

# Learners' Lives as Curriculum©

**Moving Towards Learner-Centered  
Teaching:  
Using Learner Stories for Language and  
Literacy Outcomes**



# Training Agenda

- I. Introductions**
- II. Principles of Learner-Centered Teaching**
- III. The Anatomy of a Lesson**
- IV. Hot Topics**
- V. Creating a Lesson**
- VI. Wrap up**

# Principles of Learner-Centered Teaching

1. Require Ongoing Inquiry
2. Build on What Learners Know
3. Balance Skills and Structures with Meaning-Making and Knowledge Creation
4. Strive for Authenticity
5. Entail Shared Responsibility for Learning Among Students and Teachers
6. Build Communities of Learners and Practitioners

# Moving Towards Learner-Centered Practice

<b>Experience, current and future practice- Directions in learner-centered practice</b>	<b>What you do now</b>	<b>What you would like to do</b>	
<b>1. Take an inquiring stance; learn about learners and their context</b>			
<b>2. Build on what learners know; provide opportunities to integrate the past with the present</b>			
<b>3. Balance skills and structures with meaning-making and knowledge creation</b>			
<b>4. Strive for authenticity in texts and tasks, as well as linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes</b>			
<b>5. Foster learner agency through choices, learner control, and documented mastery</b>			
<b>6. Build community among learners and practitioners</b>			
<b>7. Your idea</b>			

# Learner-Centered Teaching: Anatomy of a Lesson

- The Anatomy of a Learner-Centered Lesson
- Learning About Our Learners

# The Anatomy of a Learner-Centered Lesson

- A. Anatomy of a learner-centered lesson
  - ✓ Reading and reacting to a story
  - ✓ Mastering the language of the story
  - ✓ Generating new language to tell new stories
  - ✓ Comparing experiences for reflection and/or action



**Amne Sejaan**

# Playing With and Mastering the Language of the Story

- Traditional cloze
- Delete every seventh word

See “Never Too Late” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 50



# Story Language

With a classmate, fill in the blanks.

In my country, I didn't go to \_\_\_\_\_. When I was 12, I went \_\_\_\_\_ learn sewing. But not reading or \_\_\_\_\_. I stayed home with my mother.

\_\_\_\_\_ Now I am 60 years old. I \_\_\_\_\_ to school in Chicago. The first \_\_\_\_\_, I was nervous. Sometimes I don't \_\_\_\_\_. I look at the blackboard. I \_\_\_\_\_ everything. I tell my husband, "George, \_\_\_\_\_ don't understand." But if I don't \_\_\_\_\_ right, he doesn't understand either. When \_\_\_\_\_ can't help me, I want to \_\_\_\_\_. I am learning to read. I \_\_\_\_\_ also learning to talk English. My \_\_\_\_\_ says, "Amne, your English is good \_\_\_\_\_." I say, "Yeah, I go to school!"



**Gebre Goso**

# Playing With Language

- Cloze activity with grammar focus
- Remove subject and object pronouns
- Provide word list (or not)

See “I Help My Kids, My Kids Help Me” in *Stories to Tell our Children*, pg 32

# Story Language

1. Fill in the blanks. Use pronouns from Gebre's story.

**I, me, my, they, them**

\_\_\_\_\_ help \_\_\_\_\_ kids.

\_\_\_\_\_ teach \_\_\_\_\_ good things.

\_\_\_\_\_ play with \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ protect \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ correct \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ kids help \_\_\_\_\_ too.

## Story Language Contd.

1-Contd. Fill in the blanks. Use pronouns from Gebre's story.

**I, me, my, they, them**

\_\_\_\_\_ bring \_\_\_\_\_ things.

\_\_\_\_\_ teach \_\_\_\_\_ English.

\_\_\_\_\_ kids make \_\_\_\_\_ happy.

Maybe \_\_\_\_\_ will take care of \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_ grow old.

2. Show a classmate. Do you have the same answers?

3. Circle the verbs. Which ones do you know? Tell a classmate.



**Pijen Liang**

# Playing With Language

- Cloze activity with one word per phrase
- Dictation and other optional adaptations
- Adjusting the task instead of the text

See “Neighbors” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 26

# Story Language

1. Listen and look. Your teacher will read the story.

2. Dictation. Listen to the story again. Write the missing words.

a. My next door neighbors are \_\_\_\_\_ people.

b. They \_\_\_\_\_ two children.

c. \_\_\_\_\_ are friendly.

d. Every time we \_\_\_\_\_ I say “hi.”

e. They \_\_\_\_\_ “hi” back to me

f. and they \_\_\_\_\_ smile.

g. Sometimes they lend \_\_\_\_\_ to us.

h. Sometimes I \_\_\_\_\_ milk from them.

i. My \_\_\_\_\_ are nice people

j. but we haven’t talked \_\_\_\_\_

k. because my \_\_\_\_\_ isn’t very good.



## Story Language Contd.

3. Circle six new words. Copy them here.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

4. Ask a classmate about the words.



**Martha Gonzales**

# Playing With Language

- Strip story: Sentence order

See “Hot Music” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 14

# Story Language

Put the sentences in the right order.

\_\_\_\_\_ I felt happy because we loved each other.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remember when I was twenty years old.

\_\_\_\_\_ My husband sang these songs in those times.

\_\_\_\_\_ But now I feel sad because he is dead.

\_\_\_1\_\_\_ I think the Mexican music I heard on Jose's cassette is romantic.



**Mika Higuchi**

# Playing With Language

- Index card game: Word order

See “Sunny Day” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 20

# Story Language

1. Put the words in the right order.

a. sky Blue

b. grasses Many

c. air Clear

d. to deep Want breaths take

## Story Language Contd.

1-Contd. Put the words in the right order.

e. bit A cold little

f. sleepy bit little A

g. beautiful But season very

h. keep I can't quiet

2. Read your answers to a classmate. Do you agree with the word order?
3. Which words are new? Circle them. Ask a classmate about them.



## Word Building and Language Play

1. Which words do you know? Circle them.

happy angry homesick afraid sad  
excited surprised calm worried lazy

2. Which words are new? Ask a classmate about them.

## Word Building and Language Play Contd.

3. Put the words into two groups.

<b>Good Feelings</b>	<b>Bad Feelings</b>

4. Brainstorm with your classmates. What other words for feelings do you know? Your teacher can write them on the blackboard.

5. Copy six new words for feelings.

# Generating New Words to Tell New Stories

- Word lists
- Sort words, and add new words

See “Hot Music” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 16



**Aurora Rivera**

# Generating New Words

- Word web

See “Fast Cars” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 70

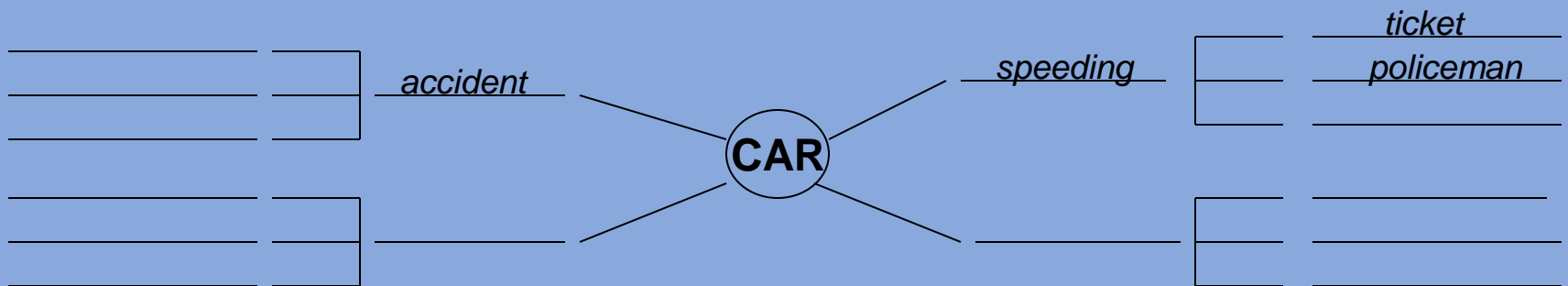


# Word Building and Language Play

OH: IV.8

HO: IV.7

1. Talk with your classmates.
  - a. What do you see in this picture?
  - b. What do you think happened?
2. Brainstorm. What do you think of when you hear the word car? Someone can add your ideas to a word web on the blackboard. For each word on the inner web, think of three more words.

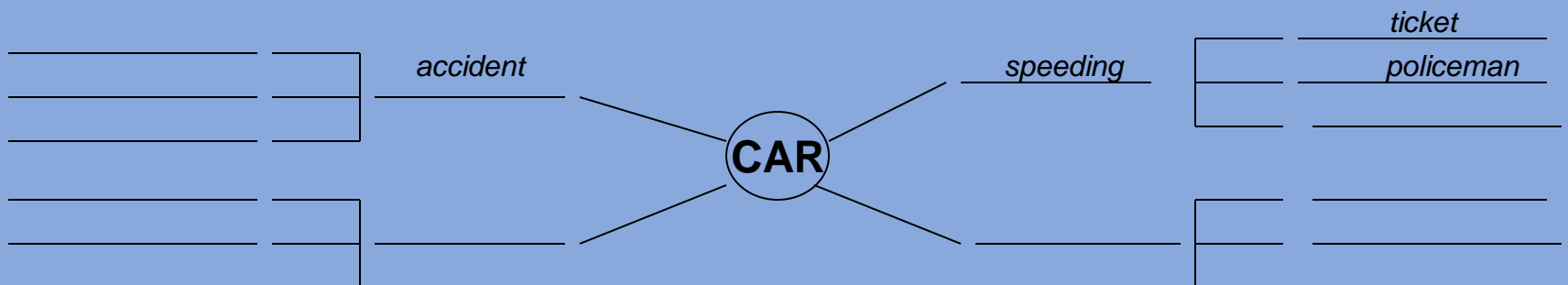


# Word Building and Language Play Contd.

OH: IV.8

HO: IV.7

3. Copy the words from the blackboard onto the word web above.
4. Tell a classmate something about yourself. Use words from the word web.
5. Tell the class about your classmate and cars.





# Sharing Stories

1. Complete these sentences.

Example: I feel lazy *when it's hot outside.*

a. I feel happy when...

b. I feel angry when...

c. I feel homesick when...

d. I feel afraid when...

e. I feel excited when...

f. I feel surprised when...

2. Show your sentences to a classmate.

Are they the same or different? How?

## Sharing Stories Contd.

3. Read your first sentence to the class. Listen to your classmates' sentences. Who has the same sentences? Repeat for sentences *b – f*.
4. Choose one feeling. When did you feel that way? Tell a classmate your story.
5. Write a story on a piece of paper. Read it to a different classmate. Listen to your classmate's story.

## Word Building and Language Play

1. Think about neighbors here and in your homeland.

Write *Yes* or *No* in each Column.

### **NEIGHBORS**

	<b>In the U.S.</b>	<b>In my homeland</b>
<b>What do friendly neighbors do?</b>		
a. Say hi or good morning		
b. Sit on the porch together		
c. Drink coffee together		
d. Watch TV together		
<b>How do neighbors help each other?</b>		
a. Lend and borrow food		
b. Watch each other's children		
c. Feed animals when one is away		

# Word Building and Language Play Contd.

1-Contd. Think about neighbors here and in your homeland.

Write *Yes* or *No* in each Column.

## **NEIGHBORS**

<b>How do neighbors fight?</b>	<b>In the U.S.</b>	<b>In my homeland</b>
a. Yell at each other		
b. Turn music up very loud		
c. Kill each other's pets		

2. Think about your neighbors. Tell your classmates.

a. Are your neighbors friendly to each other? How?

b. Do your neighbors help each other? How?

c. Do your neighbors fight? What happens?

# Comparing Experiences for Reflection or Action

- Comparisons with yes/no chart

See “Neighbors” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 28



**Farooq Yaqub**

# Comparing Experiences

- Opinion poll (with raising of hands)

See “Marriages in Pakistan” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 57

# Talk It Over

1. Talk with your classmates
  - a. What are the advantages for a man to have two wives? (Why is it good?)
  - b. What are the disadvantages? (Why is it bad?)
  - c. What are the advantages for a woman to have two husbands?
  - d. What are the disadvantages?



## Talk It Over Contd.

2. Tell your opinion. Check one answer only.

Men: I want to have one wife \_\_\_\_\_

I want to have more than one wife \_\_\_\_\_

Women: I want to have one husband \_\_\_\_\_

I want more than one husband \_\_\_\_\_

I don't want to have a husband \_\_\_\_\_

## Talk It Over Contd.

3. Tell a classmate. Which one did you check?  
Why?

4. Count your classmates.

How many men are in your class? \_\_\_\_\_

How many want to have one wife? \_\_\_\_\_

How many want more than one wife? \_\_\_\_\_

How many don't want to have a wife? \_\_\_\_\_

## Talk It Over cont'd.

4. Count your classmates.

How many women are in your class? \_\_\_\_\_

How many want to have one husband? \_\_\_\_\_

How many want more than one husband? \_\_\_\_\_

How many don't want to have a husband? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do the men and women in your class agree?

Why? Why not?

# Comparing Experiences

- Chart: Same or different, better or worse

See “Marriages in Pakistan” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 58

# ...for Reflection or Action

- Chart: Reflection with compatriots

See “Marriages in Pakistan” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 59

# Word Building and Language Play

1. Brainstorm with your classmates. What customs are different in your homeland and in the United States?
2. Make a chart. Compare customs in your homeland and in the U.S. Then, add two customs to the chart.

<b>Customs:</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Different</b>	<b>Better in U.S.</b>	<b>Worse in U.S.</b>
Celebrating the New Year				
Finding a boyfriend/girlfriend				
Getting married				
Having a baby				
Raising children				
How men treat women				
How women treat men				

# Word Building and Language Play Contd.

<b>Customs:</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Different</b>	<b>Better in U.S.</b>	<b>Worse in U.S.</b>
<b>Celebrating the New Year</b>				
<b>Finding a boyfriend/girlfriend</b>				
<b>Getting married</b>				
<b>Having a baby</b>				
<b>Raising children</b>				
<b>How men treat women</b>				
<b>How women treat men</b>				

3. Look at your classmate's chart. Write one interesting thing you learned. In my classmate's country, \_\_\_\_\_

4. Tell the class about your classmate.





# ...or Action

- Sentence completion
- Identifying potential audiences

See “Escape Story” in *Stories to Tell Our Children*, pg 83

# Sharing Stories

1. Complete these sentences.
  - a. (Tell why) I came to America because\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. (Tell how) I came to America\_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Make two class lists on the blackboard.
  - a. Why we came to America
  - b. How we came to America

## Sharing Stories Contd.

3. Write a group story on the blackboard. Write two paragraphs.

*We came to America for many reasons.*

*Some of us...*

*We came in many ways. Some of us...*

4. Talk with your classmates. Who is this story for? Other students at your school? Neighbors? Your children? Decide on an audience.
5. Make changes to your story. Think about these questions. What do you want your audience to know about your experiences? Do you need to add more details? Do you want to change the way you said it?

# Learning About Our Learners

- A. The writing process
- B. Anatomy of a learner-centered lesson
- C. Learning about our learners
  - ✓ Identifying themes or hot topics
  - ✓ Collecting narratives
  - ✓ Creating learner-centered language lessons

# Some Features of Learner-Centered Practices

1. Require on-going inquiry
2. Build on what learners know
3. Balance skills/structures with meaning making/creation of knowledge
4. Strive for authenticity
5. Foster learner agency within classroom and beyond
6. Build communities of learners and practitioners
7. Other (s)?

# Learner-Centered Practices

1. Require ongoing inquiry (listening to/learning about learners)
  - ✓ Identify learners' interests and needs
  - ✓ Identify learning styles and preferences
  - ✓ Learn about learners' contexts: issues and challenges
  - ✓ Learn about learners' contexts: resources and possibilities

# Learner-Centered Practices

## 2. Build on what learners know

- ✓ Identify learners' current knowledge and skills
- ✓ Honor and celebrate language and culture
- ✓ Provide opportunities to integrate the past with the present
- ✓ Nurture intergenerational transmission of culture and values

# Learner-Centered Practices

3. Balance skills and structures with meaning making and knowledge creation
  - ✓ Provide information about how the language works
  - ✓ Develop skills for addressing learners' purposes
  - ✓ Provide opportunities to address those purposes
  - ✓ Provide learners with opportunities to create and transmit knowledge



# Learner-Centered Practices

## 4. Strive for authenticity

- ✓ Provide access to authentic texts, authentic tasks
- ✓ Move beyond “rehearsal” to authentic interactions in pursuit of real purposes
- ✓ Employ project-based learning
- ✓ Aim for measurable linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes

# Learner-Centered Practices

5. Foster learner agency- within the classroom and beyond
  - ✓ Build in learner choice over *what* to learn and *how*
  - ✓ Nurture mentoring opportunities for more proficient learners to help less
  - ✓ Foster learner initiative in setting goals and monitoring progress
  - ✓ Provide opportunities to apply new knowledge outside the classroom, and to report/document results

# Learner-Centered Practices

## 6. Build communities of learners and practitioners

- ✓ Create opportunities for sharing stories and experiences
- ✓ Provide support for analysis of situations
- ✓ Create opportunities to collectively develop strategies for action
- ✓ Provide opportunities for reflection and planning for further action

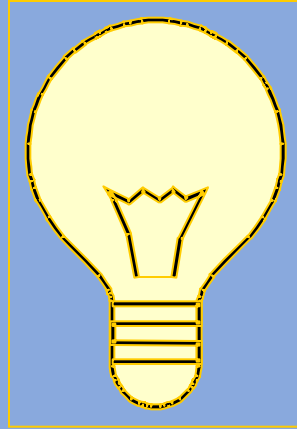
## Creating a plan of action

Three Action Steps to take what you've gotten and run with it:

What?	When?	With Whom?

Other notes and Inspirations:

# Bright Ideas



- What will you do with all this information?
- How will you plan for successful implementation of these new ideas?