From Test to Context: How to Inform Contextualized Intervention without Teaching to the Test

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Acknowledgements/Disclosures

- Dr. Nelson discloses that she will be discussing the Test of Integrated Language and Literacy Skills (TILLS) and Student Language Scale (SLS) and expects to earn royalties from them.
- She acknowledges coauthors Drs. Elena Plante, Nancy Helm-Estebrooks, and Camera Bick in this symposium.
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The presenters will

1. Address how to avoid teaching to the test
2. Provide ideas for how to go from test to context by using:

GOAL = to conduct relevant assessment and intervention

THINK
MEANING
PURPOSE
FUNCTION
SCAFFOLDS

THINK BEYOND THE TEST
What tests can and cannot do.

**Formal tests**

**What tests can do**
- Identify disorders
- Core group of subtests
- Norm-referenced
- Evidence-based cut scores
- Best sensitivity and specificity (over 80%)
- Support eligibility decisions
- Track change
  - Test learning considerations
  - Limited content coverage
- Profile strengths and weaknesses
- Need a theoretically meaningful model
- Need evidence of factors

**What tests can NOT do**
- Tell you what to do in therapy
- Not enough content coverage
- Not a direct representation of the curriculum
- Not contextualized tasks
- Track change on a daily or weekly basis
- Provide a profile when tests are not co-normed

Tests can point to areas to target.

**...But they cannot provide the tasks**

**THINK THEORY...**

A Theoretically Meaningful Model

- Good listening comp & sentence formulation
- Low reading decoding & fluency & spelling
- Average in both
- High sound/word skills and surface reading!
- Good Reading Decoding + Poor Comprehension
- Low Reading + Low Language
- Sentence/Discourse Ability
- Sound/Word Ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modality</th>
<th>Language Level</th>
<th>Sound/Word Level</th>
<th>Sentence/Discourse Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>1. Vocabulary Awareness (VA)</td>
<td>6. Listening Comprehension (LC)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Phonemic Awareness (PA)</td>
<td>8. Following directions (FD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>4. Nonword Repetition (NWRep)</td>
<td>3. Story retelling (Comp Qs) [SRcomp]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. Social communication (SC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>10. Nonword Reading (NWrd)</td>
<td>7. Reading comprehension (RC)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>5. Nonword Spelling (NWSp)</td>
<td>12a. Written Exp discourse score (WExdisc)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12c. Written Exp - word score (WExword)</td>
<td>12b. Written Exp sentence combining score (WExsens)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. Digit Span Backward (DSB)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


10 year old 5th Grade Boy

- Hx of prematurity; born at 26 weeks, in hospital for 5 months
- Primary eligibility speech/language impairment on basis of language
- Goals in multiple areas of language and math
  - Verbal expression
  - Language content
  - Reading comprehension
  - Math calculation
  - Math reasoning

What profile? So what should you target?

- Good listening comp & expressive formulation
- Low reading decoding & fluency & spelling
- Average in both
- Low Reading + Low Language
- High sound/word skills & surface reading?
- Good Reading Decoding + Poor Comprehension

6. Listening Comprehension

Say, "I'm going to read some very short stories. Your job is to listen and pay careful attention. Then I'll ask you some questions about the story. Tell me 'yes' if you are sure the answer is 'yes.' Tell me 'no' if you are sure the answer is 'no.' If the story doesn't clearly tell you the answer, tell me 'maybe.'

7. Reading Comprehension

Administer immediately following Listening Comprehension:

"Now, it's your turn to read some short stories and answer the questions in your Student Book. Circle yes if you are sure the answer is yes. Circle no if you are sure the answer is no. If the story doesn't clearly tell you the answer, circle maybe."

10. Nonword Reading

Say, "These are pretend words that are not real words, but they are like real words. Your job is to read these words out loud."

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Formal tests can be curriculum-relevant...

but not curriculum based

e.g., pseudowords → real words

---

Curriculum-based language assessment and intervention

"Use of curriculum contexts and content for measuring a student’s language intervention needs and progress." (Nelson, 1989, p. 171, LSHSS)
Curriculum-Based Measurement
- Has the child learned the curriculum?
- Repeated measures
- Structured tasks
- To evaluate the curriculum and system
- To assess the child's response to intervention

Curriculum-Based Language Assessment and Intervention
- Does the child have the language skills to learn the curriculum?
- Context-based measures
- To assess the child's abilities

Ethnographic Interviews of Participants

Student Teacher Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Interview</th>
<th>Parent Interview</th>
<th>Student Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom performance</td>
<td>Early development</td>
<td>What is hardest about school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Medical history</td>
<td>What is easiest?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of problems</td>
<td>Educational history</td>
<td>Prioritized list of concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anecdotes</td>
<td>Anecdotes</td>
<td>Anecdotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curricular concerns</td>
<td>Prioritized review of problems</td>
<td>Ideas about future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View of child's potential</td>
<td>Parents' goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M: Are you bored with the assignments that are given?
M: Like, the types of things.
M: Are those boring?
M: What makes it boring?
D: Sometimes it’s boring.
D: Well, sometimes she gives out something>
D: I don’t know.
M: (Well, um) Let’s think about today when you were in school.
M: Can you think of a time when you were bored today?
D: Yeah.
M: Okay, tell me about it.
D: We were doing math.
D: And I had no idea what to do.
D: So I was bored, I guess.

Teacher and Parent Student Language Scales

1. What language skills are required?
   Expected Response [ER]
   Consider language skills and strategies that effective language users employ.

2. What does the student currently do?
   Observed Response [OR]
   Describe by working with the student using dynamic assessment.

3. What might the student learn to do differently?
   Mismatch [ER → OR]
   Establish instructional goals and benchmarks to target mismatch.

4. How should curricular task be scaffolded?
   Bridge from [OR → ER]
   Use dynamic assessment to design scaffolding and task modifications (if necessary).

Curriculum-Based Language Assessment and Intervention
Our planet made up of many layers of rock. The top layers of solid rock are called the crust. Deep beneath the crust is the mantle, where it is so hot that some rock melts. The melted, or molten, rock is called magma. Volcanoes are formed when magma pushes its way up through the crack in Earth's crust. This is called a volcanic eruption. When magma pours forth on the surface, it is called lava.

1. What does the student currently do?
2. What language skills are required?
3. What might the student learn to do differently?
4. How should task be scaffolded?
THINK LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS
What are the requirements of the task?

THINK DISCOURSE LEVELS
Planned Discourse Continuum

Conversation  Narrative  Expository

THINK TASKS

What is functional and what might the child do differently?

FUNCTION

Communication  Child Factors  Curriculum  Environment
+STRATEGY

- EX: Morphology
  - Children increase vocabulary by using the meanings of familiar base words and suffixes to infer the meanings of unfamiliar derivatives.

  • piglet
  • owlet

  little pig, little owl, little owl

+THINK DYNAMIC

How should tasks be scaffolded?

Scaffolding in the Zone
Zone of proximal development
Student should be “in the zone” of optimal learning
What can be achieved with adult scaffolding
Dynamic assessment: what supports/scaffolds result in success

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978)

- Test
- Teach
- Test

+ Graduated Prompting

- High Challenge: Scaffold
- Challenge: Scaffold
- Functional: Scaffold
Rubric Example Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1: Full Participation</th>
<th>Level 2: Emerging</th>
<th>Level 3: Proficient</th>
<th>Level 4: Competent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rewarded level of performance and co-productive scaffolding</td>
<td>Moderate level of performance and limited scaffolding</td>
<td>Minimal level of performance and no scaffolding</td>
<td>Minimal level of performance and no scaffolding</td>
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</table>

Contextualized Language Intervention

May still be:
- Goal Directed
- Include specific / limited number of targets
- Supported practice and learning opportunities
- Have an explicit skills focus

Contextualized Scaffolding for Intervention

- Activity has larger purpose than the targeted skill
- Child performs with considerable structural and interactive support initially
- Increasing mastery of skill and decreased assistance
- Scaffolds are temporary – don’t forget to move toward independence
- Progress monitoring reflective of scaffolding

EXAMPLE:
Teaching language through literature units (narrative) and science projects (expository)
THINK EDUCATIONALLY RELEVANT

- Contextually-based and Educationally Relevant
- Place a skill in the meaningful context for which it will be used
  - Examples: Narrative literature book, expository context
- May include a motivation that is purposeful and/or functionally relevant
  - School project, social purpose
- Examples: blogs, school newspaper

Thinking in Action

- 8.5 year old 2nd-grade girl
  - History of speech and language therapy.
  - Struggling in school.
  - Parents considering holding her back a grade.
CASE EXAMPLE: 8.5 year old 2nd grader

### TOLD-P4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>T Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter Oral</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letter Visual</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Verbal</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Fluency</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Repetition</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Production</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonological Comprehension</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Composite Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composite</th>
<th>Quotient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcome</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating Quotient</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking Quotient</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken Language Quotient</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Test of Narrative Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Comprehension</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Narrative</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Interview**

MEGAN

- Megan does not like school and thinks her classroom and teacher are "funny" this year.

**FOLLOW UP**
- Classroom is where having problems – home with tutor seems better.
- Has to read 10 minutes every day at home is fine there but doesn't like reading group and writing sentences.

MEGAN likes to be quiet around friends but wishes she could "say more stuff" with them.

**FOLLOW UP** - talking on playground hard but can talk with her best friend well.

**PARENTS**

- Concerned about school success – and going to next grade

---

2. What language skills are required?
3. How can I scaffold?

CURRICULAR ASSESSMENT

- Difficulty with Metalinguistic / Figurative Language (Relational and temporal terms) and following directions
- Disciplinary Literacy: Decreased decoding multi/syllabic morphemes
- Miscue analysis age-appropriate reading passage:
  - 89.6% accuracy
  - Text item substitutions (e.g., “stroller” for “strolled”),
  - Reversals (e.g., “she hard looked” for “she looked hard”),
  - Morpheme deletions (e.g., “circumstance” for “circumstances”),
  - Misarticulations (“Gaug” for “Gage”),
  - Intonation shifts, insertions (e.g., just)
  - Multiple repetitions.
Curricular Assessment: Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension
Strategies: no paraphrasing, summarization
Questions: (answered 25%)
Answered all factual
Difficulty on inferential

When asked "what happened at the end of the reading when the text indicated that the main character crashed a tractor into a tree through the words "the pecan tree stopped it (the tractor)."
Made up her own plausible ending which did not correlate to the main character crashing the tractor.

SCRIPTED GENERATED NARRATIVE
• One day I go to school for a field trip.
• And I forgot my permission slip.
• Her not home so I couldn’t go.
• I stay at the school.
• I do math.
• I like science.
• I like recess.
• He tried to eat my pencil eraser!

SCRIPTED RETELL NARRATIVE:
• There was kids that were going to a field trip
• and they had a break down
• the kids had to go outside and push
• The end.
SCRIPTED RETELL NARRATIVE
• Once I went to camping with my family and (we had, we had )we roasted marshmallows.
• There chocolate and crackers
• And we sang some songs
• and we saw a whole bunch of shooting stars.
• And brother wanted to put marshmallows in the hair.
• Then I ran away.
• The end.

4. What might the student learn to do differently?

5. What is functional and a priority?

Language of Classroom
• Language of language in the classroom
• Strategy to paraphrase, clarifying, and plan before asking for help

Inform
-use probe
questioning,
giving examples
Teach Content in Context

1. Start with a storybook or expository text for skill introduction
2. Middle are multiple focused activities on each skill: SEMANTICS: defining words, generating, webbing
   SYNTAX: sentence expansion, sentence combining
   NARRATIVE: story grammar components, pictography
3. End with a story creation or expository project for integration of skills (oral or written)

CONTEXTUALIZED UNIT STRUCTURE
(Ukrainetz & Gillam, 2006; Hoggan & Strong, 1994)

For 3-4 tx skills that occur together within a purposeful activity
EXAMPLE: In the context of a narrative:

Skills
a) Narrative structure – story grammar for episode
b) Vocabulary
c) Syntax- noun-phrase elaboration
d) Pragmatics - story grammar for internal states

INTERNAL-STATES CHART

By 6/07/20XX, when participating in a narrative retell, Megan will demonstrate correct past tense verbs with 80-90% accuracy and low clinician scaffolding as measured by progress monitoring rubric.

By 6/07/20XX, when participating in a narrative retell, Megan will use targeted vocabulary with 80-90% accuracy and low clinician scaffolding as measured by progress monitoring rubric.

By 6/07/20XX, when participating in a narrative retell, Megan will demonstrate correct past tense verbs with 80-90% accuracy and low clinician scaffolding as measured by progress monitoring rubric.

**CORE STANDARDS**

2nd grade level standard for Informational text

- LA2.1.C Students demonstrate understanding of informational text
- LA2.1.C.3 Students use a variety of sources to gather information, such as table of contents, charts, informational books, and guest speakers.

2nd grade level standard for Narrative Discourse

- RL1 – Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson
- RL3 – Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details
- SL4 – Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences
- L1e – Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future
- L1e – Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts including using adjectives and adverbs to describe

### Holistic Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 1</td>
<td>Good (3)</td>
<td>Fair (2)</td>
<td>Needs Improvement (1)</td>
<td>Needs Improvement (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2</td>
<td>Good (3)</td>
<td>Fair (2)</td>
<td>Needs Improvement (1)</td>
<td>Needs Improvement (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 3</td>
<td>Good (3)</td>
<td>Fair (2)</td>
<td>Needs Improvement (1)</td>
<td>Needs Improvement (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 4</td>
<td>Good (3)</td>
<td>Fair (2)</td>
<td>Needs Improvement (1)</td>
<td>Needs Improvement (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### THINK ABOUT IT....

A 7 year 9 month old first grade boy

- IEP based on speech/language impaired
- History of articulation difficulties
- Working on /l/
- Getting RtI Tier 2 help for reading delays

---

### TILLS profile for 7;9 boy

![TILLS Profile Image]

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### TILLS scores for 7;9 boy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Band</th>
<th>Composite Score</th>
<th>Sound/Word</th>
<th>Sentence/Discourse</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Written</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-7 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>68</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-18 years</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

School Classification: SLI-speech only

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### Sound-symbol association (alphabetic principle)

- Low phonemic awareness
- Inadequate sound-symbol association knowledge
- Misses orthographic cues about how to pronounce sounds
- Reading fluency is a big problem
- Spelling rated lowest by both teacher and parent

- Use multi-modality, multi-sensory approach to make sound-symbol association automatic
- Soundletter → speech “Say /p/”
- Make page for “My Sounds & Letters Book”
- Symbol chip (avoid letter names)
- Precise articulation; attention to distinctive features
- Sound/speech (visual or aud only) → symbol “Point to /p/”
- From array of easily distinguished sounds/letters as /p/, /s/, /e,
- Symbol → sound “What sound does this letter make?”
- Sound → letter “Write /p/”
- Letter name → “Point to /p/” (use with caution)
Five Critical Components
(National Reading Panel; NCLB)

Phonemic awareness — ability to focus on and manipulate the smallest units of sound in spoken language
Phonics — relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language
Vocabulary development — stored information about the meaning and pronunciation of words
Reading fluency — ability to read accurately, quickly, and with expression
Reading comprehension — ability to understand or gain meaning from text
Word Pattern Recognition
(Orthographic Principle)

- Consonant → Vowel
- Single consonant → multiple vowels
- Multiple consonants → single vowel

- Vowel → Consonant
- Single vowel → multiple consonants
- Multiple vowels → single consonant

- CVC
- Onset → Rime
- Common "word families"
- Morphology ←→ Orthography
- Common “chunks” → -ing, -ion, -un, -dis-

Misses orthographic cues about how to pronounce vowels. Reading fluency is a big problem. Is he aware of inflectional and derivational morphemes? Is he using relatively better sentence/discourse skills to assist with fluency? Is he monitoring comprehension – “Does that make sense?”

Fluent Word Recognition/
Spelling with Connection to
Form & Meaning in Context

- Reading → Saying
  - Make sure that sound-symbol associations are fluent across modalities.
  - What sound do you see at the beginning of that word? Get your mouth ready for that sound.
  - What’s the first chunk? The next?
  - Does that make sense?
  - Read along with me. [shadow reading]

- Saying → Spelling
  - Say the word you want to spell
  - Say it slowly. What sound do you say first?
  - Say it in chunks
  - That says. … Is that what you wanted?
  - What letters will get me to know you mean “ ____”? Let me show you a neat little word family. We can make a new page in your small notebook.

Limited or inefficient strategies for difficult text. Difficulty monitoring sense-making.

Word Families
(analogical processes)
+10 year 7 month old fifth grade boy

- Identified as having a learning disability
- Reading goals on IEP
- ADHD
- No history of spoken language problems
- But what do you see?

TILLS profile for 10;7 boy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Identification</th>
<th>Composite Score</th>
<th>Standardized Score</th>
<th>Specificity</th>
<th>Detectors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-7 years</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>This score is consistent with the presence of language and literacy disorders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-11 years</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>This score does not meet the criterion for identifying language and literacy disorders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-18 years</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Core subtests:
- Vocab
- NW Spell
- NW Read
- WE-Discourse

Composite Score:
- Sound/Word: 91
- Sentence/Discourse: 87
- Oral: 86
- Written: 84

School Classification: LD-reading only
Baseline Report Writing Sample

a choper is a helacopter that is used with the army, on the doctor, and musems. in the army the used whean a man gets shot. They used it whean that had it for bombs whean they fight.. and they used it for emergensay from the doctor whean they have somewhere far to go they used the choper for the museons if you dress up as a army man.

Scaffolding

1. While researching his topic, Marcus was given note cards and scaffolded to put one idea on each card, so that he could group them into “facts that go together.”

2. When necessary, a feedback scaffold was used, e.g., “Do these two facts go together? Let’s read them and see if they talk about the same topic?”

3. Next, Marcus was guided to label each group with a phrase telling why they go together.

4. These labels formed the basis for his introductory sentences, given the scaffold to think, “What is this paragraph going to be about?”
**Snakes**

On the sides of the snake's body, the muscles expand and also contract so it will help them go along. Snakes have muscles in their head to help them go along. 

The Indian cobra that lives in Africa can not hear the African play the flute. It just follows the flute circles and its just waits for it to get too close so it can try to hit it.

**Where snakes live**

There are snakes that live all over the world for example they can live in Africa, Asia, and Australia, or Europe. They also live in the sea, and gardens. It is too cold in Antarctica and some parts of North America for some snakes. Snakes usually live in trees, caves, baskets, water, underground, and deserts. For snakes to live, they need to eat. Snakes eat rats, rabbits, eggs, frogs, and birds.

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**Constellations**

This paragraph is about the history of constellations. In the 16 century explorers went to the southern seas and mapped the southern sky. That means they wrote down the stars. They went to the sea and saw the stars that nobody knew about and the map became ancient. The men had a long piece of paper and put down the stars and saw things like animals and traced them the men named the 88 constellations so they could remember them. Constellations have been developed as early as 4,000 BC almost 6,000 years ago.

This paragraph is about describing constellations. There are 1,300 bright stars in the constellations. When you look at the constellations you can see bright stars and dull ones. It’s harder to find the rest of the bare constellation because the stars are dull and more spread out than the big dipper. There are 88 constellations in the sky they move every month and they are very far away.

Leo the lion is a constellation. Leo the lion has 15 stars in its body there is a big star in the lion's foot. Leo the lion's heart is a star called Regales. The best time to see him is April. I picked Leo the lion because he is one of my favorite animals.

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**Marcus’ Notes for Snake Report**

- The snake’s muscles are very complicated.
- On the sides of the snake’s body, it expands and contracts to help push it along.
- The snake also has muscles in its head for eating.

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Personal Outcome for Marcus

When asked “Why was it so easy for you to keep working on your article by yourself and not get distracted?” Marcus replied, “Because (pause) I’m so organized!”

Some Resources and References


Some Tools

- Narrative-Based Units
- Tier Talk (Tier 2 vocab) (Beck & McKeown)
- The Magic of Stories: Literature Based Intervention (Strong & North, 1996)

- Expanding Expression Tool (Smith)
MORE REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- Brinton, B. Robinson, L., & Fujiki, M. (2009). Description of a program for social language intervention: “If you can have a conversation, you can have a relationship.” *Language Speech and Hearing Services in the Schools, 35*, 283-290.
• Masterson, & K. Apel, (Eds.), *Clinical Decision Making in Developmental Language Disorders* (pp.249-266). Baltimore, MD: Brookes.


