

## WOTP In-Class Strategies

*As part of our PDIG project, WOTP teachers at the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board implemented a wide variety of practices, strategies and resources to support the learning of their students, and in particular, to help students with language disorders. The following is a list of strategies used successfully in our WOTP classes.*

**Word Games:** e.g. *Apples to Apples*, *Catch Phrase* This type of activity provides an engaging way to practice conversation and social skills while building vocabulary. These are also good for students with ADHD, helping with impulse control, practicing waiting and turn taking.

**Vocabulary Games:** A- Z sheets (movie titles, two syllable words,...) A simple sheet that lists the letters of the alphabet. Students come up with a word beginning with each letter to complete the list according to a category or other criteria.

**Root words, suffixes, prefixes:** looking at prefixes and suffixes to learn how they affect words, and learning definitions of root words; then deconstructing and looking at components to solve unfamiliar words. (A helpful resource for this: *When Kids Can't Read* by Kyleene Beers.)

**Collecting words** (can be done by brainstorming as a group or keeping a list while reading) to discover spelling rules, and exceptions: e.g - plural forms or "ing". What are the possibilities? For "ing", students will discover that three possibilities present themselves most often – drop the silent "e", double the final consonant, or LIA – leave it alone. As words are collected, they can be added to a list posted on the wall or in a class reference book, or students can keep their own personal lists in a notebook.

**Reflex Math:** This is a web-based tool to practice math facts and receive feedback. Students' responses and progress are tracked, so each individual is presented with appropriate questions for his or her own level and optimum learning. Teachers can monitor student use and progress. Contact your math consultant for information concerning access to this resource.

**Word processing to facilitate writing.** Use with or without spell checks depending on the students' needs. Assistive technology might also be used, if appropriate for the student, for example speech to text / text to speech.

**Google docs/drive to share documents,** help students with revision and editing, monitor student work. This can be an effective addition the writing workshop. It allows for peer conferencing as well as teacher conferencing.

**Conversation cards:** Based on the book *Academic Conversations* by Jeff Zwiers and Marie Crawford, these cards were designed by Lynn Senecal to provide a concrete way to support the conversation process: Establishing a focus, contributing an idea, building on an idea, supporting an idea with evidence, questioning or challenging an idea, monitoring understanding, and synthesizing a

conversation. The cards provide many possibilities in addition to supporting conversation, including developing interview strategies and as planning tools for writing (structure of a paragraph).

**Using mentor texts:** A good example of this can be found in Jeff Anderson's book *Everyday Editing*. The teacher presents examples of authentic texts to teach a rule, for example when to use capital letters, and takes students through a process that "invites" them to notice, imitate, celebrate, collect, write and edit.

**Law Initiative:** Moot court to express ideas, look at different points of view, and build confidence. More information can be found at The Canadian Bar Association's page for teachers:

[http://www.cba.org/quebec/sections\\_comites/comites/programme\\_enseignement\\_droits.aspx](http://www.cba.org/quebec/sections_comites/comites/programme_enseignement_droits.aspx)

**Current events** – discuss news, world events, human rights, laws; debate hot topics. This is an engaging way to get students talking and thinking critically, while learning about their world.

**Books Online:** Through the Westmount Public Library, go to Tumble Readables to find a variety of texts on line. The "read along" option reads to students as the text is highlighted. Many Orca publications are available in this format.

[http://www.westlib.org/adosTeens/index.cfm?Section\\_ID=23&Menu\\_Item\\_ID=116](http://www.westlib.org/adosTeens/index.cfm?Section_ID=23&Menu_Item_ID=116)

**iPad apps:** The following apps are recommended by Joanna McKay and her students to support the development of conversational skills and increasing vocabulary: Letris 2; CB Teen (Conversation Building for Teens); Psychobabble; Hangmanfree; The Gazette.