the whole class anthology has a cover slide and a table of contents with the memoir titles and authors' names.

## Digital Memoir Anthology Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure your Digital Memoir is complete.

<b>I worked hard and now my Digital Memoir ...</b>	
	Has been peer reviewed by two different classmates.
	Includes correct types of transition words.
	If free of grammar, syntax, and spelling errors.
	Has a title that fits the event and details.
	Has at least one picture/illustration/drawing that fits the events and details.
	Is no longer than three minutes.
	Has a clear voice recording of the text narration.
	Has legible text in a presentation appropriate size and font.

## Lesson Plan

Topic: Digital Memoir

Strategy: ECA

Phase: Application

Reforming Strategies: Self Assessment, Peer Assessment, Integration of Technology

Reflection: “No one does it alone.” by Oprah Winfrey

Content Standard	Expectation
Listening/Speaking	L/S.12.5 Analyzes and explains the main idea or topic and important details from learned concepts or readings from a variety of persuasive texts; summarizes. Evaluates, and judges effectiveness of the text, performance, speech, or literature.

Depth of Knowledge Level

\_\_\_ Recall (I)

\_\_\_ Skill/Process (II)

\_\_\_ Strategic Thinking (III)

√ Extended Thinking (IV)

Objectives	
Conceptual	Before beginning the Class Anthology presentations, students will review the Peer Feedback sheet and scoring rubric successfully.
Process	After completing their Movie Maker project, students will present their Digital Memoir Class Anthology clearly.
Attitude	Finished the activity of presenting the Digital Memoir Class Anthology, students will contribute feedback for their classmates’ presentation with the Peer Feedback sheet successfully.

### Assessment Techniques:

- Special Project
- Scoring Rubric
- Peer Feedback sheet

### Activities

#### Initial

- Students review the Peer Feedback sheet and scoring rubric

#### Development

- Students present their Digital Memoir Class Anthology

#### Closure

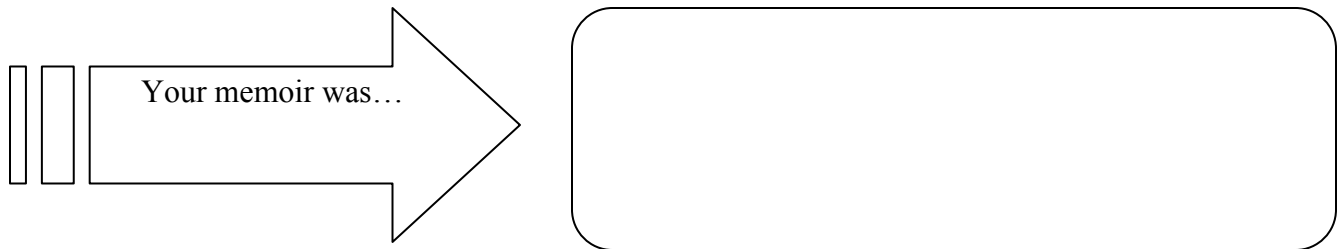
- Students' presentations are evaluated by their peers with the Peer Feedback sheet
- Students' presentations are evaluated by the teacher using a scoring rubric

Materials/ Resources: computer with Movie Maker program, digital projector, Digital Memoir

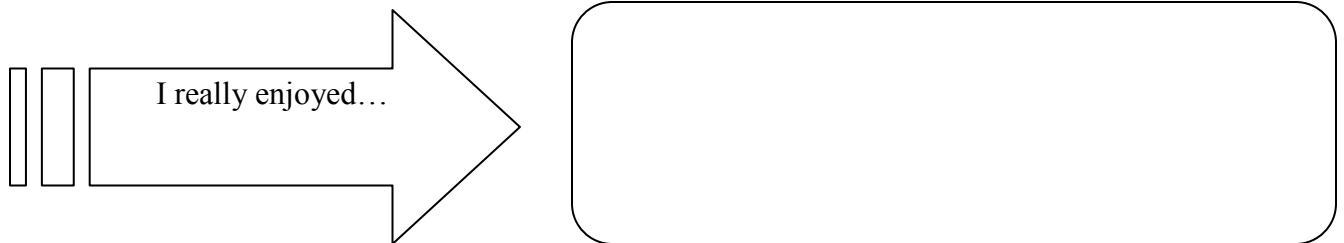
Scoring Rubric, Peer Feedback sheet, pencil, pen

## Peer Feedback

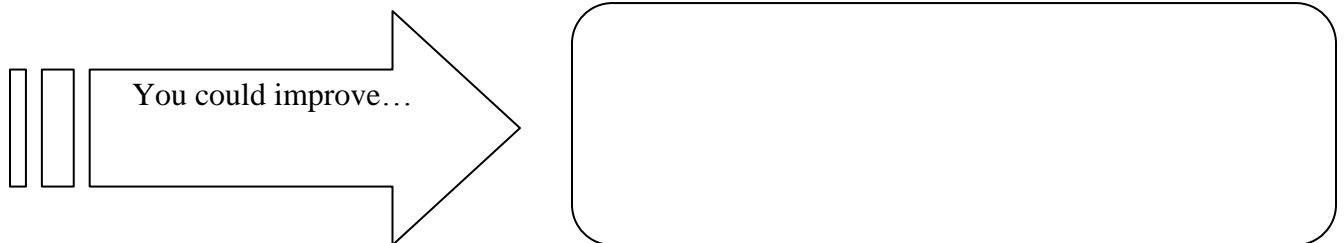
Use this sheet to provide feedback to your classmate about their Digital Memoir presentation. Remember to use constructive criticism and let them know what you liked and enjoyed more about their memoir and Digital Presentation. You could also write additional suggestions for them to better their writing.



Your memoir was...



I really enjoyed...



You could improve...

## Digital Memoir Scoring Rubric

A score of 1 indicates that more effort is needed and that there is little or no evidence of the stated criteria; a score of 3 indicates that your work is on track and that you have achieved average accomplishment of the criteria; and a score of 5 indicates full, elaborate, and exemplary achievement of the criteria.

	Evaluation Criteria	Possible Points					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Memoir</b>	<b>Details</b> -memoir contains evidence of elaborated details, puts the reader there, shows rather than tells. You have used adjectives and other techniques to create a lively piece of writing.						x4
	<b>Theme</b> - memoir offers creative connections and holds together as a piece of nonfiction. Talks about your particular situation and reveals your feelings about it, as well as a final reflection. The memoir has a title that fits it.						x2
	<b>Mechanics</b> - spelling is excellent. Capitals and punctuations are used well. Your errors don't interfere with the reading of the piece. Transitions were used correctly.						x3
	<b>Draft</b> -the student turned in two drafts, and feedback was received.						x4
<b>Movie Maker Presentation</b>	<b>Time</b> - video clip is no longer than 3 minutes.						x1
	<b>Illustration</b> - there is at least one drawing/illustration that accompanies the memoir; it fits the theme and events narrated.						x1
	<b>Voice</b> - voice recording is clear and audible. The student narrates his/ her memoir with good intonation and tone of voice.						x2
	<b>Audience</b> - the movie clip delivers an overall impact. Memoir and video clip kept audience interested and entertained.						x3
	<b>Comments:</b>						<b>Total ____/100</b>
						<b>Final Grade</b>	

\*\*Scoring rubric was adapted from *New Directions in Teaching Memoirs: A Studio Workshop Approach* (Kirby & Kirby, 2007).

### **Additional Activities**

The following activities are variations or alternatives that can be used during the fourth week of implementing the Curricular Unit. These could be utilized as homework, special assignments, or as part of the daily classroom lessons.

1. Students divide into groups to draw an illustration that represents all of their memoirs.

Once the illustrations are completed, students vote on the one they like best and they feel represents their memoirs collectively to serve as the cover of the students' Digital Memoir Class Anthology.

2. Students write a reflective journal about the process of writing their memoir. Students use the journal to identify the strengths and difficulties they have as writers, as well as come up with ideas and solutions to better their craft.

3. Students employ the writing process once again to write a second memoir. Students could also employ the writing process to complete any other writing, like a persuasive essay or a creative writing task like a short story or poem.

4. Students invite other groups of students, their own family, and friends to attend the presentation of their Digital Memoir Class Anthology and celebrate their finished work.

5. \*Students record videos of them reading or performing their memoirs to present as part of their Digital Memoir Class Anthology.

\*Keep in mind that if the students are going to be photographed or recorded parents need to sign a consent form allowing it, especially if the images are going to be published (in print or electronically) and the students' faces are visible

## **Chapter VI: Conclusions and Recommendations**

The purpose of this research project was to explore and develop a unit that integrates technology and memoirs. This study may help school English teachers, college professors, and those who teach or are interested in teaching English, as well as those who are interested in technology use in the classroom, or memoir reading and writing as a form of developing students' literacy skills. The case study findings helped develop a curriculum aimed at Puerto Rican high school English students which consists of memoir reading and writing and technology integration in the classroom.

### **Summary of Findings**

This study examined the following questions:

1. How do high school students in Puerto Rico use technology in and outside the classroom?
2. What reading and writing skills are challenging for high school students in Puerto Rico?
3. What innovative strategies can be integrated to the English curriculum to meet high school level writing and reading content standards in Puerto Rico?

This section summarizes the main findings for each one of the three research questions.

### **Research Question # 1: How do high school students in Puerto Rico use technology in and outside the classroom?**

The data elicited through classroom observations shows that students do not have the opportunity or the resources and equipment to use technology in the classroom. However, they do have access to technology and equipment related to different types of technology at home.

Nevertheless, students do not use these types of technologies for educational purposes. They use them to socialize and to communicate with others in a very informal setting. Thus, educators could benefit from the fact that students come to their classrooms with technological



skills that could be translated into educational practices. For instance, develop units that incorporate the uses of technology such as the digital memoir unit designed for the purpose of this study.

## **Research Question # 2: What reading and writing skills are challenging for high school students in Puerto Rico?**

### **Reading Skills**

The data shows that they had difficulties distinguishing a fact from an opinion. This is relevant in the design of a unit that incorporates reading because this is one of the expectations of the English content standards for high school students. This is also a basic reading skill that needs to be addressed at every level because students need to be able to recontextualize in their other content courses in order to understand a reading and give an opinion based on facts.

Students also had difficulties identifying main ideas and recalling details from a reading. The needs assessment indicated that they had difficulties identifying main ideas. Items nine and six of the reading needs assessment dealt with identifying if a sentence from the assigned text was a fact or an opinion. A total of 2 of the students got item six incorrect, while 4 answered item nine wrongly. Item seven asked for the students to choose the main idea of the short memoir from a multiple choice exercise; 3 of the participating students answered this item wrong.

On the other hand, items five and ten dealt with interpreting and identifying specific details from the text. 3 of the students answered item five wrong and item ten was answered incorrectly by 2 of the participating students. These are also skills that are part of the English content standards for high school students. These skills are also necessary to be successful when reading and understanding texts at other levels.

### **Writing**

The specific group of students that participated in the study were able to write about a personal narrative and organize their ideas in a coherent manner. However, they had a very difficult time with their mechanics and grammar. This made it difficult to understand some of their writing. One of the expectations of the English writing standard emphasizes the need to understand and use effectively grammar rules and mechanics.

The data elicited shows that students needed more grammar instruction such as the use of pronouns and verb tenses in terms of their writing skills. These are some of the grammar rules that affect the ability to communicate effectively in writing. Educators should develop writing exercise that emphasize the uses of grammar rules and not see grammar as an isolated item.

**Research Question # 3: What innovative strategies can be integrated to the English curriculum to meet high school level writing and reading content standards in Puerto Rico?**

**Cooperative Learning:** The students that participated in this study always found themselves gravitating toward their classmates when it was time to work, even though the teacher never once asked them to do so. Students helped each other and worked cooperatively on the tasks they were assigned. Educators should take advantage of this and develop materials and lessons that facilitate cooperative learning amongst students.

**Writing About Personal Narratives:** The strategy of starting to write from what the student already knows and likes is effective. Students will feel more capable and willing to write about something they know than to write about a topic they know nothing about or bores them. Personal narratives are a good way to start getting students accustomed to the writing process, develop their skills, and help them transition into more academic writing.

**Using Technology:** Students come to school and their classrooms with technological knowledge; they acquire it at home because it is there that they have more access to technology equipment. Although they commonly use that knowledge to socialize and communicate with friends, educators can turn it around and use it for educational purposes.

Allowing the student to interact and use technology in their classrooms will give them the opportunity of using their technological knowledge and skills, while at the same time acquire other academic skills necessary for their success in educational and professional settings.

### **Limitations**

As with any study or research there are limitations, this particular study encountered multiple limitations. One of the limitations encountered by this researcher was the time constraint; because of it, only one high school grade level was able to be actively involved in the data collection process.

Another limitation encountered is the fact that only 15 students handed in their consent forms out of 21 that were part of the group, and that three of those 15 students did not write the personal narrative for the writing needs assessment. This limited the study because information on all the students was not gathered and taken into consideration for the creation of the curricular unit.

Also, the fact that once designed, the curricular unit was not implemented is a limitation; this is due to time constraints on the researchers part and because the groups' regular English teacher only allowed a certain amount of time for the researcher to make observations and administer the needs assessments. However, the unit will serve as a guide for others who wish to implement units which have been designed based on student needs.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

Because of various limitations, time constraints being the most influential one, a variety of factors were not considered for this study. Students from only one twelve grade group participated; future research might include more groups of all high school grade levels or intermediate students to broaden the scope of the study.

Also, the areas of reading and writing were analyzed and taken into consideration; other researchers might want to include listening and speaking to have a better understanding of what skills students are lacking on every discipline of language.

For this study, students participated in completing reading and writing needs assessments. The results of these assessments were taken into consideration and helped with the developing of a curricular unit that was not implemented. Future researchers might also want to implement the curricular unit and support their study with post assessments.

In addition, future research could include the use of other literature genres in the development of the curricular unit because only short memoirs were taken into account for this study.

## **Final Thoughts**

The designing of a Curricular Unit is no easy task. Many steps have to be taken in order to ensure that it is complete and that the lessons are successful because the reading and writing skills students acquire through their educational journey will benefit them all of their lives. It is my hope, as researcher and developer of this Curricular Unit, that other educators get inspired by it and develop their own ESL materials to use in their classrooms; or at least use what is already created, just the way it is or edited to fit other students' educational needs and skills.

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## **Appendices**

### Appendix A

#### Carta al Director Escolar

A: Carlos Cubero

Director de la escuela Catalina Morales de Flores, Moca

De: Alexandra Tubéns La Salle

Estudiante de Maestría

Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez

Estimado Señor Cubero:

Mi nombre es Alexandra Tubéns La Salle y soy estudiante de maestría en educación en inglés (M.A.E.E.) en el Departamento de Inglés del Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez, en el Departamento de Inglés. Me dirijo a usted respetuosamente para solicitar conducir un estudio en la escuela Marcelino Rodríguez Román como parte de los requisitos del programa de Estudios Graduados para obtener el grado de maestría. El estudio se basará en investigar cómo y para que los estudiantes utilizan la tecnología. Además se determinará cuáles son las áreas de mayor dificultad en lectura y escritura en inglés. Como parte del estudio, se administrarán, a los estudiantes cuestionarios (uno socio-demográfico y otro sobre el uso tecnología), se harán observaciones etnográficas y los estudiantes completarán pre-pruebas de lectura y escritura en inglés.

Durante el proceso de investigación, la privacidad y el anonimato de los participantes serán protegidos ya que al comenzar el mismo se le asignarán seudónimos al azar a cada uno

de los participantes. Ningún nombre será revelado a la luz pública y será esta servidora la única que tendrá acceso a estos documentos. Los mismos serán destruidos una vez culmine la investigación y la misma sea aprobada. Cabe señalar que este proceso es totalmente voluntario y si el estudiante no desea participar del mismo no será penalizado o sancionado académicamente. Una vez comenzado el estudio el estudiante podrá retirarse si así lo desea. El estudiante no será remunerado de ninguna manera por participar en este estudio. De igual manera el estudiante no sufrirá ningún daño, ni físico o emocional por participar en este estudio.

Cualquier pregunta que surja después de haber leído este documento será contestada gustosamente.

Puede comunicarse conmigo por correo electrónico: [alexandra.tubens@upr.edu](mailto:alexandra.tubens@upr.edu).

Gracias anticipadas por su colaboración,

Alexandra Tubéns La Salle

## Appendix B

### Carta a la Maestra de Inglés

A: Maestra de inglés, escuela Catalina Morales de Flores, Moca

De: Alexandra Tubéns La Salle

Estudiante de Maestría

Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez

Estimada Señora. Rodríguez:

Mi nombre es Alexandra Tubéns La Salle y soy estudiante de maestría en educación en inglés (M.A.E.E.) en el Departamento de Inglés del Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez, en el Departamento de Inglés. Me dirijo a usted respetuosamente para solicitar conducir un estudio en su salón de clases como parte de los requisitos del programa de Estudios Graduados para obtener el grado de maestría. El estudio se basará en investigar cómo y para que los estudiantes utilizan la tecnología. Además se determinará cuáles son las áreas de mayor dificultad en lectura y escritura en inglés. Como parte del estudio, se administrará a los estudiantes cuestionarios (uno socio-demográfico y otro sobre el uso de tecnología), se harán observaciones etnográficas y los estudiantes completarán dos pre-pruebas de lectura y escritura en inglés.

Durante el proceso de investigación, la privacidad y el anonimato de los participantes serán protegidos ya que al comenzar el mismo se le asignarán seudónimos al azar a cada uno de los participantes. Ningún nombre será revelado a la luz pública y será esta servidora la única que tendrá acceso a estos documentos. Los mismos serán destruidos una vez culmine la investigación y la misma sea aprobada. Cabe señalar que este proceso es totalmente

voluntario y si el estudiante no desea participar del mismo no será penalizado o sancionado académicamente. Una vez comenzado el estudio el estudiante podrá retirarse si así lo desea. El estudiante no será remunerado de ninguna manera por participar en este estudio. De igual manera el estudiante no sufrirá ningún daño, ni físico o emocional por participar en este estudio.

Cualquier pregunta que surja después de haber leído este documento será contestada gustosamente.

Puede comunicarse conmigo por correo electrónico:alexandra.tubens@upr.edu.

Gracias anticipadas por su cooperación,

Alexandra Tubéns La Salle

## Appendix C

Hoja de Consentimiento a Padres

Digital Memoir Class Anthology

A: Padres de la escuela Catalina Morales de Flores, Moca

De: Alexandra Tubéns La Salle

Estudiante de Maestría

Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez

Estimados Padres:

Mi nombre es Alexandra Tubéns La Salle y soy estudiante de maestría (M.A.E.E.) en el Departamento de Inglés del Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez. Me dirijo a ustedes ya que conduciré un estudio en la escuela Catalina Morales de Flores, como parte de los requisitos del programa de Estudios Graduados para obtener el grado de maestría. El estudio se basará en investigar cómo y para qué los estudiantes utilizan la tecnología. Además se determinarán cuáles son las áreas de mayor dificultad en lectura y escritura en inglés. Como parte del estudio, se administrarán cuestionarios (uno socio-demográfico y el otro sobre uso de la tecnología), se harán observaciones etnográficas y los estudiantes completarán pre-pruebas de lectura y escritura en inglés.

Durante el proceso de investigación, la privacidad y el anonimato de los estudiantes de este estudio será protegida ya que al comenzar el mismo se le asignarán seudónimos al azar a cada uno de ellos. Ningún nombre será revelado a la luz pública y será esta servidora la

única que tendrá acceso a estos documentos. Los mismos serán destruidos una vez culmine la investigación y la misma sea aprobada. Cabe señalar que este proceso es totalmente voluntario y si el estudiante no desea participar del mismo no será penalizado de ninguna manera. Cualquier pregunta que surja después de haber leído este documento será contestada gustosamente.

Gracias anticipadas por su colaboración,

Alexandra Tubéns La Salle

Padre:

Autorizo a mi hijo/a participar de este estudio.

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

No autorizo a mi hijo/a participar de este estudio.

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Hoja de Consentimiento a Estudiantes

#### Digital Memoir Class Anthology

A: Estudiantes de la escuela Catalina Morales de Flores, Moca

De: Alexandra Tubéns La Salle

Estudiante de Maestría

Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez

Estimados Estudiantes:

Mi nombre es Alexandra Tubéns La Salle y soy estudiante de maestría (M.A.E.E.) en el Departamento de Inglés del Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez. Me dirijo a ustedes ya que conduciré un estudio en la escuela Catalina Morales de Flores, como parte de los requisitos del programa de Estudios Graduados para obtener el grado de maestría. El estudio se basará en investigar cómo y para qué los estudiantes utilizan la tecnología. Además se determinarán cuáles son las áreas de mayor dificultad en lectura y escritura en inglés. Como parte del estudio, se administrarán cuestionarios (uno socio-demográfico y el otro sobre uso de la tecnología), se harán observaciones etnográficas y los estudiantes completarán pre-pruebas de lectura y escritura en inglés.

Durante el proceso de investigación, la privacidad y el anonimato de los estudiantes de este estudio será protegida ya que al comenzar el mismo se le asignarán seudónimos al azar a cada uno de ellos. Ningún nombre será revelado a la luz pública y será esta servidora la



única que tendrá acceso a estos documentos. Los mismos serán destruidos una vez culmine la investigación y la misma sea aprobada. Cabe señalar que este proceso es totalmente voluntario y si el estudiante no desea participar del mismo no será penalizado de ninguna manera. Cualquier pregunta que surja después de haber leído este documento será contestada gustosamente.

Gracias anticipadas por su colaboración,

Alexandra Tubéns La Salle

Estudiante:

Participaré en el estudio.

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

No intereso participar en este estudio.

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix E  
Technology Survey

Edad: \_\_\_\_\_ Género: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrucciones: Completa el cuestionario en su totalidad. Puedes escoger más de una alternativa para contestar las preguntas.

1. ¿Posees computadora?

\_\_\_\_\_ portátil (laptop)

\_\_\_\_\_ de escritorio (desktop)

\_\_\_\_\_ NO

2. ¿Tienes acceso a internet?

No \_\_\_\_\_

Si \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ en casa

\_\_\_\_\_ en la escuela

\_\_\_\_\_ otro lugar      ¿Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Han utilizado tus pasados maestros de inglés tecnología en el salón de clases? Por ejemplo: Power Points, internet, tec.

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

4. ¿Algún otro maestro utiliza tecnología en el salón de clases?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

5. ¿Tienes acceso a equipos tecnológicos en el salón de clases?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

¿A cuál o cuáles?

6. ¿Tienes acceso a equipos tecnológicos en la escuela?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

¿A cuál o cuáles?

7. ¿Tienes acceso a equipos tecnológicos en tu casa?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

¿A cuál o cuáles?

8. ¿Utiliza tu maestra de inglés tecnología en el salón de clases?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

Explica cómo

9. ¿Crees que utilizar tecnología te ayuda a aprender inglés?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

¿Cómo?

10. ¿Con qué propósito(s) utilizas tecnología? Por ejemplo: juegos de video, leer, redes sociales :Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, otros

11. ¿Qué idioma (s) utilizas cuando usas tecnología?

\_\_\_\_\_ inglés

\_\_\_\_\_ español

\_\_\_\_\_ otro (s) \_\_\_\_\_

12. ¿Con cuánta frecuencia utilizas tecnología en tu casa?

\_\_\_\_\_ mucha

\_\_\_\_\_ regular

\_\_\_\_\_ poca

\_\_\_\_\_ ninguna

13. ¿Con cuánta frecuencia utilizas tecnología en tu salón de inglés?

\_\_\_\_\_ mucha

\_\_\_\_\_ regular

\_\_\_\_\_ poca

\_\_\_\_\_ ninguna

## Appendix F

### Reading Needs Assessment

“My Name” from *Experiencing Adolescence as Tantalus* by Emma Funk

I looked up my name once. It means “universal.” Usual. Typical. Boring. Like paste, useful, but overly sticky and funny-smelling. Tacky- like a carnation. My name is an ugly red mug from an office Christmas party. Functional- like pea gravel. When I was little, I wanted to be named Eleanor. Like the first lady, something strong and elegant, like a tiara. Back then, I loved the color pink. Things change.

My mom told me I was going to be named Graham if I was a boy. Like the cracker. I like Graham better. She also told me she wanted me to be Grace or Iris. Yesterday I walked into a room without opening the door. Grace is not the name for me. Iris is wrong too. It is tall, slender, delicate and purple. I am a traffic cone. I am not quiet, or dainty or feminine. I do not own a dress.

My name did not set me up for success. I wasn't named after anyone. I saw in *Time* once that Emma was the most popular name in England. I was one of the many. Apparently Jane Austen's *Emma* was written so no one would like the protagonist. When I wasn't universally ordinary, I was unlikable. I'd never liked the name anyway.

Then I started German class. The teacher saw my name and was surprised. He said that I should have kept my name instead of choosing a German one for class. I didn't know Emma was German. I used to think of Germany: guttural language, lederhosen, and potatoes. But I love the language, and now I am special. Singular. Sensational. Now I accept my name. It is a mask of putty, hiding the color and intricacies below. Simple, but enigmatic.

## Reading Comprehension

1. Does the narrator like her name at the beginning of the story?
  - a. yes
  - b. no
  - c. I can't tell
2. What does her name mean?
  - a. ugly
  - b. universal
  - c. delicate
3. What does the author compare her name to?
  - a. the universe
  - b. a carnation
  - c. potatoes
4. What name did she want when she was little?
  - a. Emma
  - b. Eleanor
  - c. Grace
5. What do the lines "Back then, I loved the color pink. Things change." mean?
  - a. She still likes the same things as when she was little.
  - b. She does not like the same things as when she was little.
  - c. She does not care about the things she liked when she was little.
6. Is the line "Apparently Jane Austen's *Emma* was written so no one would like the protagonist." a fact or an opinion?
  - a. fact
  - b. opinion
7. What is the main idea of the text?
  - a. Names are usually not important.
  - b. Names can make you feel special or common.
  - c. Names can be passed down from generation to generation.
8. Why can't her name be Iris?
  - a. Because she is neither quiet nor feminine.
  - b. Because she does not like that name.
  - c. Because she prefers the name Graham instead.

9. Is the line “I used to think of Germany: guttural language, lederhosen, and potatoes.” A fact or an opinion?
- a. fact
  - b. opinion
10. Which line can be considered as evidence the narrator is now more comfortable with her name?
- a. “I was one of the many.”
  - b. “I wasn’t named after anyone.”
  - c. “But I love the language, and now I am special.”





## Appendix H

Rubric for Evaluating Writing Prompt

Criteria	1 Unacceptable	2 Minimally acceptable	3 Proficient	4 Advanced	Score
Content	Central idea/purpose is not stated; content is erroneous or irrelevant.	Central idea/purpose is stated; content is accurate but not always relevant.	Central idea/purpose is clearly stated; content is accurate and relevant.	Central idea/purpose is vividly stated; content is accurate, thorough, and directly on point.	
Organization	Little or no structure present. Presentation is confusing to the audience; no logical sequence of ideas; frequently off topic.	Identifiable structure is present but not consistently executed; may contain several statements out of place and occasionally deviate from topic.	Identifiable structure is present and consistently executed with few statements out of place.	Identifiable structure is presented in a purposeful interesting, effective sequence and remains focused.	
Language	Grammar and/or word choice are severely deficient.	Isolated errors in grammar and/or word choice reduce clarity and credibility.	Presentation is free of serious errors in grammar and/or word usage.	Presentation is free of errors in grammar; word choice aids clarity and vividness.	
Adaptation to Assignment Requirements	Composition does not adhere to important aspects of the assignment.	Composition adheres to all but a single guideline or constraint.	Composition adheres to all aspects of the assignment.	Composition meets or exceeds all aspects of the assignment.	
Comments:					Total ____

\*Rubric adapted from the *Sample Written Communication Rubric* of the PRDE Content

Standards and Grade Level Expectations, 2007.

## Appendix I

### Observation Protocol

1. How is the classroom arranged?
2. What technology equipment is available for students? Does it work?
3. Are there books and other reading materials available for use?
4. Do students use the technology available?
5. How is the interaction between student and text?
6. How is the interaction between student and teacher?
7. How is the interaction between students?
8. How do the students go about the writing process?

Appendix J

Survey for Students

Edad: \_\_\_\_\_ Género: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrucciones: Contesta el cuestionario en su totalidad. Puedes escoger más de una alternativa al contestar las preguntas.

1. ¿Has vivido fuera de Puerto Rico o en un país donde se habla inglés?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

Si contestó si, ¿Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_ ¿Por cuánto tiempo? \_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Te consideras bilingüe (español e inglés)?

Si \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Qué piensas de tu clase de inglés?

\_\_\_\_\_ divertida

\_\_\_\_\_ entretenida

\_\_\_\_\_ aburrida

\_\_\_\_\_ importante

\_\_\_\_\_ otro \_\_\_\_\_

4. ¿Qué es lo más difícil para ti en la clase de inglés?

\_\_\_\_\_ leer

\_\_\_\_\_ escribir

\_\_\_\_\_ hablar

\_\_\_\_\_ escuchar

\_\_\_\_\_ otro \_\_\_\_\_

5. En la clase de inglés, ¿cuál o cuáles son tus fortalezas?

\_\_\_ leer

\_\_\_ escribir

\_\_\_ hablar

\_\_\_ escuchar

\_\_\_ otro \_\_\_\_\_

6. ¿Cuál o cuáles son las partes más difíciles de la sección de inglés en las Pruebas Puertorriqueñas ?

\_\_\_ leer

\_\_\_ escribir

\_\_\_ escuchar

\_\_\_ otro \_\_\_\_\_

7. ¿De qué tema(s) te gustaría leer en la clase de inglés?

\_\_\_ deportes

\_\_\_ amistad

\_\_\_ problemática social

\_\_\_ oficios/carreras

\_\_\_ fantasía

\_\_\_ otro(s) \_\_\_\_\_

8. ¿Lees por diversión o entretenimiento?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

9. Si contestó si, ¿En qué idioma(s) lees por diversión o entretenimiento?

\_\_\_ inglés

\_\_\_ español

\_\_\_ Otro(s) \_\_\_\_\_

10. ¿Qué te gusta leer?

\_\_\_ libros

\_\_\_ periódicos

\_\_\_ cómicas

\_\_\_ revistas

\_\_\_ fuentes electrónicas

\_\_\_ otro(s) \_\_\_\_\_

11. ¿Cuánta escritura has hecho en tus clases de inglés?

\_\_\_ mucha

\_\_\_ regular

\_\_\_ poca

\_\_\_ ninguna

12. ¿Escribes por diversión o entretenimiento?

Si \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

13. Si contestó si, ¿En qué idioma(s) escribes por diversión o entretenimiento?

\_\_\_ inglés

\_\_\_ español

\_\_\_ otro(s) \_\_\_\_\_

14. ¿Qué escribes por diversión o entretenimiento?

\_\_\_\_\_ poesía

\_\_\_\_\_ cuentos cortos

\_\_\_\_\_ canciones

\_\_\_\_\_ otro(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix K

### Lesson Planning Policy Letter



**ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO DE PUERTO RICO**

**DEPARTAMENTO DE EDUCACIÓN**

#### **Oficina del Secretario**

22 de julio de 2010

#### **CARTA CIRCULAR NÚM. 2-2010-2011**

Subsecretarios, Secretario Asociado de Educación Especial, Secretarios Auxiliares, Directora Ejecutiva del Instituto de Capacitación Administrativa y Asesoramiento a Escuelas, Director del Instituto para el Desarrollo Profesional del Maestro, Directores de Oficinas, Programas y Divisiones, Directores de las Regiones Educativas, Superintendentes de Escuelas, Superintendentes Auxiliares, Superintendentes Auxiliares de Título I, Facilitadores Docentes, Directores de Escuelas, Maestros

#### **PLANIFICACIÓN DEL PROCESO DE APRENDIZAJE**

La planificación del proceso de aprendizaje es una actividad inherente al rol docente. Constituye un espacio de transición en el que se articulan las metodologías pedagógicas del maestro y las condiciones particulares de la tarea. Es la previsión de las actividades y los recursos para el logro de los objetivos conceptuales (conceptos), procedimentales (procesos,

estándares y expectativas) y actitudinales (valores y actitudes) que se desean alcanzar. Se ubica entre la reflexión y la acción, y puede ser una vía para garantizar el cumplimiento de los principios de orden y sistematización del aprendizaje. Incluye procedimientos y prácticas que tienen como objetivo concretar las intenciones pedagógicas determinadas en el currículo y adecuarlas a la particularidad de cada escuela y situación docente. Ofrece, además, un marco institucional visible que organice el trabajo escolar.

El éxito de la gestión educativa depende, en gran medida, de una planificación efectiva, coherente y progresiva. Brinda mayor coherencia funcional racionalizando las tareas, preparando el material, revisando los contenidos y anticipando situaciones. Permite, además: evitar la improvisación y reducir la incertidumbre y las actuaciones contradictorias, unificar criterios racionalizando las tareas del docente, garantizar el uso racional del tiempo lectivo y coordinar la participación de todos los recursos involucrados. Además, es una función esencial e ineludible del maestro.

La planificación facilita el desarrollo de los contenidos programáticos y la organización de los procesos de aprendizaje que serán desarrollados en una jornada. En ésta, se plasma de manera concreta y directa la interacción de los temas transversales con los contenidos, las actividades (inicio, desarrollo y cierre) y el avalúo. Estas actividades deben ir dirigidas hacia el desarrollo de los cuatro niveles de pensamiento: memorístico, de procesamiento, estratégico y extendido.

El plan diario de clase es un documento oficial de trabajo. Además, sirve de guía para la elaboración de las pruebas. En el plan diario se presentan los objetivos que serán medidos en la prueba.



La planificación sirve como evidencia de la labor docente que el maestro realiza y forma parte de su evaluación profesional. Siendo un documento oficial, debe estar accesible en todo momento y cuando los funcionarios administrativos lo requieran. Su formato debe contener, como mínimo, los siguientes elementos:

1. Fecha y Tema de estudio
2. Estrategia General y Fase:
  - a. ECA: Exploración, Conceptualización, Aplicación
  - b. Trilogía de Lectoescritura: Antes, Durante, Después
  - c. Ciclos de Aprendizaje: Enfocar, Explorar, Reflexionar, Aplicar
3. Integración con otras materias
4. Estándares y expectativas de las materias
5. Nivel de profundidad del conocimiento en el que se desarrolla la expectativa
6. Objetivos: dirigidos a desarrollar
  - Conceptos, principios, datos, hechos (conceptuales)
  - Procesos, habilidades, estrategias, destrezas (procedimentales)
  - Actitudes, valores, normas (actitudinales)
7. Avalúo: debe estar relacionado con los tres objetivos y contener indicadores de logros
8. Secuencia de actividades (diversas, estimulantes, motivadoras). Las actividades deben estar dirigidas a promover el enfoque constructivista.
  - Inicio: Su propósito es enfocar a los estudiantes en la lección del día, estableciendo actividades que sirvan de motivación e interés hacia el aprendizaje. Incluye la reflexión diaria, introducción de ideas y objetivos del aprendizaje,

repasso breve de la clase anterior, discusión de asignaciones, así como las expectativas respecto al quehacer del estudiante.

– Desarrollo: Su propósito es el logro de los objetivos a través de actividades pertinentes para los estudiantes, variadas (de acuerdo a las inteligencias múltiples) y estimulantes (para que provoquen curiosidad y deseos de seguir aprendiendo).

– Cierre pedagógico: Su propósito es determinar si se lograron los objetivos de aprendizaje. Busca la opinión del estudiante respecto al tema y actividades realizadas, con lo que se puede establecer la construcción de conocimiento que cada estudiante realizó (metacognición). Es fundamental, ya que de esto depende la planificación de la clase del día siguiente.

#### 9. Materiales o recursos

#### 10. Asignación: (opcional) recordando que existen tres tipos de asignaciones

– Práctica: para reforzar conceptos o procesos ya discutidos en clase

– Preparación: para exponer al estudiante a unos conceptos o procesos que serán discutidos en clase

– Elaboración: para facilitar la elaboración de conceptos y procesos relacionados con los ya discutidos en clase

#### 11. Reflexión sobre la praxis: actividad de reflexión del maestro sobre sus prácticas educativas

La planificación de actividades especiales (actividades culturales y/o excursiones, entre otras) deben realizarse siguiendo los debidos procesos de autorización y con evidencia de la planificación: antes, durante y después de la actividad.

Los planes de clase orientan la práctica educativa, por lo cual deben ser concebidos como documentos de carácter flexible, realistas y prácticos que se elaboran **día a día** y no como un conjunto de documentos meramente formalistas, descontextualizados o simplemente decorativos.

Este documento deroga la Carta Circular Num. 15-2008-2009 y cualquier otra disposición que esté en conflicto, parcial o totalmente con las normas aquí establecidas.

Cordialmente,

Jesús M. Rivera Sánchez, Ed. D.

Secretario Interino

## Appendix L

### Assessment Techniques

Targeted List	Review
Group Discussion	Illustration
Drama	Conceptual Map
Oral Report	Summary
Rubric	Interview
Debates	Project
Concrete Poems	Special Project
Games	Comic Strips
Acrostic Poem	Graphic Organizer
Reflective Diary	Portfolio
Essay, Draft	Quiz
Test	Other