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INTEREST IN  
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from The Big Book of Tasks for English Language Development, Grades K-8.


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# This Book at a Glance

In this book, I focus on engaging tasks that support students' developing language proficiency. Each one is designed to streamline your teaching—and provide opportunities for students to produce language and communicate, both orally and in writing. The overarching principle is that students need to communicate messages, ideas, and information as much as they are receiving messages, ideas, and information. That's the surest way for them to develop fluency with the English language. I've laid out each task with the following features to make it easy for you to use the book as you are actually teaching.


## 2 Picture Retelling

### Listening



**WHEN YOU MIGHT OFFER IT**

When students are able to understand the gist of a story read aloud.



**TARGET**

Students can put pictures in order after listening to a story read aloud.

**A light introduction to inform students, but notice how brief it is. We want to move right into the action of the task.**

**Inviting students to** retell a story you have read aloud to them is a powerful way to develop learners' listening comprehension. The routine also helps them understand story structure. Since students new to English are often not speaking in school, they need alternative ways to retell a story. They can point to pictures to put them in order, or they can manipulate the pictures themselves.


**Your Instructions**

**Materials:** Simple picture books – photocopy the picture pages and/or cut out images from the beginning, middle, and end of the book. You don't need to copy every page—just the big events that depict the beginning, middle, and resolution. A well-known story like “The Three Little Pigs” is a good introductory one or any narrative with a simple plot.


**Name It:** Today we are going to retell a story about a little girl and her brother. You are going to use pictures to retell the story and I will help you if you need it. (Students can connect to what you are saying).

**What You Might Say Next:** “When we retell stories, we think about what we understand. We think about the characters and what they do. Often, they have a problem they have to solve. We don't say everything about the story, but the most important parts. We think of what happened in the beginning of the story, what happened in the middle, and at the end of the story. I have pictures read aloud to you. The first story I am going to read today.” (Point or hold up the pictures/book so students can make connections to what you are saying.)


The little girl went into the treehouse.




She called for her brother to come up.



He was too small to climb the rope.



The little boy cried.



**This feature helps you know when students are ready for it.**

**Tie the target goal to your standards and your success criteria.**

**I give you the basics for launching the task.**

**The explicitly stated purpose—so important for students to hear!**

**A light appetizer to inform students, but notice how brief it is. We want to move right into the action of the task.**

Ideas for how to demonstrate and also involve students—I purposely didn't script it in full because it's best if the words come from you!

**Model/Do Together:** Read the story aloud, stopping often to restate what is happening in the story, using simple language that summarizes the setting, characters, conflict, and action. Point to pictures as you go. After you are done reading and using the pictures you have cut out, ask students to help you retell. Support students by asking them to use the pictures to help them think of sequence by using words like first, next, and then.

**Release:** Once students are comfortable with a partner, work with a partner.

Ideas for students doing the doing! Having students communicate ideas, information, and thoughts is the heart of the tasks.

### Watch Fors and Work-Arounds

Students may use a mix of their heritage language and English to retell or may speak only English. Students are often more comfortable expressing their understanding in their heritage language. In this context, using their heritage language skills is natural. If students are not comfortable with English, they may use their heritage language to express their understanding. In my experience, they earnestly want to share their thoughts accurately, so it makes sense they would rely on their heritage language to ensure they are doing so. Encourage students to use the language they have to work on retelling the stories. Asking students to only speak English will not help them acquire English. It raises negative emotions and shuts down students' desire to participate.

Ideas for support and differentiating when students need your coaching in the midst of or after completing a task.