

When Mrs. Hernandez meets with her second grade teaching team, she shares how using the question cards in her reading groups went. Even though the “Below-the-Surface” text-dependent questions were challenging for her students, she could see that they were engaged in talking about the texts and finding evidence to support their ideas. She also shares that she’s noticed that recently, during collaborative conversations about the texts she reads aloud, her students have been attending much more to what it says in the text rather than relying solely on background knowledge or guessing. She concludes that it is the attention she gives to text-dependent questions in both small reading groups and whole group teacher read alouds that is contributing to her students’ development of these skills.

### Resources

#### Web Sites:

- Achieve the Core has resources for creating text-dependent questions (<http://achievethecore.org/page/710/text-dependent-question-resources>), as well as sample lessons (<http://achievethecore.org/>).

#### Recommended Reading:

Boyles, Nancy. 2012/13. “Closing in on Close Reading.” *Educational Leadership* 70 (4): 36-41. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec12/vol70/num04/Closing-in-on-Close-Reading.aspx>

### ***Designated ELD Vignette***

The example in Vignette 4.1 illustrates good teaching for all students with particular attention to the language learning needs of ELs. In addition to good first teaching with integrated ELD, EL children benefit from intentional and purposeful designated ELD instruction that stems from and builds into content instruction. The following vignette illustrates how designated ELD can build from and into lessons on close reading during ELA.

#### **Vignette 4.2 Designated ELD Instruction in Grade Two:**

##### **Discussing “Doing” Verbs in Stories**

**Background:** Mrs. Hernandez’s class is conducting an author study on Kevin Henkes (see Vignette 4.1 above). Mrs. Hernandez has observed that her ELs at the Expanding level of English language proficiency are finding the inferential text-dependent questions she poses during teacher read alouds and in small reading groups challenging, especially when the language the author uses is somewhat nuanced. She wants to find ways of supporting them to understand the inferential text dependent questions she asks them and to effectively convey their understandings of the questions in English, so she plans to explicitly address the language in the texts that she thinks may be making it challenging for her students to make inferences and respond to the text dependent questions.

**Lesson Context:** Mrs. Hernandez meets with her second grade teacher colleagues to discuss her observations, and the other teachers share that some of their students are experiencing the same types of challenges. As the team examines the types of questions students are having difficulty with and the language in the texts that students need to interpret in order to answer the

questions, they discover that some of the questions have to do with how the author shows how a character feels or what the character is thinking. Sometimes authors do not explicitly write how a character is feeling or what they are thinking. Instead, they show emotions and thoughts through behavior and dialogue.

When they look in the storybooks for examples of this use of language, they discover that there are quite a few instances. For example, in the Kevin Henkes book, *Chrysanthemum*, instead of writing “She’s sad,” Henkes writes that the main character “wilts” when her classmates tease her about her name. Instead of writing “She’s nervous,” he writes that she drags her feet in the dirt. The teachers also notice that “sad” and “nervous” are adjectives, whereas “wilts” and “drags” are verbs. They decide that this is an important language feature to point out to their EL students, as the children may not notice this on their own. Using resources from recent professional learning sessions provided by their district, Mrs. Hernandez and her colleagues plan a series of designated ELD lessons that delve deeper into how authors use different types of verbs to show how a character is feeling. The learning target and cluster of CA ELD Standards for today’s lesson, where Mrs. Hernandez will work with a group of EL children at the Expanding level of English language proficiency, are the following:

**Learning Target:** The students will describe how authors use verbs instead of adjectives to show how a character is thinking or what they are feeling.

**Primary CA ELD Standards Addressed (Expanding):**

*ELD.PI.2.1 - Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions ... ; ELD.PI.2.6 - Describe ideas, phenomena (e.g., how earthworms eat), and text elements (e.g., setting, events) in greater detail based on understanding of a variety of grade-level texts and viewing of multimedia with moderate support; ELD.PII.2.3 - Use a growing number of verb types (e.g., doing, saying, being/having, thinking/feeling) with increasing independence.*

**Lesson Excerpt:** During designated ELD, Mrs. Hernandez explains to her students that they’re going to be looking carefully at one way that Kevin Henkes makes his writing so interesting. She tells them that they’ll be looking at how Henkes uses “doing” verbs to show how his characters are feeling or what they’re thinking. She opens the book *Chrysanthemum* to the page just after the complication stage of the story began.

Mrs. Hernandez: Children, remember when we read the story *Chrysanthemum*, and how the children teased the main character because of her name? Here it says, “Chrysanthemum wilted.” How does Kevin Henkes show how Chrysanthemum is feeling at this point in the story?

Noé: She’s sad because they’re teasing her.

Mrs. Hernandez: Yes, she is sad. But Kevin Henkes doesn’t just say, “she’s sad,” does he? He uses the word “wilted,” and he uses this word for a reason. Usually, we use the word “wilt” when a flower is dying and folding over like this (acts out the word). Let’s say “we’re wilting” together and pretend we’re flowers wilting. Ready?

Children: (Chorally, while acting out the word) We’re wilting.

Ibrahim: That’s how Chrysanthemum felt. She felt like the flower when it’s wilting. It feels sad.

Noé: (Excited). And Chrysanthemum is a flower, too!

Mrs. Hernandez: That’s right. So, what you’re saying, is that Kevin Henkes didn’t just tell us “she’s sad.” Instead, he showed us how she was feeling, and he used a doing verb, *wilt*, to show us. We’re going to take a look at some other places where Kevin Henkes

uses doing verbs—instead of using adjectives, like *sad* or *happy*—to show how characters are feeling or what they’re thinking.

Mrs. Hernandez shows the children a chart she’s made. On one side of the chart, there’s a place to record what it says in the Kevin Henkes books, and on the other side, there’s a place for the children to decide what the text means using “being/having” (also called “relating”) or “thinking/feeling” (also called “sensing”) verbs. She explains that examples of being/having verbs that relate one piece of information to another are sentences such as “I *am* a teacher” or “I *have* a pencil.” Examples of thinking/feeling verbs are “She *thought* it was recess time” or “She *felt* happy.” She doesn’t dwell too much on the terms as she’ll be building the children’s knowledge of them over the next few weeks.

Mrs. Hernandez continues to model finding instances in *Chrysanthemum* where the author uses “doing” verbs to show how the characters felt or what they thought. First, she reads the sentence and has the children turn to a partner to discuss what the sentences mean. She then asks a few students to share the ideas they discussed with the whole group, and she writes them on the chart (provided below). As she writes the sentences, she uses a different color for the verbs in each column.

Using Verbs to “Show” & “Tell”		
Story	What it says in the story Showing with “doing” verbs	What it means Telling with “being/having” & “thinking/feeling” verbs)
<i>Chrysanthemum</i>	Everyone <i>giggled</i> upon hearing Chrysanthemum’s name.	They <i>thought</i> her name was funny.
	Chrysanthemum <i>wilted</i> .	She <i>was</i> very sad.
	Chrysanthemum <i>walked</i> to school as slowly as she could.	She <i>was</i> nervous about going to school.
	She <i>loaded</i> her pockets with her most prized possessions and her good luck charms.	She <i>didn’t feel</i> safe.

Mrs. Hernandez: What do you notice about the verbs the author is using, the ones in the left hand column (pointing)?

Noé: The author is showing the characters are doing something. They’re not feeling or thinking about it. Over there, it says, “she was sad,” and that’s describing her, how she feels.

Ana: I want to add on to what Noé said. He – Kevin Henkes – he didn’t say she was sad, but he did say it. He said it with showing us what she did, how she acted.

Mrs. Hernandez: Yes, showing us what characters are doing is one way that authors tell us about what the characters are thinking or feeling. It makes their writing more interesting. It’s okay to say things like, “she’s sad,” or “she’s nervous,” but it makes it more interesting for the reader when the author shows us what the characters are doing instead of just telling us. So, an example of showing us is when Chrysanthemum wilts or drags her feet in the dirt, and an example of telling us would be to write that she’s sad or nervous. When authors show us, we have to really think about what’s going on. We have to do the thinking work.

Clara: But when it says “Chrysanthemum *walked* to school as slowly as she could,” the verb doesn’t just do it.

Mrs. Hernandez: What do you mean? Can you say a little more about that?

Clara: You have to look at the rest, not just the verb. You have to look at where it says, “as slowly as she could.” She was walking, but not fast. She was walking slowly because she didn’t want to go to school. Because she was so nervous.

Mrs. Hernandez: Great observation Clara. Yes, you have to look at the verb, but you also have to look at what’s around the verb, how the “doing” verb was being done, or how the action was happening. Chrysanthemum was walking in a certain way: not quickly, not at a normal pace, but *slowly*. Where it says she was walking slowly, that tells us more about the verb or, in this case, the action she was taking. Over the next couple of weeks, we’re going to be talking a lot about different types of verbs and about the words in sentences that give more information about the verbs. Today, we’re going to start writing down some of the different types we find.

Mrs. Hernandez shows the children another chart, one with four columns. She writes the verbs that are in each of the sentences in the left hand column. The chart Mrs. Hernandez starts is provided below.

Verb Chart: Different types of verbs in Kevin Henkes books			
doing	thinking/feeling	being/having	saying
giggled wilted walked (slowly) loaded	thought didn’t feel	was	sighed

Mrs. Hernandez explains that there are still a lot of “thinking/feeling” and “being/having” verbs in a story, and there are many “saying” verbs because there is a lot of dialogue in stories, but that today, they are mostly focusing on the “doing” verbs that show how a character is feeling or what they’re thinking. She tells them that they may also find examples of “saying” verbs that do this. For example, an author may write “She sighed,” to show that a character is disappointed or sad, and he writes this on the chart as an example.

Mrs. Hernandez tells the children that their next task is to be “language detectives.” She has the students work in groups of three to find other examples in Kevin Henkes books where the author shows how a character is feeling or what they are thinking through “doing” or “saying” verbs. She gives the triads copies of several Kevin Henkes books, along with graphic organizers like the one she used to model the task with examples from each book in the left hand column and a space for the students to write their “translations” in the right hand column.

She tells the students that their task is to find a sentence in the text that they think uses doing verbs to show how a character feels or what they think, determine what the sentence means, agree on what they will write, write it in their graphic organizer, and then discuss why the author used the doing verb instead of using a being/having or thinking/feeling verb with an adjective. As the students engage in the task, she observes their discussions and provides “just-in-time” scaffolding when needed. Once the time for the task is up, she calls the students back to the rug to discuss their findings. She also asks the students to tell her where to place the verbs in the “verb chart,” which she will post in the room, along with the “using verbs to show and tell chart,” so that the children have models for their own story writing.

### Teacher Reflection and Next Steps

At their next collaborative planning meeting, Mrs. Hernandez meets with her second grade teacher colleagues to discuss how the lessons went. She shares that although the task was challenging at first, her students were excited about being “language detectives,” and the groups had lively discussions about the language they discovered in their investigations. In addition, Mrs. Hernandez was pleasantly surprised by how easy it was for the students to discuss in meaningful ways how different types of verbs are used in stories.

**Source and Recommended Reading:**

Schleppegrell, Mary J. 2010. "Supporting a 'Reading to Write' Pedagogy with Functional Grammar." In Caroline Coffin (Ed.). *Language Support in EAL Contexts. Why Systemic Functional Linguistics?* (Special Issue of *NALDIC Quarterly*), 26-31. NALDIC, Reading, UK. <http://oro.open.ac.uk/25026/1/>

**Conclusion**

The information and ideas in this grade-level section are provided to guide teachers in their instructional planning. Recognizing California's richly diverse student population is critical for instructional and program planning and delivery. Teachers are responsible for educating a variety of learners, including **advanced learners, students with disabilities, ELs at different English language proficiency levels, Standard English learners**, and other **culturally and linguistically diverse learners**, as well as **students experiencing difficulties** with one or another of the themes presented in this chapter (meaning making, effective expression, language development, content knowledge, and foundational skills).

It is beyond the scope of a curriculum framework to provide guidance on meeting the learning needs of every student because each student comes to teachers with unique needs, histories, and circumstances. Teachers must know their students well through appropriate assessment practices and other methods in order to design effective instruction for them. They need to adapt and refine instruction as appropriate for individual learners. For example, a teacher might anticipate before a lesson is taught—or observe during a lesson—that a student or a group of students will need some additional or more intensive instruction in a particular area. Based on this assessment of student needs, the teacher might provide individual or small group instruction or adapt the main lesson in particular ways. Information about meeting the needs of diverse learners, scaffolding, and modifying or adapting instruction is provided in Chapters 2 and 9. Additional information about formative assessment is provided in Chapter 8.

Second grade children are well on the road to discovering what brand new ideas and fresh new language they can explore and express in their reading and writing. They feel pride in consolidating the early literacy skills they have acquired and excitement for