

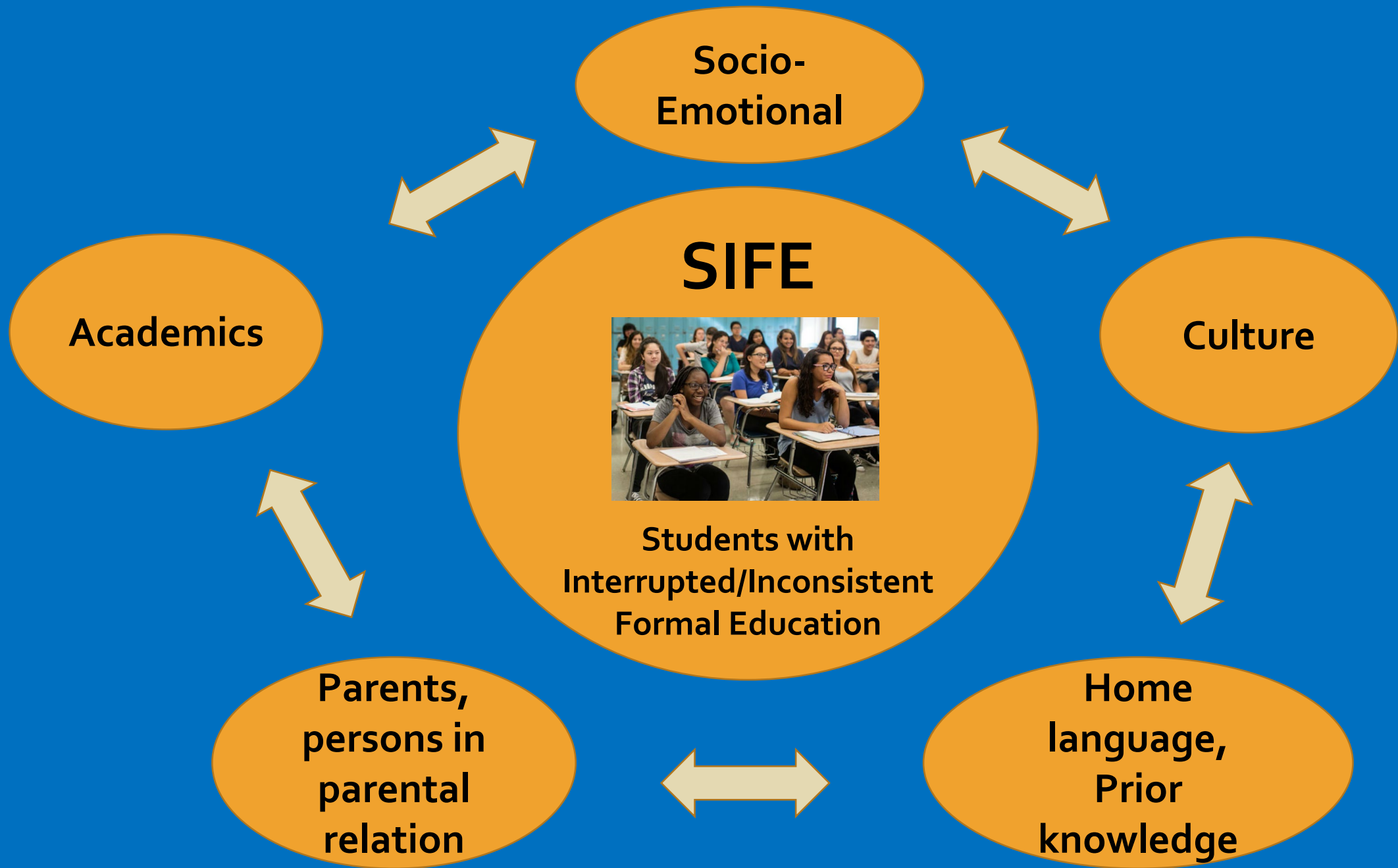
# SIFE in Our Classrooms: Best Practices for their Success

Presenters: Myriam Augustin and Dr. Maria V. Diaz  
Resource Specialists

Tuesday, November 13, 2018—8:30AM—11:30AM

New York University

The NYS Statewide Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBE-RN) at NYU



# A Prayer for Children<sup>©</sup>

By Ina J. Hughs, released 2014

We pray for children

who put chocolate fingers everywhere,  
who like to be tickled,  
who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants,  
who sneak Popsicles before supper,  
who erase holes in math workbooks,  
who can never find their shoes.

And we pray for those

who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire,  
who've never squeaked across the floor in new sneakers,  
who never "counted potatoes,"  
who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead,  
who never go to the circus,  
who live in an X-rated world.

We pray for children

who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions,  
who sleep with the dog and bury goldfish,  
who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money,  
who cover themselves with band-aids and sing off key,  
who squeeze toothpaste all over the sink,  
who slurp their soup.

# Goals for November 13, 2018 workshop:

- understand the goals of this SIFE professional development series
- know the NYSED definition of SIFE
- know the CR Part 154 process for screening, identification, administration of the Multilingual Literacy Screener (MLS) for SIFE
- understand what it means to be two grade levels below the entering grade
- be familiar with the demographics of SIFEs in New York State
- understand what makes the needs of SIFE unique
- understand the concept of pre-literacy skills before foundational literacy
- go through the development and teaching of a SIFE literacy lesson
- become familiar with a variety of effective practices for teaching SIFEs in the classroom

# SIFEs in Our Classrooms: Best Practices for their Success

NYSED Language RBERN professional development series focused  
on ELLs who are additionally identified as  
Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE)

Session 1: Tuesday, November 13, 2018

Session 2: Tuesday, January 22, 2019

Session 3: Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Invite your Principal/administrator to a special session on  
**Friday, May 17, 2019** – more information to follow

# **New York State Education Department Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) PRIORITIES for ELLs for 2017 – 2019**

- **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Accountability: ELL progress, school accountability**
- **ELL graduation and dropout rates**
- **Implementation of the Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener (MLS)**
- **CR Part 154.3 (governs ELLs with IEPs)**

**We serve SIFEs in countless ways!**

Memorialize the countless times you:

MENTOR  
INSPIRE  
EDUCATE  
COACH  
SHARE  
INFLUENCE  
ENCOURAGE



# What is the definition of SIFE?

- In NYS, under the new (2014) CR Part 154, SIFE (a Student with Inconsistent/Interrupted Formal Education) is an English Language Learner (ELL) who may have attended school in the US for less than 12 months and who, upon initial enrollment, is two or more years below grade level in literacy in their home language and/or two or more years below grade level in Math due to inconsistent or interrupted schooling prior to arrival in the US.
- This definition is inclusive of Low Literacy SIFE, with literacy at or below the third grade level in their home language. This means that they are NOT yet fluent readers in any language and do not use text independently as a resource to build on knowledge.



## What does it mean to be two grades below the entering grade?

- Example: A student from another country, entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the US is not expected to have home language literacy in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level since he/she is just starting in that grade. Such a student is expected to have 8<sup>th</sup> grade literacy in the home language.
- However, if the 9<sup>th</sup> grader has home language literacy at the **6<sup>th</sup> grade or below**, this student would be identified as a SIFE (NYSED), because he/she would be two years or more below the expected 8<sup>th</sup> grade competency.

## ELLs Demographics: NYSED, 2016-2017

**Total ELLs NYS: 230,055**

**Total ELLs NYC: 162,529**

**Total SIFEs NYS: 21,804**

**Total SIFES NYC: 8,226**

<b>Spanish</b>	<b>64.5%</b>	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>9.2%</b>
Arabic	5.6%	Bengali	3.0%
Russian	1.7%	Urdu	1.6%
Haitian Creole	1.6%	French	1.0%
Karen	0.8%	Nepali	0.7%

# STUDENTS WITH INTERRUPTED/INCONSISTENT FORMAL EDUCATION (SIFE) SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, AND PLACEMENT

Screening, Identification and Placement flow charts and SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire are in your folders.

# SIFE Screening and Identification Process

SIFEs are also ELLs, therefore, schools should follow the protocol established in CR Part 154 for the identification and placement of ELLs and then follow the procedures for the identification of SIFE.

To determine potential SIFE status:

- Qualified personnel administers SIFE Oral Interview Questionnaire. The interview must be conducted in English and in the Ell's home language

If the results of the Oral Interview Questionnaire indicate that student is a potential SIFE, the MULTILINGUAL LITERACY SIFE SCREENER (MLS) as well as the WRITING SCREENER should be administered in the student's home Language to determine their literacy skills in their home language.

When a SIFE scores on the **Transitioning** proficiency level on the NYSESLAT, the student's status as a SIFE is removed.

However, the student is still an ELL until reaching the exit criteria from ELL status.

# Quick Sheet for the Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener (MLS)

- **Reading comprehension component** available in Arabic, Bangla, Chinese, English, Haitian Creole, Maay-Maay, S'gaw Karen, Spanish, Urdu (9)
- **Vocabulary component** available in: English, Simplified Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, Urdu (4)
- Administer the **Writing Screener** to determine the student's basic writing skills in the home language
- **Writing Screener** available in Arabic, Bangla, Chinese, English, Haitian Creole, Maay-Maay, S'gaw Karen, Spanish, Urdu (9)

\*\*\*To access the MLS, you must login to [mls.gc.cuny.edu](http://mls.gc.cuny.edu).  
The password is: `mlsnysed`, then click the submit button



## What You Need to Use the MLS

- ✓ The master password: *mlsnysed*
- ✓ Your school's proctor login and password to administer the tests:
  - The proctor login is your school's BEDS code.
  - The proctor password is created by someone at your school.
- ✓ Your school's administrator login and password to read reports:
  - The administrator login is sent to you, once you apply for credentials (Step 1).
  - The administrator password is created by someone at your school.



**Note that the proctor and administrator logins are different. Request the credentials three business days in advance of MLS administration. Only one set of credentials is issued per school. Once you receive your confirmation email you may use the MLS.**

### Step 1: Before Administering the MLS

1. Open Chrome or Firefox (Do not use Internet Explorer or Safari) and navigate to [mls.slalab.org](http://mls.slalab.org)
2. Enter the master password *mlsnysed*
3. Apply for credentials by selecting **Apply for an account** from the homepage. This will take you to the registration page.

Early Literacy  
Vocabulary  
Reading Comprehension  
Reports  
Apply for an account

#### You will need:

- ✓ Your school's BEDS code
- ✓ A proctor password of your own creation (this will be used by all educators at your school site)
- ✓ An administrator password of your own creation to view reports (this should be different than the proctor password)

BEDS Code

MULTILINGUAL LITERACY SIFE SCREENER

**Register. Create a new account.**

School Name

Email (please use your official NY State Education Department email address)

Your official school email

Login

Proctor's Password (to administer tests)

This password may be shared among all teachers who proctor scores. Please do not use a personal password.

Confirm proctor's password

The Administrator's password field is required.

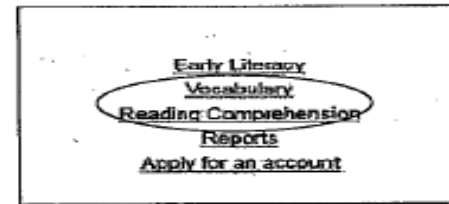
Confirm administrator's password

Register

For more information about the MLS, read the *MLS User Guide*.  
Technical support is available from the *MLS Support Team* at  
[MLS.email.server@gmail.com](mailto:MLS.email.server@gmail.com)

## Step Two: Administering an Assessment Using the MLS

1. Open Chrome or Firefox (Do not use Internet Explorer or Safari)
2. Visit [mls.slalab.org](http://mls.slalab.org)
3. Enter the master password *mlsnysed* to access the homepage
4. Administer an exam by selecting either **Vocabulary** or **Reading Comprehension** from the homepage
5. Then, using your proctor or administrator credentials, complete the exam login and select the appropriate language:
  - **Reading Comprehension:** Arabic, Bangla, English, Haitian Creole, Maay Maay, Simplified Mandarin Chinese, S'gaw Karen, Spanish, Urdu
  - **Vocabulary:** English, Simplified Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, Urdu



You must have the proctor login and password entered correctly to select the language of the exam. All fields must be filled out in order to start the MLS.

A screenshot of the 'Exam Login' form. The form contains the following fields: 'Teacher full name \*', 'Login \*', 'Password \*' (with a 'Forgot password!' link), 'Test Language \*' (with a dropdown menu and a note '(valid login required)'), and 'Student ID \*'. The 'Student ID \*' field is circled in red.

### Please note the following:

- Although the test is untimed, each administration of the test can take up to 50 minutes.
- Instructions for the exam are given orally and in the student's home language.
- The student should have headphones to listen to instructions which begin immediately after starting the exam. Do not close the browser until the test data has been sent to the server. If the browser is closed before the test is finished, no information will save and the student will need to begin the exam again.
- If using Chrome, please make sure that students do not use the translation function.
- **Monitor students during the test and make sure they are not using other browser functions, or the results will be meaningless.**

### How do I access reports?

Go to the MLS homepage and enter the master password: *mlsnysed*

1. View the MLS Literacy Skills and Abilities Report by selecting **Reports** from the homepage
2. The report is available immediately after the test is completed.

**You must have your administrator login (which can be found in your confirmation email from the MLS) and password. Please note that this is different from the proctor password used to give the exam.**

A screenshot of the 'Authenticate to view student reports' form. The form contains the following fields: 'Username', 'Password' (with a 'Forgot password!' link), and a 'Log In' button. An arrow points from the 'Administrator login' text to the 'Username' field.



# CR Part 154 English as a New Language (ENL) Units of Study

Grades K - 8	Entering	Emerging
ENL Instructional Time (Minimum)	2 units of study per week (360 minutes)	2 units of study per week (360 minutes)
Stand-Alone ENL	1 unit of study in ENL (180 minutes)	.5 unit of study in ENL (90 minutes)
Integrated ENL	1 unit of study in ENL/ELA (180 minutes)	1 unit of study in ENL/ELA (180 minutes)

Grades 9 - 12	Entering	Emerging
ENL Instructional Time (Minimum)	3 units of study per week (360 minutes)	2 units of study per week (360 minutes)
Stand-Alone ENL	1 unit of study in ENL (180 minutes)	.5 unit of study in ENL (90 minutes)
Integrated ENL	1 unit of study in ENL/ELA (180 minutes)	1 unit of study in ENL/ELA (180 minutes)

# English Proficiency: Level 1 (Equivalent to Entering Level)

Differentiating Instruction and Assessment for English Language Learners: A Guide for K-12 Teachers, Shelly Fairbaine and Stephaney Jones-Vo

- **Listening:** begins to recognize frequently heard words and phrases; requires frequent restating or paraphrasing; begins to develop awareness of sound system in English
- **Speaking:** silent period; produces frequently heard words and phrases or self-generated language to express meaning or ask questions; supports communication with non-verbal cues; begins to produce sounds in English
- **Reading:** gains meaning primarily from visual support; if literate in home language, may start to transfer those literacy skills to English; preliterate students may begin to develop reading skills in English when provided with high-quality, visually-supported reading instruction
- **Writing:** may draw, copy written text; write or dictate individual letters, words or phrases to convey meaning

## English Proficiency: Level 2 (Equivalent to Emerging Level)

- **Listening:** able to respond to frequently heard language with continued dependence on context, paraphrasing and repetition; begins to build content and academic vocabulary
- **Speaking:** uses phrases and simple sentences to communicate about common experiences; begins to produce content and academic vocabulary; errors may inhibit communication
- **Reading:** may recognize and read words and phrases; gains meaning from simple and familiar text with visual support
- **Writing:** dictates phrases and simple sentences; writes phrases and simple sentences with occasional use of content and academic vocabulary when supported; errors often obstruct meaning

# Why is it important to know about your ELL SIFE's?

## Who are your SIFE?

- How long have they been here?
- What countries are they from?
- What languages do they speak?
- Why didn't they go to school in their country?
- What skills do they bring with them?
- What skills and funds of knowledge (Moll et al, 1992) do their family bring with them
- If they have basic literacy, in what language is it?
- Why did they come to the United States?
- How did they come to the United States?
- Who do they live with here?
- Do they have a place to study/do their home work at home?
- What else would you like to share about your SIFE?

# Developing a Profile of Your SIFEs

The utmost care and respect must be taken when gathering information from your SIFEs. This information is considered Confidential and is only to be used to become better informed as you work with your SIFEs. Please be careful to be non-judgmental and watchful of any body language that might convey to your students a negative message. We must remember that SIFEs are complete human beings who bring previous life experiences, skills and other assets into our classrooms. They are not empty slates.



# What makes SIFE's needs unique?

Factors that may cause SIFE to be different from other ELLs:

- As their education has been interrupted, inconsistent, and in certain cases, unavailable, SIFEs may have complex social and psychological needs due to possible traumatic migration experiences, war, lack of access to education, socioeconomic or cultural circumstances, frustrations with their academic delays in relation to their peers, a lack of familiarity with school culture, and feelings of isolation in school. (NYSED)
- Stress: As a result of any of these situations or any combination of situations, the student may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, may be under severe distress, or may be completely overwhelmed by the need to assimilate to a new school environment in a new language.

# What makes SIFE's needs unique? (Continued)

- Literacy and academic gaps: Students may not be able to read or write in their native language. They may also lack an understanding of basic concepts, content knowledge and critical thinking skills that their peers may have mastered.
- SIFEs require instruction in the basic concepts and skills necessary for academic success, including how to study and take notes, how to behave in school, and how to participate in class discussions etc.
- Their academic success rests on meeting increasingly sophisticated standards and English-language assessments. So, even when they are not fluent in English and are not formally educated, it is important to offer lessons designed to develop critical knowledge, using content that reflects students' lives, interests and culture. (Colorin Colorado: DiCerbo and Loop, 2003).
- These students are at a high risk of dropping out of high school due to the precarious nature of their situation. (Colorin Colorado online 12/2016 p.4

Educators know how important it is to create a positive classroom environment.



However, because of the unique characteristics of SIFEs, it is especially important to establish a positive classroom environment in your classroom.

Who can tell us why?

And how you will create such an environment?



# Pre-literacy Skills and Concepts

- Familiarity with school culture: How to get on line
- Take them on a walk around the school
- **Expectations** for when they walk into your class, ex.: hang up coats, remove hats, take a seat, take out notebooks and pencils, academic work
- Academic habits: note taking, listening, paying attention, how to hold a pencil/pen, how to identify pictures. The teacher must demonstrate.
- Behavior: raise hand and wait to be called on, how to talk with a partner/in small groups, be respectful to self and others, how to ask politely
- Create a print-rich environment by posting the alphabet, vocabulary words, posters, charts, students' work etc. (could be in English and the home language; consider age-appropriate displays)
- Must have a library in the room with books in the home language and in English.
- The teacher must help students develop a culture of reading & writing, and help them understand the tasks by modeling in each lesson.

# How do we read a text written in English?

1. In general, we approach a text with a purpose in mind
2. We bring some prior knowledge of the topic. The more familiar the topic, and event, the easier it is for the reader to understand the text.
3. We activate prior knowledge of the topic of the text by imagining what we know and don't know about the topic. We predict what the text will be about, and we generate questions that the text might answer. We are then able to assess, confirm or change our prediction based on what we discover while reading.
4. Having set a purpose and activated prior knowledge, we begin reading by visually processing the print from left to right, top to bottom of the page.
5. Processing the print involves decoding the words on the page. (This is a mental or verbal way to access meaning). However, decoding word by word is insufficient as we have seen students who are able to call out every word in a sentence without understanding the meaning.
6. Without meaning, reading does not take place.

# Foundational Skills SIFEs need to be taught:

- Foundational Skills of literacy: how print works, the alphabet, the phonetic system of English, and other basic conventions of the English writing system.
- In English, words are read from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page
- Spoken words are represented in written language by specific letters
- One-to-one letter-sound correspondences
- Associate long and short sounds with common spellings
- Read high-frequency words by sight
- Read leveled text with purpose and understanding

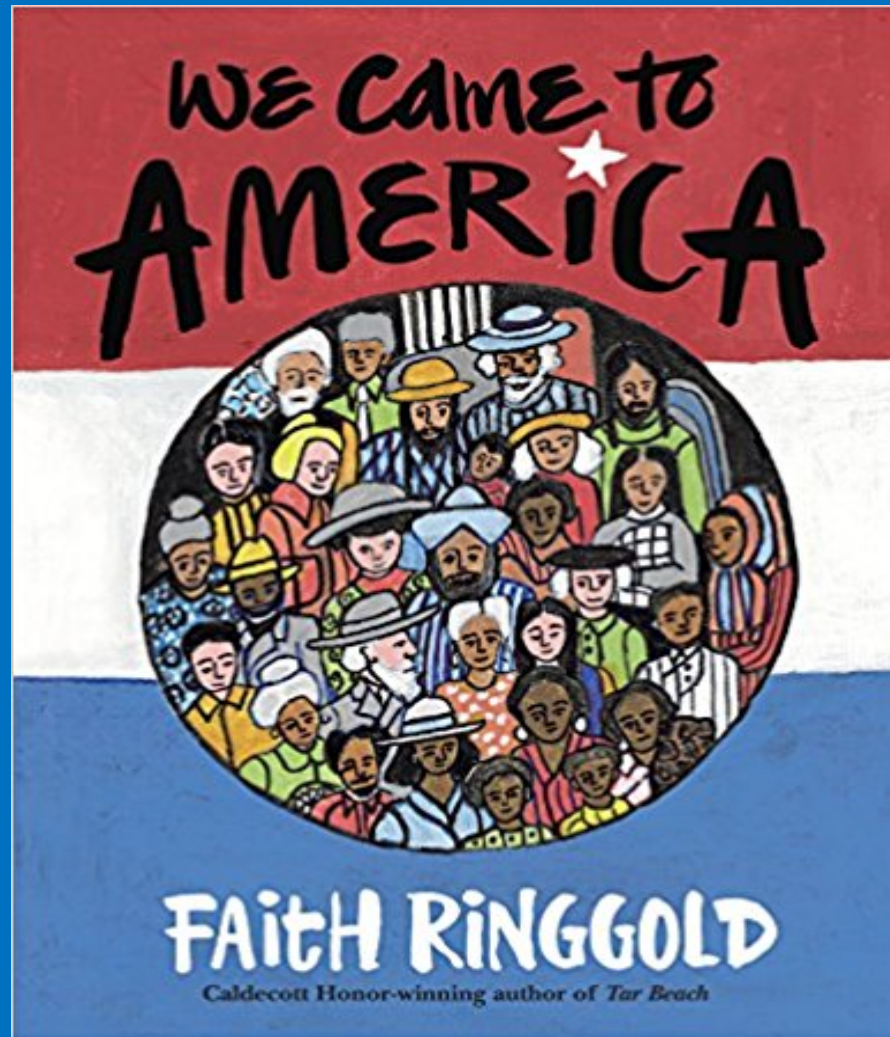
([www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RF/K/](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RF/K/))

# Some Effective Practices for Teaching SIFE

- Programs for SIFE must start with the specific needs of this population.
- Students must have opportunities to learn foundational literacy skills through thematic units of study, and direct instruction. Foundational skills include: the alphabet, letter sounds, decoding, phonics, grammar, syntax, reading comprehension, the four modalities (listening, speaking, reading and writing), etc.
- Contextualize their schema, for example: if you're teaching about the drought in California, find out if any of them have ever experienced a drought. Help them make that connection, allow them to talk about their experience. (To do this, you, the teacher will need to do a bit of research first about some of the countries represented in your class to find out if there was or is a drought in their country).
- Must use scaffolding through: pictures (that are as real as possible to remove ambiguity), realia, video clips, connecting to prior knowledge, body movement.

- SIFEs must have hands-on, real life experiences through the discovery approach. They must see, touch, and do. They must go on field trips to a variety of places.
- Research has proven how experiences are important to language development. This will support oral language, which supports reading and writing.
- Home Language Instruction or support: Linguists have proven over and over again that the best way for a student to learn is through the language the student understands best. In the case of SIFE, this usually means their native/home language. They might have some basic understanding of the language of instruction in their country, but most likely are not fluent in that language.
- If Native Language Instruction is not possible, the teacher can use other staff for translation when necessary. They could also have more advanced students translate for the new ones (but this should not be on an every day basis). In addition to this, the next best thing is to teach content areas through ENL methodologies in a way that makes content accessible.

# Lesson Planning for SIFEs

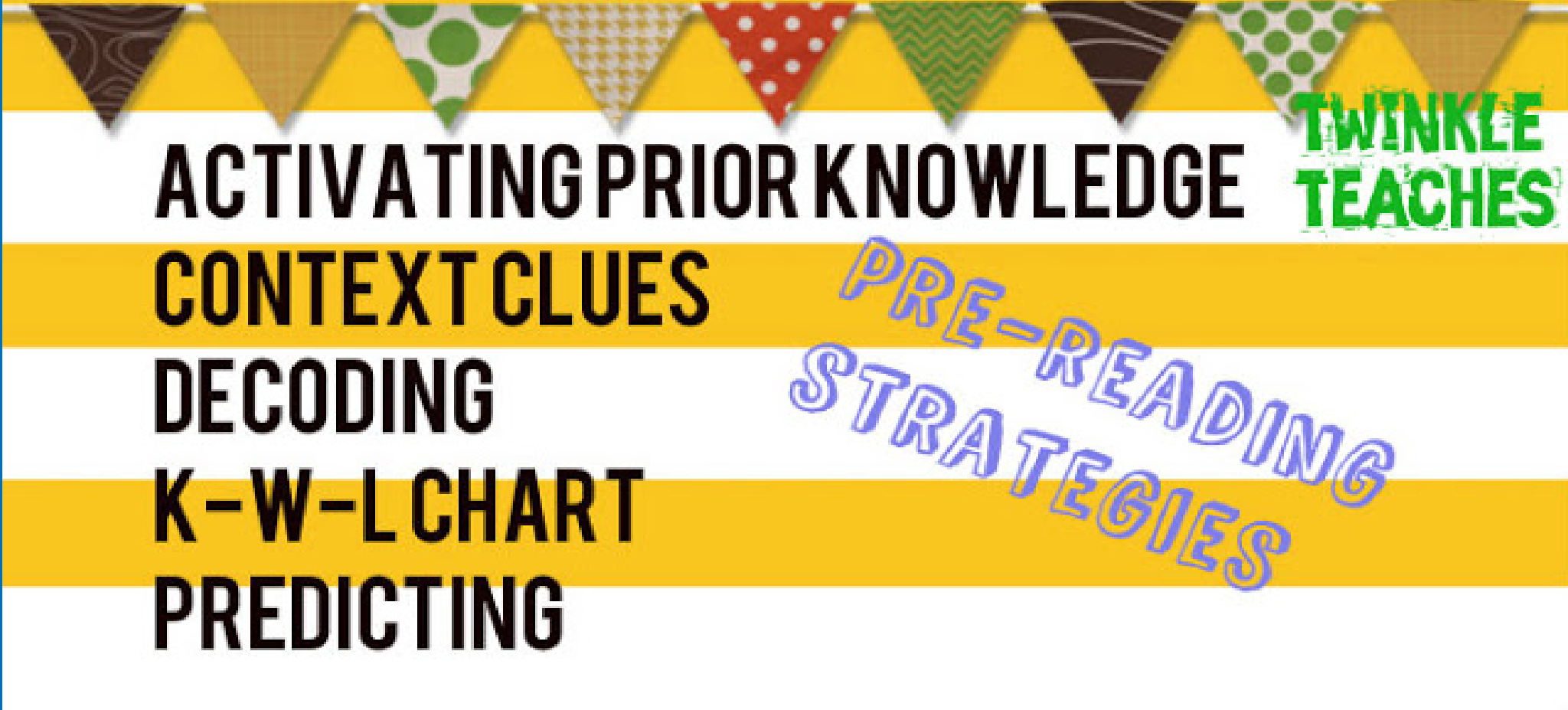


# Start with the End in Mind



- Set clear vision of unit-end (theme) goals/targets: What should students know, understand and be able to do?
- “Don’t lose the forest for the trees”
- Keep the instruction student centered and in their understanding
- Adapt instruction from day to day using student assessment information
- Determine acceptable evidence: how do you know that the desired learning has been achieved?
- What you assess is where you focus instruction

# WE CAME TO AMERICA: Word Study Extension Strategies



**ACTIVATING PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

**CONTEXT CLUES**

**DECODING**

**K-W-L CHART**

**PREDICTING**

**TWINKLE  
TEACHES**

*PRE-READING  
STRATEGIES*



# SWIRL Every Day

Let's engage *all* of our SIFE's modalities throughout the school day :

S – speaking

W – writing

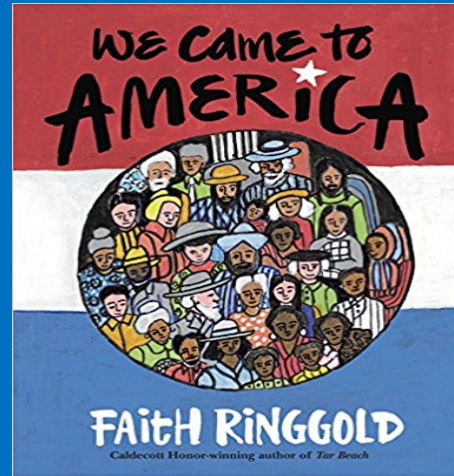
I – interactive/interactions

R – reading

L - listening



# WORD STUDY FOR We Came to America by Faith Ringgold



	Word	Times used in story	Tier 1, 2, 3*	Variations of the word	Cognate (if applicable) Spanish	Cognate (if applicable) Haitian Creole	Cognate (if applicable) French	Cognate (if applicable) Bengali	ENL Linguistic demand
1	air	1	2		aire				noun
2	all	1	1						adjective
3	along	1	1						proposition, adverb
4	already	1	1						adverb
5	America	6	2		América	Amerik			noun; geographical name

# Jigsaw reading activity for the sample lesson plan

The purpose of this activity is to enable everyone to have an idea of what the entire text is about.

Each group will carefully read their assigned section. They will discuss the main idea of their section and make connections to their students. Select a presenter to share with the whole group.

- Group 1- p. 1-
- Group 2- pp. 2-4
- Group 3- pp.5-7
- Group 4- pp.8-14
- Group 5- pp. 15- middle of 16
- Group 6- pp. bottom of 16-the end

- Modeling 3 activities from the sample lesson plan
- As you watch, please jot down the strategies that you see are being implemented, for example: activating prior or background knowledge, use of visuals, vocabulary introduction, etc.

We will then discuss these strategies, while keeping your students in mind.

## Exit Ticket: Closure



- What do you now know about SIFEs and how to teach them that you did not know before this workshop?
- What are three takeaways you will start incorporating with your SIFEs as soon as possible?



## Resources

- Center for Applied Linguistics: <http://www.cal.org>
- Colorín colorado - <http://www.colorincolorado.org/teaching-english-language-learners>
- Common Core State Standards - <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>
- **Differentiating Instruction and Assessment for English Language Learners: A Guide for K-12 Teachers, Shelley Fiarbairn and Stephaney Jones-Vo**
- Moll, L. et al, Funds of Knowledge, 2005 - [http://cmmr.usc.edu/FullText/Luis\\_Moll\\_Hidden\\_Family\\_Resources.pdf](http://cmmr.usc.edu/FullText/Luis_Moll_Hidden_Family_Resources.pdf)
- NYCDOE SIFE Educator Resources - <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/ELL/EducatorResources/SIFE.htm>
- NYSED Bridges Program, Lisa auslander, Project Director –<http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/schools/students-interruptedinconsistent-formal-education-sife> NYSED SIFE
- NYSED Engage NY - <https://www.engageny.org/>
- NYSED Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages - <http://www.nysed.gov/program-offices/office-bilingual-education-and-world-languages-obewl>
- NYSED Statewide Language RBERN - [http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/center/technical\\_assistance/program/language\\_rbern/](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/center/technical_assistance/program/language_rbern/)

