IHLA NEWSLETTER

International and Heritage Languages Association

IHLA school students ready backstage to perform at the 8th International Mother Language Day, in Edmonton, on February 19, 2011.

Spring is in the Air!

IHLA celebrated its 8th Annual International Mother Language Day on February 19, 2011, at the Italian Cultural Centre in Edmonton. Special guests offered their greetings and messages of support as well as appreciation for the work that IHLA community schools do for international and heritage languages and cultures in Edmonton and in Alberta.

The spring season has also seen IHLA present at the Languages Matters conference organized by the Institute for Innovation in Second Language Education (IISLE), which took place at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton, on February 18, 2011, and just this past weekend in Vancouver, as part of the Canadian Languages Association (CLA)

panel discussion on heritage Languages and Literacy at the Metropolis conference.

Spring sessions have already begun, and IHLA is happy to share the news that a new one-time grant was received from Alberta Education, which will enable IHLA to continue offering professional development sessions, and support for international and heritage language programs and resources, especially in the area of technology and standards.

Check out IHLA's activity calendar in this issue and plan to attend our sessions. They are offered free of charge and open to all teachers (IHLA members and non-members).

At our AGM we plan to adopt a final version of the Professional Standards for IHLA members.
Community members worked hard to edit the proposed standards that will be voted at the AGM.

Spring is in the air and so is the energy of IHLA schools.

Happy reading!

IHLA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MONDAY JUNE 6, 2011

6.1.11

IHLA members and special guests at the MLD 2011.

IHLA UPDATES

Even if quieter than usual, our IHLA office and community schools have been busy planning and arranging for a number of activities over the last few months. Since our last update in the winter issue of the IHLA Newsletter, IHLA has completed the following activities.

- On February 18, 2011 IHLA presented a session on technology at the "Languages Matters" conference, organized by IISLE, in Edmonton. The session had over 40 people in attendance and was very well received.
- On February 19, 2011 IHLA celebrated its 8th Annual International Mother Language Day at the Italian Cultural Centre, in Edmonton. Over 300 people attended the event. Special guests included: Mr. Hai Nguyen, from Heritage Canada, Mrs. Janice Sarich, MLA Edmonton-Decore, and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education and Bernard Bouska, Coordinator of CLA. Dr. Olenka Bilash also offered her inspiring speech in celebration of leaders and champions of language education around the world. Remember that we have already planned a new date for next year. Mark your calendars for the 9th Annual Celebration of MLD on Saturday, February 25, 2012 at the Italian Cultural Centre!

- On March 1, 2011 IHLA offered a preview of a special movie presentation entitled: Between Alex and Sasha. This 45-minute movie was made possible by the hard work of a Japanese student who visited a Russian family in Edmonton and lived in the community for over a year. Once back home, Shohei Miyajima宮島昇平, from Keio University, put together this story which ended up representing a slice of Canadian culture seen through the eyes of a foreign student. IHLA will be showing the movie as an introduction to the upcoming AGM, on Monday, June 6, 2011. Remember to register for our meeting.
- On March 22, 2011, IHLA conducted a community discussion on its Professional Standards. Eight IHLA member schools gathered together and reviewed the proposed standards which will be voted on at the upcoming AGM. To review the standards visit the IHLA blog at: http://ihlastandards.blogspot.com/
- On March 24, 2011, IHLA participated in a special panel on supporting literacy through heritage languages education at the Metropolis conference in Vancouver. IHLA's president, Josephine Pallard spoke on behalf of the association as part of the CLA panel presentation.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

The AudioPal, Voki and Google Map Session

IHLA is offering this special workshop on Tuesday, April 12, 2011 at the IHLA office. There are still a few openings so hurry and register by April 9, 2011 at:t: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/audiosAvatarsGoogle

The 9th Annual International Mother Language Day

Set your calendars for Saturday, February 25, 2012!

IHLA
ACTIVITIES

these are upcoming activities for the months of April to August 2011

april

june

august

12

AUDIO FILES, AVATARS AND GOOGLE MAPS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

This session focuses on guiding participants in learning how to set up audio files, use avatars and Google Map features to create interactive ideas for SL teachers.
Register at: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/audiosAvatarsGoogle

6 AGM

Attend the IHLA AGM. To register email us at edmontonihla@gmail.com

Important AGM items:

*   Viewing of the movie: "Between Alexander and Sasha"
*   Vote to adopt the IHLA Professional Standards
*   Vote on IHLA Constitution Changes
*   Annual Reports
*   9th MLD Planning

13-18

A special summer institute opportunity with great presenters and topics from assessment, planning, technology and much more.

Check the IHLA website for upcoming program details!

Vote on our IHLA poll page for topics and times for sessions on the institute.

SPECIAL INVITATION FOR LEADERS OF TOMORROW!
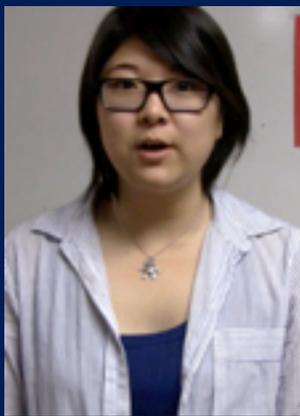
Are you an IHLA member school student?   Yes ◯

Are you in high school ?   Yes ◯

Do you wish to participate in a great leadership opportunity on behalf of your IHLA school?   Yes ◯

If you said yes to these questions, check out the new IHLA Mother Language Day Leadership Program! You will gain useful knowledge about becoming a leader and will run the next International Mother Language Day. This opportunity offers up to 45 hours of certified volunteer work. Email us at edmontonihla@gmail.com

Remember that only IHLA member schools and members in good standing can attend and vote at the upcoming AGM, on June 6, 2011.
Check with Leticia at the IHLA office to verify whether your school is in good standing!
Don't let membership fees stand in your way! This is a distinct bargain!

Students from the Korean School of Edmonton play special drums at MLD.

About the Edmonton Korean Language School

Our school's name is the Edmonton Korean Language School. The school was founded in 1979 by the Edmonton Korean Association. Currently, our school reaches out to around 50 families, meaning we have around 70 students in our school this year. Along with teaching the Korean language, we teach about the Korean culture, including food, traditions, and holidays. We have an instrumental class, also known as the Samulnori class, where students learn how to play the Korean traditional drums. Every year we have a speech and writing contest in order to present to the parents and families of our students how much the students have learned and grown while attending our school.

Being a contest, it motivates students to try harder in their studies in order to prepare for these events. Our Samulnori class also attends some functions and performs for the Korean community in Edmonton. Our

students are very young and therefore we hope that they will present their knowledge of our country's instruments well to the community. Our greatest success was the acceptance of our language as a high school course for credit from the Alberta Education. Our school is run by a non-profit community organization called the Edmonton Korean Language School Society. This organization hosts an annual event, "The Korean School's Night" for a big fund-raising. We're been part of the IHLA since 2003, we're been participating in the Mother Language Day Event ever since.

Our principal works hard to encourage students to use Korean not only during class time but during break time and while going home with their parents. Most of our teachers are well-known in the Korean community and have a good reputation for increasing the amount and ability of Korean spoken, read, and written by the children. We also have a class for adults who are new to the Korean language. We believe this is good for expanding the Korean language and culture in Edmonton.

One of our teachers actually started off as a student when she was young. She then went on to volunteer as a teacher's assistant and now, on her 14th year in Korean school, it is her first year teaching. We are working to encourage other students and volunteers to work towards the same goal since they know how things work in our school. Also by encouraging this, we believe students and volunteers will make more of an effort to speak Korean in their homes and hopefully pass along our language and culture to the next generation. Our goal is to expand and grow our Korean culture and language in Edmonton, not only to Koreans but also to non-Korean members of our Edmonton community. If you are interested in learning Korean please do consider being part of us. You can find out more about our school program at http://ihla.ca/ihlaSchools/koreanSchool.html or www.ekoreans.org

Students and instructors at the Edmonton Khalsa School during prayer time.

About the Edmonton Khalsa School

Languages Taught at the School: English, Punjabi and French.

The School Name means: Khalsa means PURE

School details: There are currently 270 students. The entire community is affected by the school as it is linked closely with the Sikh temple. Each year the school enrollment increases. Students participate in many cultural events that relate to the language. For example, Vaisakhi celebrations and concerts use the Punjabi language. Students put together Punjabi dances (Bhangra) as well as celebrate many religious holidays reciting religious hymns using the Punjabi language. We also enjoy participating in the Annual International Language Day.

The leaders of the school are the Edmonton Khalsa School Management and Board of Directors. The community recognizes them through their continuous volunteer work within the community. The leaders of the Sikh community are role models that students look up to.
A Punjabi language camp runs during the summer for children. The students who participate in the camp are various ages. The Punjabi language, Sikh religion and culture are taught at various ages.
Our Mission: The school is dedicated to provide quality educational experiences to prepare students for life-long learning within the framework of Sikh discipline, values and culture. High academic and behavioral expectations are priority in Edmonton Khalsa School.
Our Goal : A school-wide effort to have all Edmonton Khalsa School's students to be able to show progress in their ability to read and write in both the English Language and Punjabi Language.
Instructional Focus Statement:
A school-wide effort to have all Edmonton Khalsa School's students to be able to show progress in their ability to read and write is continuous with the school's AISI project. Students' performance will be measured by the H.L.A.T. writing scores, Gates MacGinitie reading scores, Canadian Basic Skills Test, Provincial Achievement Tests, and Individual Grade Teacher assessments.

Developing Heritage Language Literacy:
Cracking the code vs reading with understanding

Dr. Olenka Bilash
University of Alberta

The primary purpose of any educational institution is to render its 'students' literate – able to read and write. Such ability is embedded in a complex interactive social system and related as much to the elements and members of that system as it is to the individual learner. In his seminal work on The Foundations of Literacy Donald Holdaway (1979) revealed how children who developed literacy in English before going to school or very easily in kindergarten had all shared a number of common experiences: they were read to at home; they had been taught to sing and chant and sung many songs and chanted rhymes at home while playing or cleaning or tidying; they had talked with significant caregivers (parents, grandparents, siblings, family members) about many varied experiences to build their vocabulary; they had seen significant caregivers engage with a variety of written forms on a regular basis (such as parents reading the daily newspaper, referring to a recipe book or brochure, consulting a map, opening mail, sending letters); and they had been guided to notice the print in their local environment. In a second or heritage language (HL) milieu the development of literacy is dependent on these same factors; however, they are not all as easily accessible to children, families or communities.   This article will review factors that contribute to developing literacy in a HL, including the importance of oral language, and present considerations for beginner HL learners as well as more advanced speakers.

Reading aloud to children at home

Reading aloud to children at home leads to children having favorite stories in the HL. Holdaway (1979) suggests that children have heard between 200-300 stories before they start school and among them are those favourites which they ask caregivers to read over and over again. Bedtime is a popular time for reading by a parent as it provides a way to calm the child before sleep, creates an atmosphere and bond of intimacy between the child and reader, helps the child see the parent as a model of a reader, contributes to increasing the child's attention span, and exposes the child to stories, thus enabling them to acquire a repertoire of stories that will eventually help them to see the structure of beginning-middle-end in stories.

The reading of favourite stories becomes an interaction between reader (parent) and child. At first the reader reads the entire story while the child listens, pointing to parts of the visuals that are told about in the story. Soon the reader only needs to initiate sentences and the child can complete them as they progress through the story page by page. Not long after the child may be able to 'read' some pages on his or her own. And it is not long before parents may

see the child reading the story alone, pointing to pictures and mimicking the intonation of the parent. These interactions with stories form the developmental roots of literacy.

Most parents crave the opportunity to read aloud to their children; however, they also face the challenge of finding appropriate stories to read in the HL. Where can they be found? Are there sufficient numbers of stories available to read a different one everyday? Are they affordable? Such questions are ones that the HL community must face collectively. Importing books can be expensive. Finding appropriate books takes time. Sharing books takes organization. Two sources can help you: the public library's multilingual biblioservice and a local community library.

Canada's Multilingual Biblioservice

The National Library of Canada established the Multilingual Biblioservice in 1973 in response to a perception in the Canadian library community that the demand for books in languages other than English and French was growing. The report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism included a recommendation that Canada's policy on multiculturalism be strengthened. Clearly, the National Library of Canada had a role to play in promoting the multicultural nature of our country. (http://www.lac-bac.gc.ca/multicultural/005007-210-e.html)

This service is available at all libraries in the province upon request. The website also provides guidelines and suggestions for local librarians to follow in creating a collection in a language other than English or French. Be sure to use this service and let others know about it. Also, libraries are looking to create relationships with heritage language communities so elect a member of your HL school board to initiate a discussion with your local librarian about your needs.

Using or creating a local community library

Many HL communities have already established a local collection of books; however, the challenge is making it accessible to the community. If this local library is located in or near the HL school then it might be able to be open for parents during class time. When parents drop their children off or pick them up they can visit the library and take out books. If you are facing a problem in staffing the library consider asking a teenager in your community to volunteer to be there when it is open and to put returned books onto a shelf. Teenagers may use this time as service time for high school credits so the situation is a win-win one for both individuals and the HL school.

If your HL community is newer to Canada and has not yet developed a community library talk to IHLA staff who can direct you to teachers and principals of HL communities that have been here longer and can guide you. All HL communities, having emerged many generations ago, or recently, can benefit from donations of books or for books. "If there is little or nothing to read in a particular culture, literacy development is going to be very difficult if at all possible" (Goodman, 1979, p. 30).

Environmental print

Holdaway (1979) noted that children who read by the age of five were also attuned to print that they encountered around them, such as road signs, grocery labels, fast food signs and television advertisements. They construct knowledge from the inside out through interacting with their environment – they have an experience and then seek ways to make sense of that experience through creating hypotheses about how and why something is the way it is and then talking with others or listening to others to confirm or change their understandings. The decades of research of the 1980's and 1990's confirmed that children often engage in reading environmental print before reading print in books, and at an early age, perhaps as young as two or three. Having developed concepts about print in their environment and about books before they start their formal education, children had formed primitive hypotheses about letters, words, or messages. In turn schooling helped them to confirm or revise those hypotheses and smoothly move into reading. (Marie Clay, 1991, 2000, 2001)

The challenge for HL children in Alberta is that they live in a world dominated by English environmental print and even if they speak and hear the HL they naturally become curious about English environmental print and quickly acquire it. This curiosity is indeed positive in terms of child development and must be nurtured. However, although HL families and communities cannot compete with the amount of English print in the society, they can insure that there is some exposure to the HL in print form. Newsletters from community organizations can be written in the HL or at least bilingually; posters of upcoming community events can appear bilingually and be mounted in local ethnic stores or restaurants; parents can label objects in the home with word cards written in the HL and parents can find websites of songs, rhymes, stories or movie clips to show their children. The more different the HL script is from English (or sometimes called the Latin alphabet) the greater should be the child's exposure to it.

Seeing people reading the HL

A child's identity develops toward the HL based on positive role models or agents of influence. The most significant agents of influence are parents and family members. When children see these people reading in the HL and hearing the HL orally, they develop an affinity or connection to the language (and its culture) through these significant loved ones. They become conduits for values toward the HL and culture. Parents cannot expect the teacher in the HL school to teach the HL without the child having any exposure outside of the school; parents and family members have a responsibility to maintain the discipline toward using the HL and modeling reading it. Cable television and the internet provide many opportunities for exposure to the HL in the home that never existed for previous generations.

Seeing a diversity of text forms in the HL

Children who develop early literacy skills in a language are reported to have seen significant caregivers like parents, siblings and other family members reading. They also see many print forms or text types in their environment – from maps, recipes, calendars, cards, newspapers, newsletters, and magazines in the home to billboards, signs, posters, and advertisements on television and outside the home. Again, HL learners have more limited opportunities to see people interacting with a variety of text types in the HL because they are either not available or not needed for local survival. Thus again, parents must consciously create such opportunities if they wish their child to develop HL competencies. Just as parents might enroll their child, pay fees, drive to and participate in events such as pre-school or swimming to help their child develop, so too must they make the same time and effort to expose the child to contemporary use of the HL; only this time it is not so easy to simply pay for that exposure outside the home. There is no doubt that trips to visit areas where the HL is spoken instill the reality of the language as one of mass communication for the child living in a minority language environment. Further, leaving the child for several weeks with loving and caring relatives who do not speak English can also contribute to HL development without any negative effects on the development of English. Building these multi-generational multi-country relationships, the HL, and relationships in the HL are lifelong gifts for your child.

In the research on the development of literacy skills most researchers assume that learners can speak the language that they are learning to read. Oral language competency always precedes literacy in children because learning to decode the HL (or read it aloud so as to demonstrate knowledge of the relationship between the symbols and its corresponding sounds) does not mean that the 'reader' understands what is read aloud. While it can be relatively easy for a learner to crack the written code of languages that have a high grapheme-phoneme correlation (GPC), such as Ukrainian, Russian, Korean or German, the ability to read or develop literacy means both cracking a code or symbol system **and** understanding what is read.

Cracking the code

The GPC refers to the written symbols that represent the spoken sounds. In the Cyrillic alphabet there is a high GPC, meaning that when the reader sees a certain symbol it will always sound the same. English has the lowest GPC of all languages because it has so many borrowed words (and spellings) from many languages, thus making learning to spell in English a greater challenge than in most languages. Further, there is a natural tendency for learners who already speak and read English to make the sounds of letter combinations as they would in English, and not in the other language. For example, in German "ie" will always sound like a long e no matter where that letter combination is located in a word; however, without explicit teaching about GPC, unilingual English speakers will most frequently read it is a long i as in pie because that is their English eye-ear experience or 'training'. This means that teachers must often provide short discrete lessons in comparative orthography showing young or beginning HL learners how the same symbol can have a different sound in two languages. Some examples of how symbols can have different sounds in different languages follow.

Letter/symbol/ grapheme	Most common sound affiliation (phoneme) in English	Sound or phoneme of the same grapheme in another language
"c"	A "k" sound as in "cut", "cute", "coin" or an "s" sound as in "nice", "cent", "place"	"c" in Italian sounds like "ch" as in cello
"ent"	"ent" as in "sent", "went", "silent"	"ent" in French is either nasal as in cent or silent (not pronounced) as in "ils marchent"
"ei"	A long e sound as in "receive" or a long a as in weight	"ei" in German always sounds like a long i as in English "height"
"s"	"sh" as in "share", "sure" or "pressure"; "s" as in "save"; "z" as in "matches"	"s" in German is pronounced "z" as in "Sie"; in French it is often silent as in "tu as" or "s" as in "satisfait"

Without teaching what researchers once called the sound-symbol relationship and now call the grapheme-phoneme correlation (grapheme means written form and phoneme means the sound) learners will process and decode the second language according to the sounds the grapheme usually makes in their first language, which in the Alberta context is usually English. Thus, learners will impose the English GPC on the new language. E.g. a French sentence such as "Elles marchent dans la rue." will initially be read aloud as follows: "El less march ent danz la roo." when it should be read aloud closer to "El marsh dan la roo". Introducing the print form of a language before learners have a firm oral base or without the comparative GPC can result in either poor anglicized pronunciation in the new language or reading with appropriate sounds but possibly without attached meaning.

Speaking should precede reading

In any natural or authentic language community children learn to speak before they learn to read. Oral language or speaking serves as the foundation for learning to decode and once the code is cracked meaning accompanies it. However, if the child cannot speak the HL or has only a very limited knowledge of it/exposure to it, then there may be benefits to broadening the child's oral language base before teaching 'reading' or 'decoding'. Such broadening of the oral language base requires teachers to understand how to teach oral language skills and the importance of learner memory in that process.

- Teaching oral language in a HL school setting demands a wide range of teaching skills. HL instructors must be able to identify and teach language such as in the following ways:
- commonly used or high frequency phrases and contexts in which they are used;
- formulaic expressions that learners will need to be able to ask for help (such as the HL equivalents of *Please repeat. I do not understand. Please speak more slowly. I don't know.*);
- formulaic sequences of phrases that commonly go in tandem (such as Hi. How are you? **Fine thanks. And you?** *Great*.) (Wood, 2006)
- nursery rhymes, chants or songs (with actions) with built in mnemonic or memory devices
- simple pattern stories that children can understand, remember and play with to create their own variations of the pattern stories
- a collection of visuals that represent basic vocabulary and can be used for review in class and at home
- a collection of gestures that connect to the same basic vocabulary and visuals and can be used to reinforce memory outside of the classroom

Teachers must also understand that learning and memory are generally improved by **repetition** for learners; however, not all repetitions are equally beneficial. The effectiveness of repetitions depends in part on their distribution in time. Learners need both to learn HL vocabulary and phrases through frequent exposure or repetition through a variety of activities (games, songs, stories) and through regular and repeated exposure over time. Put another way, teaching something over a short time period and then never revisiting or recycling that content is less likely to lead to learner retention. Repetition that takes place on a regular basis is known as distributed practice (Underwood, 1961). Distributed practice (DP) means interrupting practice or study time with rest intervals of up to 24 hours or longer. For example, if a person has one hour of time for practice or review, that hour might better be spent as three 20-minute study periods on each of three consecutive days than on one day for one hour. (Bloom & Shuell, 1981)

Since "distributed practice and increased student involvement can considerably expand the amount of remembered material" (Sildus, 2006, p.67), teachers need to provide students with an abundance of varied and engaging tasks through which they can use, re-use and continue to apply what they know on a frequent and regular basis.

Expanding vocabulary

Reading is also a major vehicle for second language vocabulary development (Bamford & Day, 2004; Day, 1998; Day, 1993) and like the development of any other skill, can be taught in a scaffolded way for learners. It is said that when a reader cannot understand five words on a page s/he will abandon the reading of a text. Thus to entice learners to read and develop the habit of reading in the new language it is necessary to find or create texts that have few words on a page, few new words among them and ample contextual cues (e.g. visuals) to decipher what may be new, and simultaneously provide interesting and somewhat familiar information to learners. For beginning readers it is often very motivating to discover that they can understand a text whether or not it provides "new" information to them; after establishing confidence in reading in the new language, the content of reading becomes more important to them.

Some commercially created graded readers can meet the needs of strong beginner or intermediate level language learners since such books often begin with a minimal vocabulary of 500-600 words*, but for beginners or less confident new language learners, teachers may have to create texts of interest. A teacher- or class- made newspaper may be a format to

*In ESL samples of such graded readers can be found at: http://www.penguinreaders.com/ or http://www.pearson.ch/LanguageTeaching/PenguinGradedReaders/   or http://www.oup.com/elt/global/products/bookwormsleveltest/ .
In French see: http://www.europeanbookshop.com/languagebooks/subject/FRE/m4
http://french.about. com/od/reading/tp/begreaders.htm
In many other languages see: https://www.eurobooks.co.uk/packs

meet the needs of a range of beginner level readers (differentiation) and create opportunities for student written production as well. Ideally a newspaper could be created monthly, and distributed by hand or online; it might capture events in the class or school (present or upcoming) and attract a variety of readers with pictures, captions, titles and a variety of text types (or forms). Each section of the newspaper can also feature an icon that indicates the language level of the section (e.g. a one "book" icon indicates the easiest text; a two-book icon is more difficult and a three-book icon the most difficult). As in any local newspaper, each component is self-contained so that a student can select any text and read it in its entirety without having to have read any previous or following components or pages.

Examples of junior and senior high level newspapers in French, German, Italian, Punjabi, Spanish, and Ukrainian can be found on my website. http://www2.education.ualberta.ca/staff/olenka.bilash/Best%20of%20Bilash/LiteracyDevelopment2.html They have been prepared by 4th year second language education students as examplars of what students might read in a teacher-created newspaper. Since teachers play an important role as language models in both oral and written language, it is highly recommended that they create several models of newspapers for students to read and that students have experiences reading such models for several months before they are asked to create or co-create such a project. This will also sensitize the teacher to the demands of creating such a project, learning how much time it takes to create, which skills are required, and which copyright issues must be considered.

Notice how each newspaper on this website:

- integrates a variety of text types (written forms)
- includes a range of visual support
- contains components for a range of language and literacy levels (differentiation)
- covers contemporary topics
- creates space for local school and community events.

Please feel free to adapt these for use in your own classrooms. See tips for scaffolding the development of independence in student creation of a newspaper in Appendix A. We are also happy to share your teacher-created newspapers with others (and your proposed corrections on the website), if desired.

Once children know how to read in the HL (or crack the code of GPC) they want to read to learn. They want to read for pleasure. Louise Rosenblatt (1978) argues that reading is an interactive process between a text and a reader and differentiates two separate modes in the experience of reading: the efferent and the aesthetic. When reading in the efferent mode the reader identifies and collects information from the text. The reader must also identify data in the text and create a referential structure in order to internalize and retain that information as knowledge. When responding from efferent mode, readers want to understand what the text is saying. Answering comprehension or **display questions**** is designed to engage the efferent mode.

In the aesthetic mode readers engage with the story and decide if they like it or not by allowing their memories, experiences and emotions to guide them through the text. The reader contemplates the totality of the text and attempts to understand the experience recounted in the text. When readers are responding in the aesthetic mode or stance, their own unique lived-through experience or engagement with a text is primary. **Referential questions***** about one's feelings or thoughts during the reading of a text calls the reader to embrace an aesthetic stance.

Generally speaking, HL teachers tend to emphasize efferent reading in reading tasks, frequently asking the reader to look up the meaning of new words in a dictionary during a reading and asking comprehension questions about the text. This leaves readers with the impression that reading in a HL or learning a HL is hard work and no fun. Using tasks that require aesthetic reading may counter balance this impression and thus increase student engagement. For example, offer students a text that is quick for them to read (i.e. a text with little to no new vocabulary) either for pleasure or with a simple oral or written follow up such as asking them to write one or two sentences about their opinion of the contents of the text.

** A display question is one to which the asker already knows the answer. E.g. What is this (pointing at a table)? Most comprehension questions that follow a written text consist of display questions. E.g. Who wrote the story? Who is the main character? What di the main character do? Where did the story take place?

***A referential question is one to which the asker does not know the answer. E.g. How are you feeling?

Reading is both a habit and an ability; the habit of reading and ability to read are both developed by reading. In a HL program, teachers need to help learners find texts that call forth aesthetic reading. Just giving them time to read for pleasure – to read texts at and not above their language level – will promote the habit of reading in the HL. A teacher's job is to provide such texts; if they are not commercially available at the language level of the learners then perhaps teachers or community members must gather to write them. Parents, grandparents and even great grandparents can be asked to write stories of coming to Canada, making Canada home or inviting relatives from other countries to visit. Children can also write about their lives, their pets, their hobbies, their vacations, or their experience learning or using the HL in Canada.

Closing

As your school year comes to a close you may wish to use your creativity to compose stories or newspapers for your students for next year or to organize a special summer writing camp so that older and more able HL speakers can write their stories or interview family members to share their experiences in written form. OR as you are travelling, think about book purchases that could enhance your school's library. Once your students have cracked the HL code, continue to nurture their appetite for reading with good stories at the appropriate level.

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Appendix A: Scaffolding toward student creation or involvement in the creation of a class newspaper:

Make your first edition a teacher generated one.

Write several articles on various topics that would be of interest to your students. Be sure that they represent a variety of language and literacy levels and text types.

Some examples of topics and text types include: current events in your area, comics, sports, classroom activities (eg. a field trip, or special class event), word puzzles, crossword puzzles, word search, horoscopes, picture captions, cultural events, features on countries or cultures, recipes, fashion commentary, advertisements, movie reviews, book reviews, etc.

Choose clear pictures to accompany each article or component

Keep words to a minimum and repeat key words as often as possible (instead of using pronouns).

Bold or italicize new vocabulary.

Use an icon to indicate the relative difficulty of the passage (e.g. one book or star for a simple text, two for a more difficult one and three for the most difficult text.) Remember that there should be more level 1 and 2 texts than level 3 texts because level 3 language students can actually read all of the parts of the newspaper while level one students are more restricted.

Authenticity is the key! Try and make the work look as much like a real newspaper as possible with a catchy title, formatting in outlined textboxes, headlines, bylines, dates etc. You may also consider printing your final product on double sided 11"x17" paper and folding it in half, so it even looks like a newspaper (instead of printing it in book form with staples down the side or in the corner).
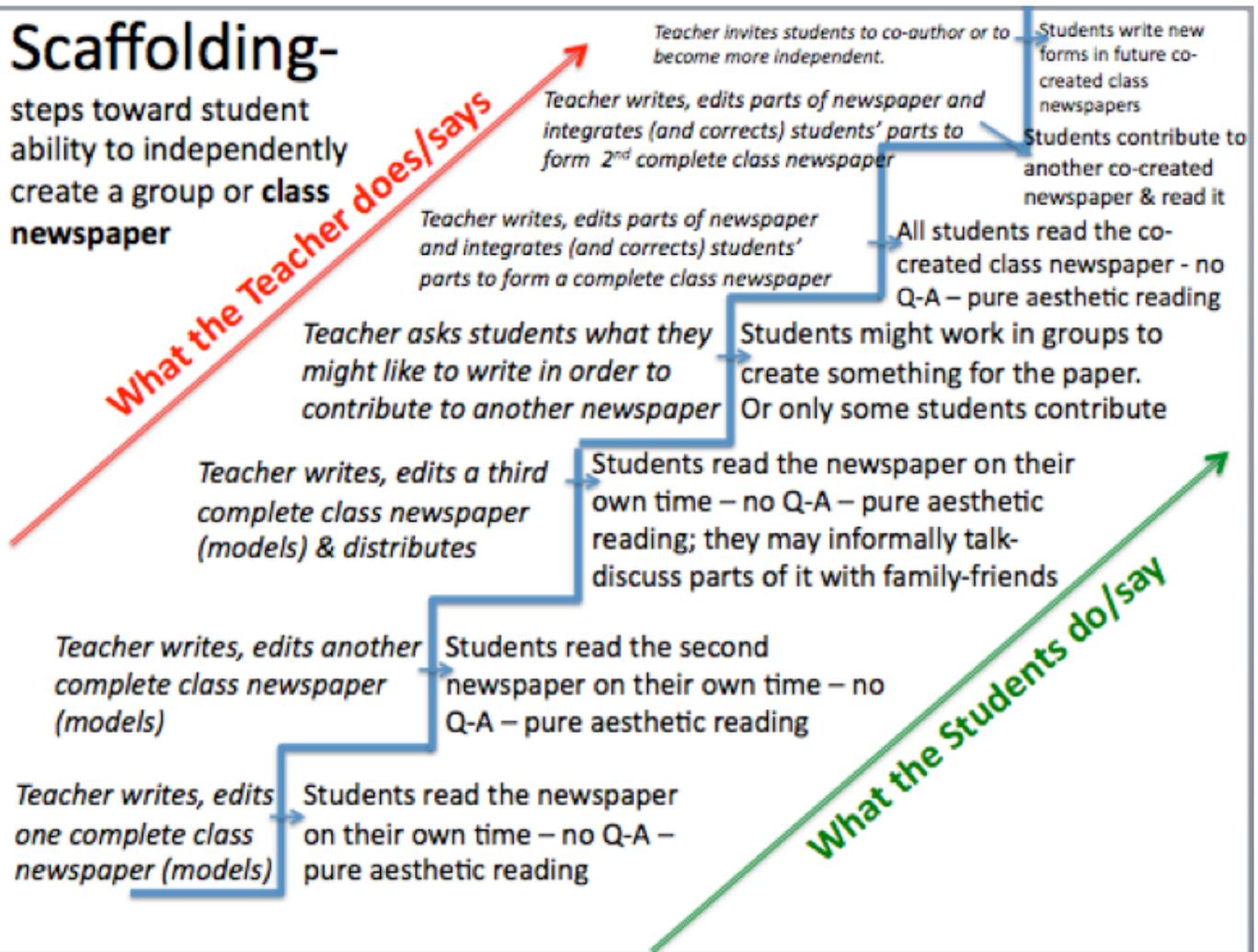
Hand out to students for their reading pleasure. Avoid testing or even comprehension questions associated with the newspaper. It is designed to increase opportunities for students to engage in aesthetic reading (without having to use the dictionary).

Once you have completed and circulated one to three class newspapers invite students to co-produce a few issues by taking responsibility for a few components only, perhaps the writing of an opinion article, poem, or story or finding a HL comic on line or making a puzzle. Eventually they may be asked to compose a complete newspaper in groups. See Figure 2 below. NOTE: the biggest mistake teachers make is giving students the responsibility to create a newspaper without having the experience of reading appropriate models of class newspapers. This lack of preparation can lead to products that are weaker in quality than they need be.

Save students' work so that you can edit and adapt, thus increasing the number of model issues in the next year! Most students are flattered to know that their work can be read by others.

Scaffolding-

steps toward student ability to independently create a group or **class newspaper**

What the Teacher does/says →

Teacher invites students to co-author or to become more independent.

Teacher writes, edits parts of newspaper and integrates (and corrects) students' parts to form 2nd complete class newspaper

Teacher writes, edits parts of newspaper and integrates (and corrects) students' parts to form a complete class newspaper

Teacher asks students what they might like to write in order to contribute to another newspaper

Teacher writes, edits a third complete class newspaper (models) & distributes

Teacher writes, edits another complete class newspaper (models)

Teacher writes, edits one complete class newspaper (models)

Students write new forms in future co-created class newspapers

Students contribute to another co-created newspaper & read it

All students read the co-created class newspaper - no Q-A – pure aesthetic reading

Students might work in groups to create something for the paper. Or only some students contribute

Students read the newspaper on their own time – no Q-A – pure aesthetic reading; they may informally talk-discuss parts of it with family-friends

Students read the second newspaper on their own time – no Q-A – pure aesthetic reading

Students read the newspaper on their own time – no Q-A – pure aesthetic reading

What the Students do/say →

Margaret Radziwon receives the first annual Sabatino Roncucci Teacher Award.

Congratulations!

IHLA wishes to congratulate Margaret Radziwon, teacher at the Henryk Sienkiewicz Polish School for winning the first Sabatino Roncucci Teacher Award, of 2011.

Margaert's project involves the interviewing and recording of elders in her community, by students in her class at the community school. The interview will allow students to get a first person account of memories of 1945, just after World War II. Students will work to prepare the interview in the HL and will tape and prepare a recording of the event that will be shared as a resource at the community level. IHLA looks forward to the outcomes of this special project.

IHLA also invites IHLA member schools to consider a project and applying for this annual project for next year. Details will be provided at the IHLA AGM.

Elena and Sab Roncucci, founders of IHLA. The Sabatino Roncucci Teacher IHLA Award was created in recognition of Sab's long-term commitment and vision for heritage and international languages and culture education.

INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE IDEAS PROJECT

IHLA wishes to thank Alberta Education for accepting our most recent project proposal, entitled: INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE IDEAS, 2011-2012. This new grant will allow IHLA to continue offering its services in a number of familiar ways as well as creating new resources and PD opportunities for its instructors and language teachers at large. The grant will run from January 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012. Details on activities and the project budget and plans will be shared at the upcoming IHLA AGM, on June 6, 2011.

Alberta
Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

IHLA 8th Annual Mother Language Day Pictures now Online

Check our fantastic pictures of the latest MLD event at the IHLA link:

http://www.flickr.com/photos/edmontonihla/

If you have pictures of the event that you wish to share, send them to IHLA and we will upload them to our Flickr account.

THE INTERNATIONAL AND HERITAGE LANGUAGES ASSOCIATION

Established in 1978 and formerly known as NAHLA, IHLA is a non for profit umbrella organization that actively promotes cross-cultural understanding through heritage/ international language instruction and education, through its many member schools. IHLA serves more that 35 schools who teach heritage and international languages at the community level, in Central and Northern Alberta, Canada.

The Association represents all levels of language and culture instruction and education for over 12,000 students each year, outside of the public school system in Alberta. IHLA's primary objectives include:

- supporting and promoting international and heritage language education
- assisting in the development of international and heritage language curriculum, teaching and learning resources and other materials
- supporting international and heritage language teacher training and skills development

IHLA SUPPORTS THE VIEW THAT international language education increases the level of respect and appreciation for multiculturalism and promotes tolerance and understanding of the diversity of Canada's people.

IHLA

3RD FLOOR 10010 105 STREET
T5J 1C4

EDMONTON CANADA

PHONE: 780-428-5510
FAX: 780 - 428-5549

Website: www.ihla.ca

Email:
edmontonihla@gmail.com