

Lesson Plan: Home Language Development

This set of activities is designed to introduce teachers to the work of developing children’s home language. It could be integrated into courses on elementary or early literacy methods or teaching Multilingual Learners (MLs), or used for professional development.

In this 2.5-hour sequence of activities, teachers:

- Practice a greeting in the language their students speak.
- Develop and practice a research-based rationale for supporting children’s home languages in school.
- Explore strategies all teachers can use to integrate children’s home languages into the classroom.

In an optional extension activity, teachers participate in a gallery walk of resources related to developing |children’s home languages on the [Multilingual Learning Toolkit](#), and share learnings with colleagues.

<p>Learning Goals</p>	<p>Teachers will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn key words and phrases in languages they do not speak. • Cite research on the relationship between home language development and second language development. • Identify strategies for integrating children’s home languages in class.
<p>Pre-Work</p>	<p>Before the session, teachers should read “Ensuring the Presence of Each Child’s Language” from Sobrato Early Academic Language (SEAL).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review pages 7–8 of the resource. Identify a language that at least one child in your classroom speaks and learn the greeting phrases outlined in the resource. (If you already know those, follow the links to learn 2-3 more basic phrases or messages in that language.) Come to class ready to teach the greetings/other phrases to a colleague!
<p>Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of the Note Catcher (see template below)

Suggested Activities

Time & Activity	Notes
<p>Introduction to Home Language Development</p> <p>(10 mins)</p>	<p>Tell teachers: Today's session will focus on developing Multilingual Learners' (MLs) home languages.</p> <p>To activate teachers' prior knowledge about the topic, distribute the attached Note Catcher, and invite teachers to work in pairs to generate responses to the prompts. (Teachers can reference their pre-work, "Ensuring the Presence of Each Child's Language.") Let teachers know that we'll be using the Note Catcher to capture learnings throughout today's session (so they should leave room for notes).</p> <p>Then, give teachers a brief introduction to the work of home language development, highlighting key points from the Starter Guide and inviting teachers to add to their Note Catcher as they go. (If helpful, teachers can reference the paragraph following "What can I do to encourage home language development if I don't speak the home language of all the Multilingual Learners in my classroom?" on the Multilingual Learning Toolkit.) Suggested points to highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers who are not proficient in the child's home language can take important steps to support it. • For example, teachers can learn and use key words in the home language and provide opportunities for children to hear their home language in class. • These practices will help create a welcoming classroom environment where each child, culture, and language background is valued and children are excited about language diversity. • It can also help English-only speaking children understand that other languages exist and have different characteristics (an aspect of metalinguistic awareness), and foster respect for other languages and cultures.
<p>Research Review: How does home language development relate to second language acquisition?</p> <p>(20 mins)</p>	<p>Play the beginning of the video, "Using the native language as a resource," from Colorín Colorado, up until 0:15. (In the excerpt, Dr. Cloud describes a teacher who doesn't engage with children's home languages because "the children need to learn English".)</p> <p>Ask teachers: How would you respond to the teacher that Dr. Cloud is describing? Elicit a few responses.</p> <p>Then tell teachers: Now we're going to take a few moments to brush up on the research about the relationship between children's home language skills and their English language development.</p> <p>Invite teachers, in trios, to review two resources and develop talking points that use research to respond to the teacher in Dr. Cloud's example. (Teachers can capture these on their Note Catcher.)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource #1: "Using the native language as a resource" from Colorín Colorado • Resource #2: "The Home Language-An English Language Learner’s Most Valuable Resource" <p>While teachers are developing their talking points, the teacher educator or facilitator circulates and invites 2 groups to share their talking points with the whole class.</p> <p>Then, the teacher educator or facilitator plays the role of the teacher in the video, and the teacher candidates use their research-based talking points to explain how home language development supports second language development.</p>
<p>Jigsaw: Analyzing Strategies in Action (35 mins)</p>	<p>Tell teachers: You can support children’s home language development, even when you don’t speak their language.</p> <p>Here is one example. Show this video from SEAL about an integrated 3rd grade unit, up to timestamp 3:29. Ask teachers to watch for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the teacher bring Dylan’s home language into the classroom? (Invite teachers to add this to their Note Catcher.) • How do you think the choice to present in Portuguese impacts Dylan? The other students in the class? <p>Transition: Now we will examine what these strategies look like in action in more classrooms. Break the class into trios and assign each group to read and discuss one of the "Strategies in Action": PreK–TK, K–1, or 2–3 (or choose just the ones that best fit the focus of your session).</p> <p>Within groups, ask each group to identify a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reader—to read the strategy out loud to the group • Facilitator—to ask the discussion questions • Recorder/reporter—to share out highlights from the group’s discussion at the end <p>Give groups about 15 minutes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read their assigned text • Have a discussion using the included questions as prompts • Add any new strategies they learned to their Note Catcher <p>Then, invite groups to share out, charting responses on the board. Suggested prompt for share out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What strategies did the teacher you read about use to intentionally support multilingual children’s home language development?
<p>Resource Walk (60 mins)</p>	<p>Tell teachers: Now we will explore even more strategies for supporting children’s home languages in the classroom, through a resource walk. (See this Resource Walk activity.)</p>

<p>Conclusion (15 mins)</p>	<p>Invite teachers to reflect on and consolidate their learning by engaging in a 10 minute quick write in response to the following prompt, using their Note Catcher as reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What are some ways in which I can support my students' home language development?</i> <p>Then summarize key learnings about home language development and close the session. Key learnings to highlight might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers who are not proficient in the child's home language can still take important steps to support it.• For example, teachers can learn and use key words in the home language and provide opportunities for children to hear their home language in class.• These practices will help create a welcoming classroom environment where each child, culture, and language background is valued and children are excited about language diversity.• It can also help English-only speaking children understand that other languages exist and have different characteristics (an aspect of metalinguistic awareness), and foster respect for other languages and cultures.
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Note Catcher

How does children's home language development relate to their English language development?

Why is it important for teachers to support home language development in school?

What strategies do teachers use to develop Multilingual Learners' home language (even if they don't speak those languages)?