Embedded Readings, Acquisition and Literacy in the Latin Classroom

Dr. Robert Patrick

Parkview High School

Gwinnett County Public Schools

Foundational Principles

- Studies also provide consistent evidence that we acquire language and develop literacy primarily from understanding what we read and hear. Stephen Krashen

- Of the two modes-listening and reading—reading is best.

- Reading: seeing squiggles on a page and a movie in your head.

- Reading is not translating.

- The 90% rule

- The "compelling" rule

Embedded Readings

- Teacher creates a sequence of readings of the same story or text that are increasingly more demanding.
- Each earlier text can be found within the next more demanding text—hence "embedded."
- It takes as many embedded versions as your particular class needs, 2, 3, 4 or more.
- May be created from the bottom up or from the top down.

Embedded readings—Top Down

- Start with the target text that you want students to read and understand.
- Identify words that you know they will have difficulty with.
- Re-write the text using synonyms for those difficult words or leaving them out altogether to begin with so that you have a somewhat modified text.
- The step above may take one or more embedded versions to accomplish readability (90% rule) each time.
- Re-write the text one more time including ONLY words that you know they will know—perhaps a short summary of the total text.
- Work with them in reverse order, like this:

Aeneid 1:1-4

Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab <u>oris</u>

Arms and a man I sing, who the first from Troy's borders

Italiam, fato <u>profugus</u>, <u>Laviniaque</u> venit

came to Italy, a refugee by fate, and to Lavinian

litora, multum ille et terris iactatus et <u>alto</u>

shores, he, thrown so much from land and sea

vi <u>superum</u> <u>saevae</u> memorem Iunonis ob iram;

by the force of the gods on account of the anger mindful of savage Juno.

28 words—6 unknown word = 79% readability

Aeneid 1:1-4 (embedded 1)

Ego, Vergilius, fabulam cano.

I, Vergil, sing a story.

Fabula est de armis et viro.

The story is about arms and a man.

Vir iter fecit. Vir in mare et terris iactatus est. The man made a trip. The man was through in the see and on the lands.

Vir per multa horribilia laboravit quod Iuno erat iratissima. The man suffered through many horrible things because Juno was very angry.

Aeneid 1:1-4 (embedded 2)

- Cano de armis et viro qui Troia Lavineam venit. Aeneas iactatus est in mare et terris et multa passus est (endured), ob iram Iunonis saevae.

- I sing about arms and a man who cam from Troy to Lavinea. Aeneas was thrown in the sea and on the lands and suffered many things on account of the anger of save Juno.

- 24 words—2 unknown = 92% readability

Aeneid 1:1-4 (embedded 3)

Arma virumque cano, qui primus ab oris Troiae
Italiam, fato profugus, litora Laviniaque venit,
ille et terris et alto (mari) iactatus
vi superum (deorum) ob iram memorem
Iunonis saevae;

Weapons and a man I sing, who first from the boundaries of Troy to Italy, by fate a refugee, to the Lavinian shores came, he thrown on the lands and the sea by the force of the gods on account of the anger mindful of savage Juno.

Aeneid 1:1-4

Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris

Italiam, fato profugus, Laviniaque venit

litora, multum ille et terris iactatus et alto

vi superum saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram;

Supporting Activities

- Read and Discuss
- Dictatio
- Kahoot.it
- Point out literary style and devices
  - Poetic sandwich
  - Enjambment
  - Ciceronian period
  - Et alia

Read and Discuss

- 1. Quis in carmine loquitur?
- 2. De quo ille dicit?
- 3. Quomodo hanc scaenam describere possumus? Lepida? Periculosa? Quieta?

Dictatio

- Traditional dictatio provides very simple, very powerful introduction to new vocabulary as a listening, writing, and comprehension activity.
- Can be used as a vocabulary review at the end of a unit.
- Identify new words.
- Write 10 sentences using the words based on the text you want them to read.
- Read each 3 times, slowly. They write what they hear to the best of their ability.
- Show sentence on screen. They write corrections beneath their sentence.
- After they make corrections, they can ask you about the meaning of anything in the sentence.

Kahoot.it

Somewhere in the midst of using embedded readings, you might use a [Kahoot game](#) to practice new vocabulary. This is a simple, low level form of delivering and practicing understandable messages.

- Warm up activity on a second or third day.
- Brain break from reading.
- End of class activity.
- Post to website for home review, snow day activity or for absent students.

Point out literary style

- The poetic sandwiches
- Troiae oris—what's in that sandwhich
- Lavinia litora sandwich
- Terris alto sandwich
- Savae memorem Iunonis ob iram—a feast of interlocking sandwiches!

Q & A: Interrogationes/Responsa

let's talk

Contact: robert.patrick59@gmail.com

More: Embedded Readings, CI and Literacy in the Language Classroom

- https://latinbestpracticescir.wordpress.com/
  - Latin Best Practices CI Resources with ideas, downloads, and demonstrations of various CI approaches

- http://embeddedreading.com/
  - Laurie Clarcq's website devoted to embedded readings.

- http://todallycomprehensiblelatin.blogspot.com/
  - Keith Toda's really wonderful blog on using CI in the Latin classroom.