

SASKATCHEWAN ACTION RESEARCH NETWORK

Title: The Benefits of Student Journaling After School Hours to Improve English Language Skills

Researcher's Name(s): Ron Mang

Contact E-mail(s): mangr@siast.sk.ca

Location of Project: SIAST Wascana, Regina

Summary of Outcomes:

Since the **criteria for success was:** “ Any increase in CLB level would be deemed a success over the 24 day period”
And, “would students see the journaling as useful or as a ;chore”:

- For the 15 students who completed their journals (sample journaling form available on request), both the initial & final assessment task test **showed an average increase of .75 CLB level increase in their listening CLB level . Six of the students increased their listening CLB level by a full one CLB level.**
- **Fourteen of the fifteen students felt the journaling experience helped improve their writing. All of the students viewed the journaling as a positive experience.**

Abstract:

- 15 LINC students were to journal the activities undertaken & time spent on each learning activity in each of the four skill areas(speaking/listening/reading & writing).
- This followed following completion of their five hours of formal ESL instruction in the LINC program at Wascana Campus SIAST.
- The journaling activity included a brief description of the LINC students' learning activities for a period of 24 days.

Question Posed:

Would the 15 students completing their journaling activities, as instructed, for the full 24 day period:

1) Show a measurable increase in the individual students CLB level? (For pragmatic purposes only listening would be tested).

2) How would the students feel about their journaling work? Would this be viewed as a positive step in their ESL development, or would it be viewed as a chore?

Method of Investigation:

Students were to journal after school hours on a daily basis, on the questions:

- Was journaling valuable in helping improve your ESL development?
- Please describe how journaling helped you?

Baseline for comparison

Initial assessment:

- Using testing; A Canadian Language Benchmarks 5-10 Listening Assessment Exit Task was given to the 15 LINC student in the study on May 20th/11. The results were recorded and used as a baseline for later comparison.
- Final assessment: A CLB 5-10 Listening Assessment Exit Task was given on June 17th/11. Results were compared to the initial results.
- Using interviews: All students were interviewed about their journaling experiences. Two questions were asked:
 - 1) Was journaling valuable in helping improve your ESL development?
 - 2) Please describe how journaling helped you?

Data collection techniques:

- Each participating student's CLB 5-10 Listening Assessment Exit Task Data was marked & the data was converted to a CLB level from a raw score. The conversion grid on page 24 of the CLB 5-10 Exit Assessment Tasks manual was used for this conversion.
- Each participating student was interviewed and asked two questions about their journaling experience.

Summary of Findings:

For the 15 students who completed their journals (see sample journaling form attached), both the initial & final assessment task test **showed an average increase of .75 CLB level increase in their listening CLB level . Six of the students increased their listening CLB level by a full one CLB level.**

Fourteen of the fifteen students felt the journaling experience helped improve their writing. All of the students viewed the journaling as a positive experience.

- Criteria for success: Any increase in CLB level would be deemed a success over the 24 day period.
- Recommendations: 1) In the next study all four skill levels could be tested.
 - 2) Study needs to take place over a longer period of time.

Reflection On or Implications for Practice:

- **Obstacles**
 - 1) Project was too broad in scope.
 - 2) Four of the fifteen ESL students didn't journal every day as required.
- **Positives/gains**
 - 1) Positive feeling about journaling after school.
 - 2) Measurable increase in CLB level.
 - 3) Reflective abilities after school journal comment (attached).
- **Next steps**
 - 1) Have students record only what they will be tested on. Next time it will be both reading and listening as these two skill areas can be tested in the most objective manner.
 - 2) Check every two or three days as to whether students are doing their journaling faithfully.