

The curriculum I decided to analyze in the Annotated Matrix was *HMH-Into Reading*, K-2nd Curriculum. In particular, I decided to narrow my research and solely focus on 2nd grade as it is the grade I am teaching. As a first-year teacher, the start of the school year felt like a simulation, I felt as if I was just going through the motions, not really paying close attention to the details *HMH-Into Reading* consists of. Now that I have taken a closer look at this curriculum, I have realized the attention to detail to “support students’ social and emotional learning (including social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills), throughout the program.” (Harcourt. H. M., 2023) The 2nd-grade curriculum in *HMH-Into Reading* is much more complex than one would think. The expectations for the specific unit I chose required abstract thinking, something that can be difficult for some students at such a young age. The first unit introduces the three components of central idea (topic, central idea, supporting evidence), setting (where and when), author purpose (persuade, inform, and entertain), summarizing, and character traits (external and internal traits). *HMH-Into Reading* introduces these key ELA components in a 21st-century manner. Right from the start of the unit, the curriculum is heavily based on real-world experiences, doing a great job of incorporating 21st-century views. The unit provides teachers and therefore students with an abundance of materials to successfully teach and learn how to be a well-rounded citizen in the community. It teaches students about “doing the right thing, telling the truth, respecting the needs of others, and being kind.” (Harcourt. H. M., 2023) This being said, I believe the theory/approach that best suits this unit is the Ecological Approach.

The Ecological Approach is characterized as heavily focusing on breaking down the barriers of academic life and home life and allowing them to bridge together as one. *HMH-Into Reading* prioritizes a curriculum that will encourage students to use past experiences in order to

create new learning. In addition, the curriculum researched allows teachers to have a free range of creativity within the lesson and it allows cross-curricular connections to occur. Furthermore, the lessons in this unit, heavily focus on conversation. Students are encouraged to think of the “where, when, and why” of their experience in order to connect it to the curriculum being presented to them.

The first peer-reviewed source I decided to use really focused on boosting the academic language skills of ELLs through dramatization and movement. Something that is phenomenal about *HMH-Into Reading* is that it is also a Spanish curriculum. This being said children are encouraged to interact with their surroundings in two different languages. While they are becoming stronger Spanish speakers, they are also being pushed to develop a strong oral language in English. *Boosting the Language Skills of English Learners Through Dramatization and Movement* supports the Ecological Approach and HMH-Into Reading curriculum because students are learning about their community and environment, really adapting to the place-based learning environment. Furthermore, in the curriculum HMH-Into Reading, there is a section that provides content that specifically focuses on bridging the TEKs and standards in a creative way such as plays. In the peer-reviewed *Boosting the Language Skills of English Learners Through Dramatization and Movement*, it is mentioned that “By integrating movement and gesture with vocabulary lessons, plot discussions, and dialogue, teachers facilitate the development of students' semantic and conceptual knowledge, as well as narrative discourse.” (Brouillette, L., & Greenfader, C. M., 2013). If movement is applied in the classroom the more the student is likely to retain the information, not to mention that English language learners learn best when visuals and movement are added. Being a bilingual teacher has taught me that many of the times, teaching them and mentioning certain things to them is the first time they have heard it before.

Encouraging students to broaden their horizons and introducing new things to them in different ways such as movement, allows for more retainment of the curriculum. “When children improvise scenes from stories, they immediately bring their own experiences to bear.

Dramatization helps students better understand the plot and the feelings of the characters, even if they do not initially comprehend all of the words.” (Brouillette, L., & Greenfader, C. M., 2013)

In the second peer-reviewed article, Shutz and Rainy mention the importance of modeling instruction in elementary literacy instruction. As mentioned before, the first unit of the curriculum focuses on the central idea of a few stories. The central idea is a TEK that requires teacher assistance toward the beginning. Without modeling the expectation one wants reciprocated, the content will not be retained in the students. If teachers on the other hand model what is being taught, and incorporate and encourage students to connect with background knowledge and expand the knowledge, the more the students will shelter their knowledge. In *Making Sense of Modeling in Elementary Literacy Instruction*, authors Shutz and Rainy mention the importance of looking beyond what's on the paper. “Specific moves included using marking language to narrate their process (i.e., the thinking work, the doing work) and to highlight necessary components (e.g., “So, what you just saw me do there was...,” “Watch closely as I...”) and tucking in helpful pointers to help students in their early attempts using strategies or processes (e.g., “Remember, it's not cheating to look at those illustrations. They often carry meaning that the words don't”).” (Shutz, K. M., & Rainy E. C., 2019).

In the curriculum, *HMH-Into Reading*, Ecological Approach is evident as it encourages students to find connections between academic and home life. Furthermore, it allows students to find meaning in what they are learning as it allows them to fully explore past what they are already familiar with.

Sources

Greenfader, C. M., & Brouillette L. (2013). *Boosting Language Skills of English Learners*

Through Dramatization and Movement. International Literacy Association.

<https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/TRTR.1192>

Shutz, K. M., & Rainy E. C. (2019). *Making Sense of Modeling in Elementary Literacy*

Instruction. International Literacy Association.

<https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/trtr.1863>