

Why It Works

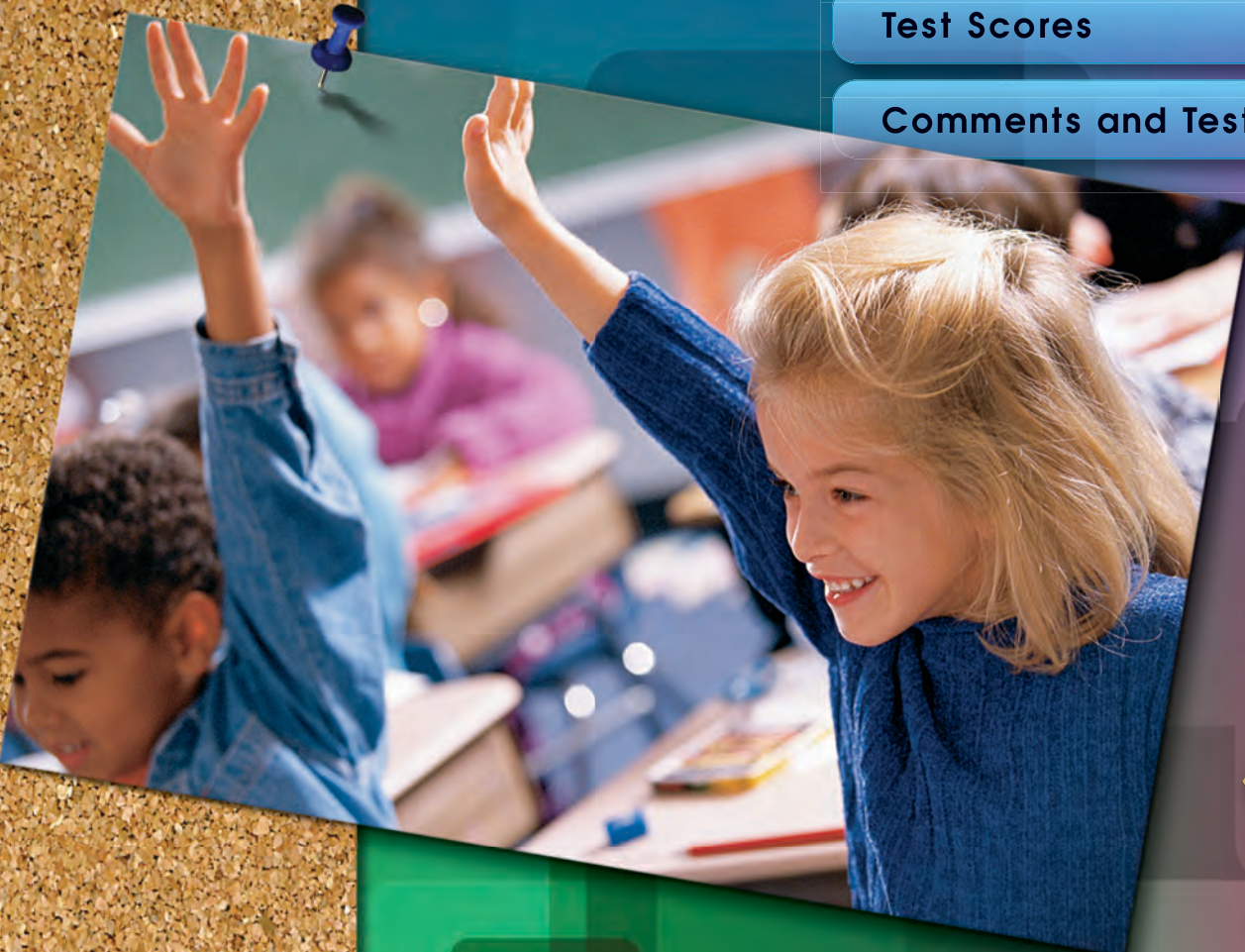
# SHURLEY ENGLISH

Research Results

Performance Results

Test Scores

Comments and Testimonials



Shurley English is a dynamic English curriculum for grades K-8. We are known for our unique blend of grammar, skills, and writing. Shurley English is a rigorous curriculum that brings back student-teacher interaction, promotes higher-order thinking skills, and provides measurable academic achievement.

Our most defining teaching model, the *Question and Answer Flow*, is highly successful because it utilizes the different learning styles of students, includes enough repetition for students to master grammar easily, and incorporates the part-to-whole philosophy.

Shurley English writing teaches concrete organizational patterns for a variety of writing purposes. Shurley students produce writing that is clear, readable, and understandable.

In this booklet, you will find research supporting Shurley English as an effective curriculum that promotes the development of language and communication skills. We encourage you to study and compare this research to help you select the best curriculum for your students.

*Thank you for taking the time to inquire about Shurley English.*

*As you work hard to select the best curriculum for your students, we hope you will consider Shurley English.*

If you would like additional information, please contact us.



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- Research
- Proven Methods of Teaching
- Phases of Learning and Assessment



# Research

## Introduction

Educational practices should be associated with scientifically based research. Studies have revealed what will work in schools and what will not. Neuroscientific research, memory research, educational research, and effective strategy research all point to specific pedagogies that raise student achievement. *Shurley English* has defining characteristics that are validated with this research.

The following summary presents the research that supports *Shurley English* as a curriculum, which contains the key elements to effectively promote the development of language and communication skills.



## Neuroscience Research

Neuroscientific research (Arendal and Mann, 2000) suggests a combination of elements that lead to efficient learning of new tasks and concepts. These elements are *frequency, intensity, cross-training, adaptivity, motivation, and attention*. *Shurley English* is designed to integrate these elements to help students learn effectively.

**Frequency.** Neural pathways are built and grow strong by repeated exposure to learning. This is known as frequency. In reading, studies have shown that the more a person reads, the better that person will read.

*Shurley English* provides frequency in the following areas:

- Writing  
*Journal, creative, expository, persuasive, descriptive, narrative, comparison / contrast, research*
- Revising and editing  
*Sentences, paragraphs, essays, letters*
- Question and Answer Flow  
*Analysis of sentences*
- Reading sentences orally  
*Continuous analysis of various types of sentence structure and vocabulary*

**Intensity.** Learning requires rigorous practice. A student will build neural support for a skill in a shorter period of time if practice is intense.

*Shurley English* provides rigorous practice in the following areas:

- Writing
- Revising and editing
- Analyzing sentences
- Building vocabulary
- Practicing skills

**Cross-training.** Teaching for memory requires strong networks that can connect to other networks. This is called cross-training. Therefore, different kinds of skills and different forms of memory should be used. *Shurley English* provides cross-training in the following areas:

- Writing is taught through explicit memory and practiced to store strategies and skills in implicit memory.



- Sentences are dissected to understand component parts, and new sentences are constructed and revised.
- Writing across the curriculum connects the writing process to various subject areas.
- Vocabulary and analogy exercises are used to connect word activities to analytical thinking and writing.

**Adaptivity.** Teaching for memory requires that the teacher monitor the student's progress and adjust the teaching/learning situation to meet individual needs. In other words, the teacher must differentiate. *Shurley English* provides this in the following manner:

- Teaching tips give teachers ways to adjust lessons to meet different learning needs.
- Writing portfolios and evaluation guides provide feedback on student progress.
- Activities are accelerated or modified for various needs.

**Motivation and Attention.** These are what keep the students interested in learning. Various strategies will keep students on task. Frequency and intensity rely on these factors.

*Shurley English* keeps interest high through participation in the following areas:

- Short- and long-term goals
- Teacher-student interaction
- Cooperative-learning activities

## Memory Research

Memory research suggests that there are two types of memory: explicit and implicit. Explicit memory is that which can be spoken or written. Facts are an example of this type of memory. Implicit memory includes the habits and skills that are done automatically. The research states that implicit memory is more lasting and reliable than explicit. (Schacter, 1996)

*Shurley English* teaches grammar and writing explicitly. Students are then given the kind of practice and reinforcement necessary to put the writing process into implicit memory. This is done by providing the needed repetition, practice, priming, experience, and demonstration.

Rhythm and rhyme are like music to the brain. According to Weinberger (1995), "an increasing amount of research findings support the theory that the brain is specialized for the building blocks of music." *Shurley English* provides an oral, rhythmic set of questions and answers to identify and reinforce each part of speech within a sentence. In addition, Shurley jingles strengthen grammar and writing objectives. These concepts become implicit memories.

In-brain research, the storehouse for implicit memory is also the storehouse for movement. Through movement, information is better remembered. Educators should be deliberate about integrating movement into everyday learning. (Jensen, 1998) Movement is an integral part of *Shurley English*, and teachers are encouraged to add movements to many of the jingles.

## Educational Research

In an effort to identify instructional strategies that raise student achievement, several meta-analyses have been completed. In 1992, researcher John Hattie identified several strategies and documented a standard deviation with higher scores in the experimental group than the control group. He analyzed thousands of studies to create his list. In 2001, Robert Marzano et. al. published the results of their meta-analysis that yields nine instructional strategies that raise student achievement. The group distinguishes not only the standard deviation, but also provides us with the percentile gain achieved by those using these particular strategies.

The *Shurley English* curriculum is a grammar, skills, and writing series that utilizes many of the strategies identified in these scientifically based research studies.

### Identifying Similarities and Differences.

Research suggests that this strategy will raise student achievement 45 percentile points. Students whose teachers instruct them in the use of analogies, metaphors, similes, and idioms far outperform their peers who do not use these approaches. *Shurley English* includes these domains:

- Classifying and categorizing
- Homonyms, antonyms, and synonyms
- Metaphors, similes, and analogies
- Differences in types of sentences and in types of writing

**Homework and Practice.** A 28-percentile gain can be achieved through this strategy. According to Marzano et. al. (2001), “Two common purposes for homework are practice and preparation or elaboration. When homework is assigned for the purpose of practice, it should be structured around content with which students have a high degree of familiarity.” Homework and practice are essential to any program designed to raise student achievement. *Shurley English* provides the following activities:

- Creating and revising sentences
- Classifying sentences
- Practicing skills
- Practicing all forms of writing
- Revising and editing paragraphs and essays

These elements, along with the appropriate feedback from the teacher, can increase the percentile gain.

**Non-linguistic Representations.** *Shurley English* engages students in kinesthetic activity, as well. This physical movement generates a mental image of the knowledge in the student’s mind. Mental images include physical sensations. (Marzano et. al., 2001) Students have shown a percentile gain as much as 27 percent through this strategy. Students grasp a better understanding of grammar and sentence structure as they use manipulatives to identify and label words and sentences in the *Shurley English* curriculum.

**Setting Objectives or Goals.** The *Shurley English* series begins each year by setting long-term and short-term goals. Research indicates that students benefit from setting goals. Walberg (1999) found that the general effects of setting goals reflected a percentile gain of 18. Goal-setting provides the student the opportunity to direct his or her own learning. Students know what to focus on. They can also personalize the teacher’s or the classroom’s goals.

**Providing Feedback.** Lysakowski and Walberg (1981, 1982) found that the effects of feedback could increase achievement from 7 to 37 percent. Providing students with information about how well they are doing on a regular basis is so powerful that researcher John Hattie (1992) analyzed nearly 8000 studies and concluded, “The most powerful single modification that enhances achievement is feedback. The simplest prescription for improving education must be ‘dollops of feedback!’” *Shurley English* provides the following types of feedback:

- Comprehensive editing checklists
- Daily interactive Question and Answer Flows

- Corrective instructional activities
- Skill Builder Checks
- Share Time
- Writing conferences

**Computer-Assisted Instruction.** The *Shurley English* curriculum provides educational software to reinforce students’ understanding of language. According to one research finding, computer-assisted instruction can result in a gain of as much as 12 percent. (Hattie, 1992) This technology supports the concepts being taught in the classroom and provides kinesthetic activity for students. This educational software can assist students new to the curriculum and can be used as a reteaching or remediation tool. It can also be used as a tool for advancing accelerated students.

**Direct Vocabulary Instruction.** “Even superficial instruction on words greatly enhances the probability that students will learn the words from context when they encounter them in their reading.” (Marzano et. al., 2001) In a study by Jenkins (1984), students who had previous instruction with words were about 33 percent more likely to understand those words when they encountered them in their reading. Vocabulary instruction is intrinsic to *Shurley English*. In *Shurley English*, new words are defined during vocabulary time. Students then create their own definition cards and use definitions, synonyms, antonyms, and sentence context to write independent sentences. In addition, students analyze word pairings to solve analogies. Stahl and Fairbanks (1986) found that direct vocabulary instruction increases student comprehension of new material by 12 percentile points. *Shurley* offers the following activities:

- Direct vocabulary instruction
- Word analogies
- Sentence revision, using synonyms and antonyms
- Oral Skill Builder Checks, which includes intense vocabulary review

### Formative Assessment

Paul Black, professor emeritus in the School of Education, King’s College, London, and Dylan Wiliam, head of school and professor of educational assessment, define formative assessment as, “all those activities undertaken by teachers and by their students [that] provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged.”



They conducted a major review of more than 250 articles and books that present research evidence on assessment from several countries. (Black & Wiliam, 1998) The main conclusion as a result of their study was as follows:

*Standards are raised only by changes that are put into direct effect by teachers and students in classrooms. There is a body of firm evidence that formative assessment is an essential feature of classroom work and that development of it can raise standards. We know of no other way of raising standards for which such a strong prima facie case can be made on the basis of evidence of such large learning gains.* (p. 19)

Black and Wiliam have studied assessment with results indicating strong percentile gains. “Firm evidence shows that *formative assessment* is an essential component of classroom work and that its development can raise standards of achievement.” (1998) Formative assessment is ongoing in the *Shurley English* series.

## Reading Research

In the area of reading, *Shurley English* assists with a much-neglected area, fluency. Fluency bridges the gap between word recognition and word comprehension. Researchers have investigated an approach to fluency called *repeated oral reading*. Several studies show that reading aloud promotes the acquisition of printed word representations in the child’s mental lexicon. (Share and Stanovich, 1995) The National Reading Panel (1999) suggests that repeated reading of text is one of the most effective ways to improve reading fluency and comprehension. *Shurley English* promotes one of the most comprehensive and recommended forms of repeated oral reading during constant sentence analysis. According to cognitive research synthesizers, Pat Wolfe and Pamela Neville (2004), “Children apply skills of attention, concentration, and engagement when they are exposed to a rich variety of reading and language arts activities. They draw on long-term memory to recall facts, details, and concepts.” Sally Shaywitz, noted reading researcher from Yale University, explains that after a child has analyzed and correctly read a word several times, he forms an exact model of that specific word that includes its spelling, pronunciation, and meaning. It is then stored permanently in the brain. (2003)

## Research of Best Practices in Effective Teaching

Noted researcher Kathleen Cotton from the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory wrote *Effective Schooling Practices: A Research Synthesis*. Her key findings on the basis of effective teaching are hallmark practices of *Shurley English*.

### Teachers carefully orient students to lessons.

This includes describing objectives, making connections between prior learning and current learning, and calling attention to key concepts.

### Teachers provide clear and focused

**instruction.** Directions are given both orally and in writing, they emphasize key points, and, most importantly, they check students’ understanding. *Shurley* offers abundant opportunities for guided and independent practice. Student success rates are high as the content of the lessons are well-matched to the students’ capabilities. There is also computerized instruction to supplement the learning.

### Teachers routinely provide feedback and

**reinforcement.** Teachers using *Shurley English* give both written and oral feedback. Immediate feedback is provided by the computer-assisted instructional activities as well.

### Teachers routinely review and re-teach as necessary.

They present materials in alternate ways to ensure mastery by all students. Additionally, teachers select computer-assisted instructional activities that include review and reinforcement components. *Shurley* curriculum is presented in an orderly way, using clear and simple language that is provided in a scripted fashion. Each concept in the curriculum is reinforced through a spiral learning process.

Cotton’s research on composition supports the *Shurley English* format for teaching writing. Those effective schooling research findings that are most relevant to composition instruction are those that emphasize the importance of these criteria.

- 1) *Clarity of objectives:* Every lesson begins with clearly stated objectives.
- 2) *Continuity and sequencing of instruction:* Grammar, skills, and writing are taught in a sequential format, and concepts are presented in a step-by-step process.
- 3) *Opportunities for guided and independent practice:* *Shurley English* provides guided practice in all areas. Students are given independent practice as they gain mastery of concepts.

- 4) *Alignment of practice activities with concepts studied:* All Shurley activities are matched with stated objectives and covered concepts.
- 5) *Frequent monitoring of student learning:* Student work is assessed by the teacher, other students, and by the student himself.
- 6) *Providing feedback and correctives while student work is in progress:* Composition is taught with an editing checklist so students can assess themselves. The teacher and other students also offer feedback through editing partners/groups and teacher conferencing. Constant feedback and correctives are also provided during oral analysis of sentences. This immediate feedback allows students to self correct in a non-threatening environment and allows the teacher immediate feedback of student progress.

### **National Council of Teachers of English**

Four of the twelve standards from the National Council of Teachers of English (1998–2004) address the students’ understanding of language and sentence structure:

Standard #3 refers to the range of strategies and abilities students should use to comprehend and appreciate texts, and among these is their understanding of *sentence structure*. *Shurley English* focuses on the following strategies.

- Analyzing the four kinds of sentences
- Analyzing seven sentence patterns
- Analyzing parts of sentences
- Creating Practice and Improved sentences
- Writing and Editing

Standard #4 explains that students should adjust their spoken and written language for different audiences and purposes, and these adjustments include changes in the *conventions and style of language*.

As such, *Shurley English* provides the following activities.

- Writing for various purposes
- Editing and Share Time

Standard #6 states that students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts. To that end, *Shurley English* includes the following activities.

- Writing, revising, and editing
- Analyzing propaganda techniques
- Critiquing literature selections
- Creating different kinds of poetry

Standard #9 calls for students to “develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in *language use, patterns, and dialects* across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.” (Italics added.) Understanding basic grammar can help students see the patterns of different languages and dialects.

### **Conclusion**

Neuroscience research, memory research, educational research, and effective strategy research all support the components and key elements implemented by *Shurley English*. *Shurley English* is a curriculum that merges a strong skills foundation with the writing process. According to E.D. Hirsch (1996), “Learning builds on learning.” The more a person knows, the more that person can learn. Neuroscience calls this making connections. Education calls it building on prior knowledge. Hirsch calls existing knowledge “mental Velcro,” which allows new information to become attached to it.

*Shurley* pedagogy is supported by a wide variety of research. It provides the “mental Velcro” that students require for ongoing learning. Teachers in classrooms throughout the country have found success and improved test scores by using *Shurley English*.



# Proven Methods of Teaching

## Direct Instruction

*Shurley English* utilizes many components of the Direct Instruction (DI) model of teaching. These components are a strong academic focus, a high degree of teacher direction and control, high expectations for student progress, and a system for managing time.

*Shurley English* has a strong academic focus. All the necessary language skills that students need to know are taught directly, but not in isolation. Students develop a firm sense of “knowingness” as they progress through the curriculum. In *Shurley English*, the teacher assumes the role of “mentor” as he or she instructs students in the vocabulary and structures of the English language.

Because *Shurley English* holds high expectations for all learners and provides scripted lessons for teachers, instructional time is maximized. The use of direct instruction methods helps all learners achieve a high degree of academic success.

## The Memory Model of Instruction

*Shurley English* places strong emphasis upon semantic memory to help students build a firm foundation of knowledge, which is the first stage of learning according to Bloom’s Taxonomy. Coupled with semantic memory is procedural memory. *Shurley English* processes stimulate procedural memory through repeated rehearsal of jingles and the Question and Answer Flow (Q&A Flow).

All learning depends on memory, including the simple recall of facts and data and the more complex memory system of remembering thinking patterns, conceptual frames, and complex ideas (Fogarty 2002).

*Shurley English* capitalizes upon the brain’s ability to “chunk” information. Chunking (Sylwester 1995 as cited by Fogarty 2002) is a phenomenon that is achieved when a coherent group of informational items are readily combined and are remembered as a single item. *Shurley English* achieves this by teaching grammar jingles and the Q&A Flow.

## Multiple Intelligences

In 1983, Howard Gardner developed his theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI), which since publication, has gained popularity with educators who strive to teach to students’ strengths. He stated that intelligence is multi-modal. He outlined various categories of intelligence, and *Shurley English* supports many of them. He labeled them as verbal/linguistic (V/L), musical/rhythmic (M/R), mathematical/logical (M/L), interpersonal/intrapersonal, bodily/kinesthetic (B/K), visual/spatial (V/S), and naturalist.

*Shurley English* has always honored the way students learn through the “see, hear, say, do” approach. These processes support the theory of MI. The *Shurley English* curriculum focuses primarily upon the verbal/linguistic, musical/rhythmic, mathematical/logical, bodily/kinesthetic, and visual/spatial intelligences.

## Brain-Compatible Instruction

In Brain-Compatible Instruction, learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat (Caine & Caine 1991,1993 as cited by Fogarty 2002). *Shurley English* presents appropriate challenge in a fun, exciting way, which positively stimulates the brain. Emotions are critical to patterning, so *Shurley English* seeks to generate enthusiasm and positive effect during each engaging lesson.

In brain-compatible teaching, there is a balance between direct instruction for skill development and authentic learning that immerses the learners in challenging experiences. In addition, brain-compatible instruction taps into the uniqueness of each learner and shepherds relevant transfer for future application of the learner (Fogarty 2002). Students who have had several years of instruction in *Shurley English* retain their skills throughout their education and their lives!

Finally, the brain always searches for meaning, and this search for meaning occurs through patterning. By teaching grammar rules and usage with jingles, punctuation, and the classification of sentence patterns, *Shurley English* engages students in the learning process in a brain-friendly way. Another brain-compatible feature is the use of graphic organizers to help create mental constructs, which students will remember easily.

# Phases of Learning and Assessment

## Depth of Knowledge for Writing

Norman Webb presents the following levels for the depth of knowledge for writing in his book, *Depth of Knowledge for Four Content Areas*:

### • *Level 1*

Level 1 requires the student to write or recite simple facts. This writing or recitation does not include complex synthesis or analysis but basic ideas. The students are engaged in listing ideas or words as in a brainstorming activity prior to written composition, are engaged in a simple spelling or vocabulary assessment, or are asked to write simple sentences. Students are expected to write and speak using Standard English conventions. This includes using appropriate grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 1 performance are:

- Use punctuation marks correctly.
- Identify Standard English grammatical structures and refer to resources for correction.

### • *Level 2*

Level 2 requires some mental processing. At this level students are engaged in first draft writing or brief extemporaneous speaking for a limited number of purposes and audiences. Students are beginning to connect ideas using a simple organizational structure. For example, students may be engaged in note-taking, outlining, or simple summaries. Text may be limited to one paragraph. Students demonstrate a basic understanding and appropriate use of such reference materials as a dictionary, thesaurus, or web site. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 2 performance are:

- Construct compound sentences.
- Use simple organizational strategies to structure written work.
- Write summaries that contain the main idea of the reading selection and pertinent details.

### • *Level 3*

Level 3 requires some higher level mental processing. Students are engaged in developing compositions that include multiple paragraphs. These compositions may include complex sentence structure and may demonstrate some synthesis and analysis. Students show awareness of their audience and purpose through focus, organization, and the use of appropriate compositional elements. The use of appropriate compositional elements includes such things as addressing chronological order in a narrative or including supporting facts and details in an informational report. At this stage students are engaged in editing and revising to improve the quality of the composition. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 3 performance are:

- Support ideas with details and examples.
- Use voice appropriate to the purpose and audience.
- Edit writing to produce a logical progression of ideas.

### • *Level 4*

Higher-level thinking is central to Level 4. The standard at this level is a multi-paragraph composition that demonstrates synthesis and analysis of complex ideas or themes. There is evidence of a deep awareness of purpose and audience. For example, informational papers include hypotheses and supporting evidence. Students are expected to create compositions that demonstrate a distinct voice and that stimulate the reader or listener to consider new perspectives on the addressed ideas and themes. An example that represents but does not constitute all of Level 4 performance is:

- Write an analysis of two selections, identifying the common theme and generating a purpose that is appropriate for both.

Webb, Norman L. (2002). *Depth of Knowledge for Four Content Areas*. Article retrieved from the Internet, February 24, 2006.

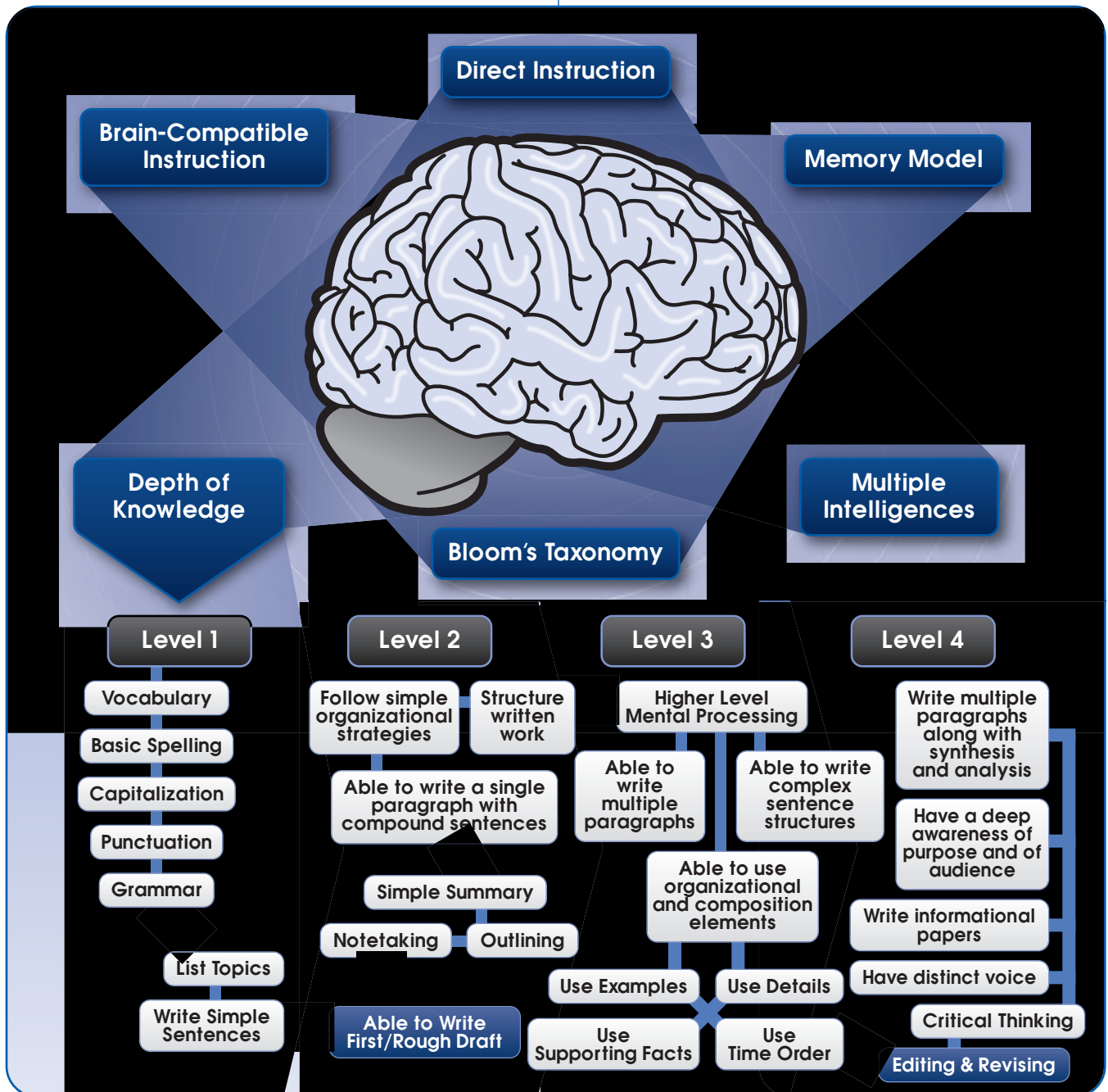


*Shurley English* adheres to Webb's Depth of Knowledge for Writing in many areas. First, students learn and use grammar conventions as they write and expand simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Second, students learn to write, revise, and edit rough drafts by following the steps in the writing process. Their writings include expository, persuasive, descriptive, narrative, and comparison/contrast paragraphs and essays.

Third, students use their knowledge of different types of writing to organize their paragraphs and essays by using main points, supporting details, and time-order words to give their writing a coherent flow.

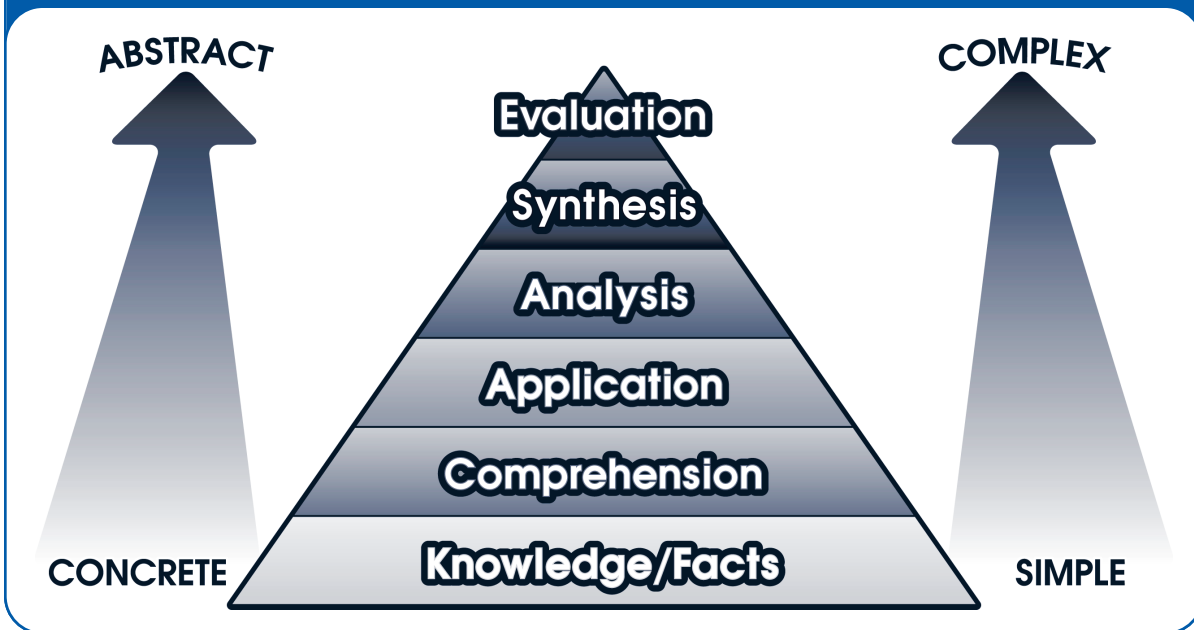
Fourth, students develop an original voice as they understand the purpose and audience of their writing. Knowing and using the steps in the writing process allows students to write narratives and informational papers with a high degree of independence, competency, and confidence.



Phases of Learning and Assessment

## Meeting Areas of Bloom's Taxonomy

- **KNOWLEDGE -**  
Remembering previously learned material  
*Student Action:* Responds, absorbs, answers, remembers, memorizes
- **COMPREHENSION -**  
Understanding, grasping the meaning  
*Student Action:* Translates, interprets
- **APPLICATION -**  
Using pre-learned methods and principles in situations  
*Student Action:* Lists, solves problems, demonstrates, creates
- **ANALYSIS -**  
Breaks apart or down into its elements  
*Student Action:* Classify, discusses, uncovers, dissects
- **SYNTHESIS -**  
Puts elements together to make a whole or a new item  
*Student Action:* Discusses, generalizes, relates, compares, contrasts
- **EVALUATION -**  
Judges the value  
*Student Action:* Judges, debates



### Vocabulary and Analogy Time

The Student...

1. Learns new words and analogies.
2. Discusses and compares how words and their synonyms and antonyms are related.
3. Discusses and compares how analogies are related.
4. Solves analogies by analyzing and comparing two sets of words and by deciding how they relate.
5. Creates new vocabulary sentences and new analogies.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation

### Jingle Time

The Student...

1. Memorizes new jingles.
2. Learns how to sing jingles with music.
3. Discusses and compares how jingle definitions relate to grammar concepts.
4. Discusses and compares how the Sentence and Transition Jingles relate to writing.
5. Applies jingle definitions to help analyze, classify, and write sentences.
6. Can create motions for jingles.
7. Can create new jingles and new tunes for jingles.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis

## Grammar Time

The Student...

1. Learns definitions for the parts of speech.
2. Memorizes the questions to ask to classify the parts of a sentence.
3. Analyzes the order and the sense of the words in a sentence to determine the parts of speech.
4. Analyzes the sentence to determine the kind of sentence and the sentence pattern.
5. Analyzes the sentence to determine the complete subject and the complete predicate.
6. Applies knowledge of sentence structure to help analyze, classify, and write sentences.
7. Applies grammar vocabulary to expand sentences, using adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, etc.
8. Evaluates his own writing and the writing of other students based on following correct sentence structure.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation

## Practice and Revised Sentences

The Student...

1. Applies knowledge of sentence structure to write practice sentences, using sentence labels as guides.
2. Applies grammar vocabulary to expand sentences, using adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, etc.
3. Applies grammar vocabulary to revise sentences, using synonyms, antonyms, word changes, added words, and deleted words.
4. Evaluates the connection between grammar and writing, using this knowledge to write, revise, and edit his/her writing and the writing of others.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation.

## Skill Builders

The Student...

1. Analyzes sentences to determine which words are nouns.
2. Analyzes criteria to determine if nouns are common, proper, singular, or plural by making comparisons.
3. Analyzes sentences to determine the complete subject and complete predicate.

4. Analyzes sentences to determine the simple subject and simple predicate.
5. Discusses vocabulary meanings of selected words in sentences.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis

## Skill Time

The Student...

1. Discusses, learns, and remembers skill concepts, such as capitalization and punctuation rules, subject/verb agreement rules, meanings and spellings of homonyms, how to identify and correct a sentence fragment or run-on sentence, and the spelling rules for the plurals of nouns.
2. Applies rules and concepts to skill exercises to demonstrate mastery.
3. Applies rules and concepts to editing exercises to demonstrate mastery.
4. Applies knowledge of skills to the writing process in writing rough drafts, revising, and editing.
5. Evaluates his own writing and the writing of other students based on how well these rules have been followed.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation

## Classroom Practice

The Student...

1. Analyzes sentences to determine parts of speech, kinds of sentences, and sentence patterns.
2. Analyzes sentences to determine the complete subject and the complete predicate.
3. Applies rules and concepts to skill exercises to demonstrate mastery.
4. Applies rules and concepts to editing exercises to demonstrate mastery.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis

## Chapter Checkup

The Student...

1. Analyzes sentences to determine parts of speech, kinds of sentences, and sentence patterns.
2. Analyzes sentences to determine the complete subject and the complete predicate.



3. Applies rules and concepts to skill exercises to demonstrate mastery.
4. Applies rules and concepts to editing exercises to demonstrate mastery.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis

### Chapter Test

The Student...

1. Analyzes sentences to determine parts of speech, kinds of sentences, and sentence patterns.
2. Analyzes sentences to determine the complete subject and the complete predicate.
3. Applies rules and concepts to skill exercises to demonstrate mastery.
4. Applies rules and concepts to editing exercises to demonstrate mastery.
5. Solves analogies by analyzing, comparing, and relating two sets of words in a standardized testing format.
6. Applies vocabulary knowledge by choosing correct definitions, synonyms, and antonyms in a standardized testing format.
7. Applies skills and editing knowledge in a standardized testing format.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation

### Writing Time

The Student...

1. Applies knowledge of sentence structure to write sentences, paragraphs, essays, and reports.
2. Applies rules and concepts of grammar and skills to writing, revising, and editing.
3. Analyzes the purpose for writing and organizes the writing as expository, persuasive, narrative, descriptive, comparison/contrast, a letter, a book review, or a report.
4. Discusses his/her writing with a partner and in large or small groups.
5. Evaluates his/her own writing and the writing of other students based on how well the writing process has been followed.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation

### Literature Time

The Student...

1. Reads and listens to poetry by different poets, including classical and contemporary.
2. Discusses, analyzes, and interprets poetic elements of selected classical and contemporary poems.
3. Researches, discusses, and analyzes selected poets.
4. Creates different types of poems.
5. Selects and evaluates poems by well-known poets.
6. Selects, reads, and evaluates fiction and nonfiction books for book reviews.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation

### Discovery Time

The Student...

1. Reads, discusses, and researches different thematic topics for his/her level.
2. Answers questions about the topic studied.
3. Writes and discusses results of research with others.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis

### Across the Curriculum Activities

The Student...

1. Relates English skills to other subjects.
2. Applies speaking and writing skills to other subjects.

**BLOOM'S AREAS MET:** knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis

## REFERENCES

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- The Relationship Between Shurley English and Student Language Arts Performance



suits

*Prepared by:*

PRES Associates, Inc.  
Miriam Resendez, Senior Researcher  
Dr. Mariam Azin, President  
May, 2010

## **Executive Summary**

Whether or not a strong foundation of language arts skills has been established early on often sets the stage, and strongly predicts whether or not children will flourish in their future educational and career endeavors. Unfortunately, research suggests that U.S. students' language arts skills continue to fall short. In order to help improve upon the English language arts skills of students, Shurley Instructional Materials' developed the *Shurley English* curriculum for students in grades K-8. This English language arts program was designed to help students master the key fundamentals such as vocabulary, mechanics, usage, editing, and sentence work. In an effort to provide preliminary information on *Shurley English*, PRES Associates conducted analyses to examine the relationship between *Shurley English* and student language arts performance on state assessments. The statistical analyses used existing assessment data available from three states: Georgia, Mississippi, and Indiana. The total sample included 225 *Shurley English* schools.

Major findings, organized by the key evaluation questions, include:

Are there significant changes in the language arts performance of students who use *Shurley English* over time?

- Results showed that 4th and 5th graders in *Shurley English* schools demonstrated statistically significant language arts gains. Specifically, the percent of 4th grade students who were proficient significantly increased by 4.3% and the percent of 5th grade students who were proficient significantly increased by 1.5%. In addition, while students in 3rd and 6th grades showed small improvement (0.2% and 0.6%), the percent of 7th and 8th grade students who were proficient increased substantially by 4.7% and 5.5% respectively, although this was not statistically significant.<sup>1</sup>

Do schools show accelerated language arts performance following the introduction of *Shurley English* as compared to before *Shurley English* was used?

- Analysis of pre-post changes in student performance showed that overall proficient and advanced students demonstrated significant accelerated language arts gains following introduction of *Shurley English* as compared to before *Shurley English* was used. There were also significant declines in the percent of students at the below basic level following usage of *Shurley English*.
- It is interesting to note that while long term gains were observed over time among the proficient and advanced students, the percent of proficient students first declined immediately following usage of *Shurley English* (i.e., during the Spring of their first year of usage). However, this is likely due to a learning curve that teachers and students experienced as they became accustomed to the new language arts program. Indeed, this is supported by the aforementioned findings that proficient and advanced students showed significant accelerated language arts gains during the years that followed initial implementation of *Shurley English*.

How do patterns of student achievement in language arts among students in schools using *Shurley English* compare to statewide performance overall?

- Across all three states, *Shurley English* schools showed more positive changes over time as compared to the average statewide performance. Specifically, *Shurley English* schools demonstrated a 4% increase in the percent of students who were proficient in language arts whereas statewide student performance declined by 2%.
- Overall, positive changes were observed among *Shurley English* schools in Georgia that exceeded those observed statewide. These findings were consistent within grades 3–5.
- Similar to the patterns observed in Georgia, *Shurley English* students in Mississippi and at the majority of grade levels tended to show more positive changes from 2008 to 2009 as measured by the Mississippi state language arts test than

the statewide average. In addition, on the 2009 Mississippi Writing Test, there was a higher percentage of students in *Shurley English* schools who were proficient in writing as compared to students statewide.

- Patterns observed in the state of Indiana were also consistent with those obtained in Georgia and Mississippi. In particular, greater gains in language arts proficiency were observed among *Shurley English* schools as compared to statewide for 3rd and 4th graders. Among 5th and 6th grade students, *Shurley English* schools were able to maintain the same level of proficiency over time as compared to declines in the percent of students statewide who were proficient.

PRES Associates' preliminary findings on the *Shurley English* program using existing data sources revealed that the program is associated with improvements in student language arts performance. Furthermore, the consistency of positive trends across different state standards and grade levels lends more credence to the observed patterns. In sum, while this study provides preliminary information on the relationship between *Shurley English* use and student performance, further research is needed to examine the effectiveness of the *Shurley English* program.

*More data from this study is presented on pages 24 and 25.*

<sup>1</sup>Note that the lack of significance among the 7th and 8th grade students is due to the more limited sample size at these grade levels, which negatively affects power.





- Test Scores



Test Scores

## Sevier County School System Sevierville, Tennessee

### Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)

**EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN:** A comparison of standardized test scores was made before and after the introduction of the *Shurley English* curriculum. Two classes of fifth graders were tested. *Shurley English* was introduced shortly before the second test.

**SAMPLE:** Two fifth grade classes in the Sevier County School System, Sevierville, Tennessee, participated in the study. The control scores are the scores from 2002, before the introduction of the *Shurley English* curriculum. These scores were compared with scores from 2003. In April 2003, Class A had been taught *Shurley English* for three months, while Class B had been taught *Shurley English* for two months.

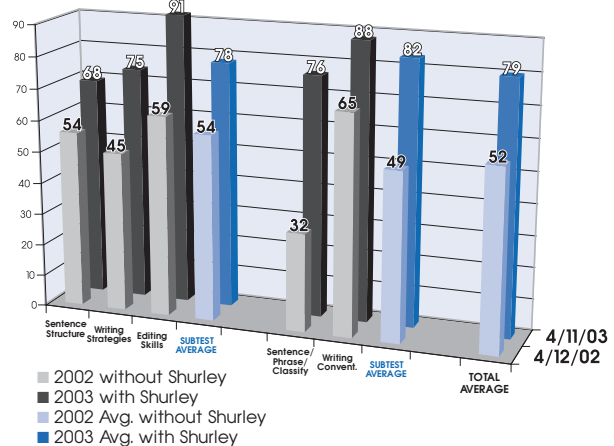
**METHODOLOGY:** The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) was administered twice—once in April 2002 and once in April 2003. Scores of two different classes of fifth graders were compared over two years. Scores were divided into the sub-headings Sentence Structure, Writing Strategies, Editing Skills, Sentence/Phrase Classification, and Writing Conventions. The scores for Sentence Structure, Writing Strategies, and Editing skills were averaged together for the Language Introduction to Print Subtest Average. The scores for Sentence/Phrase Classification and Writing Conventions were averaged together for the Language Mechanics Subtest Average.

**MEASURES:** In April 2002, Class A's total average score was 54. Class A's 2002 score in Sentence Structure was 54; in Writing Strategies, 43; and in Editing Skills, 64, for a Language Introduction to Print Subtest Average of 57. Class A's 2002 score in Sentence/Phrase Classification was 23, and in Writing Conventions, 77, for a Language Mechanics Subtest Average of 50. In April 2003, Class A's total average score was 84. Class A's 2003 score in Sentence Structure was 71; in Writing Strategies, 71; and in Editing Skills, 93, for a Language Introduction to Print Subtest Average of 79. Class A's 2003 score in Sentence/Phrase Classification was 86, and in Writing Conventions, 100, for a Language Mechanics Subtest Average of 93.

In April 2002, Class B's total average score was 49. Class B's 2002 score in Sentence Structure was 53; in Writing Strategies, 47; and in Editing Skills, 53, for a Language Introduction to Print Subtest Average of 51. Class B's 2002 score in Sentence/

Phrase Classification was 40, and in Writing Conventions, 53, for a Language Mechanics Subtest Average of 47. In April 2003, Class B's total average score was 74. Class B's 2003 score in Sentence Structure was 65; in Writing Strategies, 78; and in Editing Skills, 88, for a Language Introduction to Print Subtest Average of 76. Class B's 2003 score in Sentence/Phrase Classification was 65; and in Writing Conventions, 76, for a Language Mechanics Subtest Average of 71.

Summary of Classes A and B



**REPORT OF RESULTS:** In all categories, scores increased from 2002 to 2003, with total averages nearly doubling in only one year. The greatest increase occurred in Class A under the Sentence Structure sub-heading: the score increased from 23 to 86, a 370% increase. Most impressive is the fact that these increases come after only two or three months of *Shurley English* instruction.

**INVESTIGATORS:** Staff and Faculty of Sevier County School System, Sevierville, Tennessee.



Comparison Summaries

Class A began using *Shurley English* mid-January 2003. Results are as follows:

SUBTEST/OBJECTIVE	CLASS A SUMMARY	
	4-12-2002 without Shurley	4-11-2003 with Shurley
Language Intro to Print		
Sentence Structure	54	71
Writing Strategies	43	71
Editing Skills	64	93
<b>SUBTEST AVERAGE</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>79</b>
	4-12-2002 without Shurley	4-11-2003 with Shurley
Language Mechanics		
Sent/Phrase/Classify	23	86
Writing Conventions	77	100
<b>SUBTEST AVERAGE</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>TOTAL AVERAGE</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>84</b>

Class B started using *Shurley English* in February 2003. Those results are as follows:

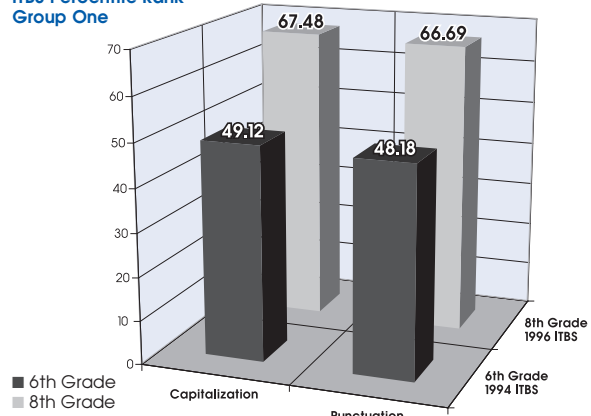
SUBTEST/OBJECTIVE	CLASS B SUMMARY	
	4-12-2002 without Shurley	4-11-2003 with Shurley
Language Intro to Print		
Sentence Structure	53	65
Writing Strategies	47	78
Editing Skills	53	88
<b>SUBTEST AVERAGE</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>76</b>
	4-12-2002 without Shurley	4-11-2003 with Shurley
Language Mechanics		
Sent/Phrase/Classify	40	65
Writing Conventions	53	76
<b>SUBTEST AVERAGE</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>TOTAL AVERAGE</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>74</b>

**Lindbergh Middle School  
Peoria, Illinois**

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills, or ITBS, was given to a group of sixth grade students who had never been taught *Shurley English*. *Shurley English* was introduced to these same students in the seventh grade. The ITBS was then given to these *Shurley English* students in the eighth grade after using the *Shurley English* curriculum for only one year.

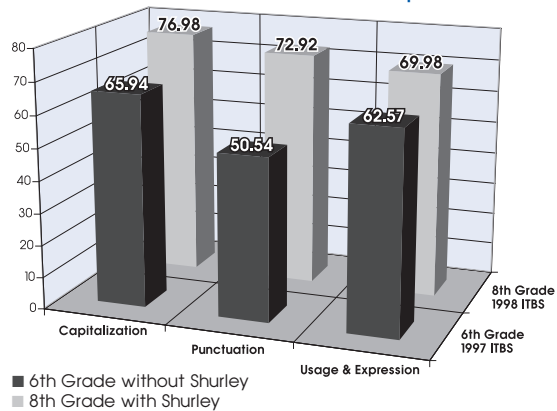
ITBS Percentile Rank Group One



As you can see in the Group One graph, students made positive progress in each aspect of the ITBS given after only one year of the *Shurley English* curriculum.

The ITBS was also given to another group of sixth grade students who had never used *Shurley English*. *Shurley English* was introduced to these same students in the seventh grade and continued in the eighth grade. The ITBS was then given to these *Shurley English* students in the eighth grade after using *Shurley English* curriculum for two years.

ITBS Percentile Rank Group Two



In this graph of Group Two, students also made positive progress in each aspect of the ITBS given after two years of the *Shurley English* curriculum.

6th Grade ITBS Data collected in 1994. 8th Grade ITBS Data collected in 1996.

## Normandy Elementary School Littleton, Colorado

### Terra Nova and CSAP

**EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN:** Standardized tests were administered and scores were compared for two years, once before and once after the *Shurley English* curriculum was introduced.

**SAMPLE:** The first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade classes of Normandy Elementary School, Littleton, Colorado, participated in the study. The control scores are from the year 2001–2002, before the introduction of the *Shurley English* curriculum. These scores were compared with the scores of 2002–2003, after one year of *Shurley English* instruction.

**METHODOLOGY:** The Terra Nova standardized test was administered to students in first and second grade twice: once in the 2001–2002 school year, and again in the 2002–2003 school year. The CSAP was administered to students in grades three through six twice: once in the 2001–2002 school year, and again in the 2002–2003 school year. The only difference from one school year to the next was the introduction of the *Shurley English* curriculum.

**MEASURES:** The first grade scored 82% in 2001–2002, and 85% in 2002–2003. The second grade scored 76% in 2001–2002, and 82% in 2002–2003. The third grade scored 77% in 2001–2002, and 96% in 2002–2003. The fourth grade scored 77% in 2001–2002, and 89% in 2002–2003. The fifth grade scored 76% in 2001–2002, and 84% in 2002–2003. The sixth grade scored 74% in 2001–2002, and 84% in 2002–2003.

**STUDIES:** The scores were converted to percentages and compared.

**REPORT OF RESULTS:** All grades scored higher the second year, after *Shurley English* was introduced. The highest gain in scores occurred in the third grade, at 19%.

**INVESTIGATORS:** Cynthia A. Haws, Principal.  
Normandy Elementary School, Littleton, Colorado.

*After many years of struggling with the lack of good writing in my school, I happened upon your program. I was in the airport talking with a principal who was waiting for a flight to California. By chance we started talking about writing programs. She told me the results she had gotten using Shurley English in her school. I decided to do a little homework and look into the program.*

*Two years ago, I literally locked myself in the office and wrote a \$25,000 staff development grant to implement Shurley English. I got it! Then I pondered how my staff would react. We visited schools and had your representative Jamie Geneva come for a day of inservice. We brought in teachers from a charter school, which was using the program, to our school to help the staff see the benefits.*

*Last year was our first year of implementation. Our results are outstanding. Let me share them with you:*

	2001-2002	2002-2003	GAIN
1st Grade Terra Nova	82%	85%	3%
2nd Grade Terra Nova	76%	82%	6%
3rd Grade CSAP	77%	96%	19%
4th Grade CSAP	77%	89%	12%
5th Grade CSAP	76%	84%	8%
6th Grade CSAP	74%	84%	10%

*We have had many schools contact us to come and see what “magic” we are using. The truth is, it is a well-defined, thorough program that teaches the structure of writing. My staff, children, and community all agree it has made a significant difference in our children’s ability to write well. What truly pleases me is when I pick up individual student writings and see the difference made in just one year.*

*Your representative in Colorado contacted me for a testimony. He said he might be moving to another state. I told him he could not only use my testimony, but he could refer anyone he wanted to come and see Shurley in action at Normandy.*

*Thank you for writing and publishing a stellar program!*

**Cynthia A. Haws**, Principal  
Normandy Elementary School  
September 17, 2003

**Pleasant Grove Elementary School  
Greenwood, Indiana**

**Indiana Statewide Testing  
for Education Progress (ISTEP)**

**EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN:** A comparison of standardized test scores was made of the students who had been taught *Shurley English* for a period of one school year, students who had been taught *Shurley English* for two successive years, and students who had never been taught using *Shurley English*.

**SAMPLE:** The entire fifth grade class of Pleasant Grove Elementary School in Greenwood, Indiana, participated in the study. The control group consisted of all the students who attended fifth grade at Pleasant Grove Elementary with the exception of two classes. These two classes used the *Shurley English* curriculum (Class 1 and Class 2). A third class was taught *Shurley English* for two successive years (Class 3).

**METHODOLOGY:** The Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) was administered. Scores were compared under the sub-headings National Percentile, Grade Equivalent, Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE), Writing Development, and Language in Use.

**ISTEP Scores**

NATIONAL PERCENTILE			
Control	..... 5th Grade.....	No Shurley	..... 59.5
Class 1	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 77.2
Class 2	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 76.0
Class 3	..... 4th & 5th Grades....	Shurley—2 years	..... <b>80.0</b>
GRADE EQUIVALENT			
Control	..... 5th Grade.....	No Shurley	..... 7.5
Class 1	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 9.3
Class 2	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 9.4
Class 3	..... 4th & 5th Grades....	Shurley—2 years.....	<b>9.9</b>
NCE (NORMAL CURVE EQUIVALENT)			
Control	..... 5th Grade.....	No Shurley	..... 57.8
Class 1	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 66.8
Class 2	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 69.3
Class 3	..... 4th & 5th Grades....	Shurley—2 years	..... <b>71.4</b>
WRITING DEVELOPMENT			
Control	..... 5th Grade.....	No Shurley	..... 3.8
Class 1	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 3.8
Class 2	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 4.0
Class 3	..... 4th & 5th Grades....	Shurley—2 years.....	<b>4.0</b>
LANGUAGE IN USE			
Control	..... 5th Grade.....	No Shurley	..... 3.6
Class 1	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 3.9
Class 2	..... 5th Grade.....	Shurley—1 year	..... 3.9
Class 3	..... 4th & 5th Grades....	Shurley—2 years.....	<b>3.9</b>

**MEASURES:** National Percentile scores for the control group were 59.5; for Class 1, 77.2; for Class 2, 76.0; and for Class 3, 80.0. Grade Equivalent scores for the control group were 7.5; for Class 1, 9.3; for Class 2, 9.4; and for Class 3, 9.9. NCE scores for the control group were 57.8, for Class 1, 66.8; for Class 2, 69.3; and for Class 3, 71.4. Writing Development scores for the control group were 3.8; for Class 1, 3.8; for Class 2, 4.0; and for Class 3, 4.0. Language in Use scores for the control group were 3.6; for Class 1, 3.9; for Class 2, 3.9; and for Class 3, 3.9.

**STUDIES:** Students were listed alphabetically; every third student’s score from the control group was chosen, added, and the mean score of this randomly selected group was listed, along with the scores from Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3.

**REPORT OF RESULTS:** In all sub-headings, the students who had been taught *Shurley English* scored higher than students who had not. Test results show a definite increase of almost two grade level equivalents in test scores occurring among those students who had *Shurley English* for one school year, with an added increase in students’ scores who had been taught *Shurley English* for two consecutive years. The lowest scores invariably belonged to students who had not been taught *Shurley English*, while the highest invariably belonged to those who had been taught *Shurley English* for two years. Results indicate the superiority of the *Shurley English* curriculum over the school’s standard curriculum. Moreover, students who had been taught using *Shurley English* for two consecutive years scored in the top 20% of the nation, as indicated by the National Percentile scores, suggesting the superiority of *Shurley English* on a national scale.

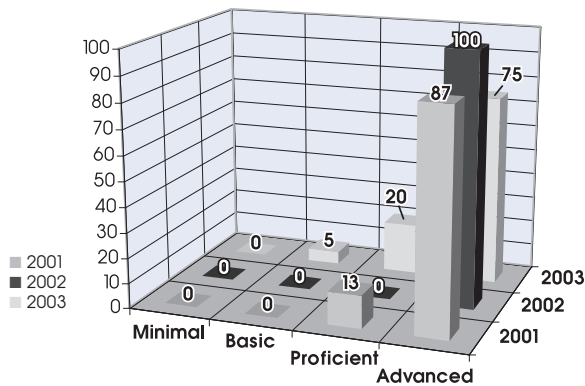
**INVESTIGATORS:** Staff and Faculty of Pleasant Grove Elementary School, Greenwood, Indiana.

### Kosciusko School District Kosciusko, Mississippi

#### Mississippi Curriculum Test (MCT)

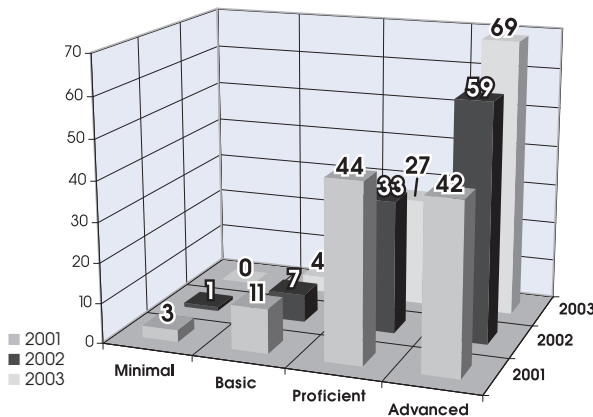
The Kosciusko School District started using *Shurley English* in the fall of 1999. This curriculum first began with one third grade class. In the 2000–2001 school year, *Shurley English* was the basal curriculum for all third grade classes. Upon seeing the results of the 2001 MCT scores, *Shurley English* was implemented in grades K–5. Grade six added *Shurley English* to their curriculum in the 2002–2003 school year. Test scores were reviewed and *Shurley English* was mandated K–8 beginning in the 2003–2004 school year.

#### Mrs. Terry's 3rd Grade Class Language Proficiency Levels



CATAGORY	2001		2002		2003	
	AVERAGE POINTS	POINTS POSSIBLE	AVERAGE POINTS	POINTS POSSIBLE	AVERAGE POINTS	POINTS POSSIBLE
Editing: Caps & Punctuation	14.5	16	15.6	16	14.9	16
Spelling	3.9	4	4.0	4	3.8	4
Sentence Structure	14.7	16	15.5	16	14.5	16
Meaning	15.6	17	16.2	17	15.9	17

#### Kosciusko 3rd Grade School Language Proficiency Levels



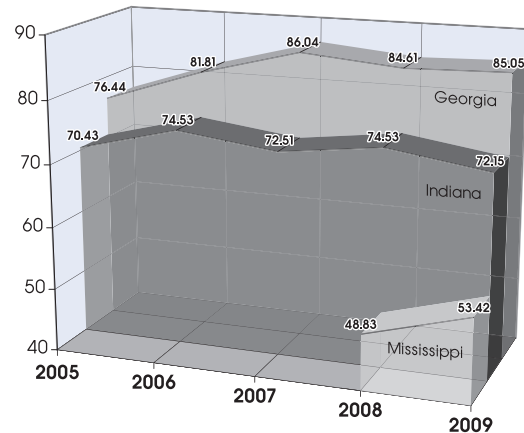
CATAGORY	2001		2002		2003	
	AVERAGE POINTS	POINTS POSSIBLE	AVERAGE POINTS	POINTS POSSIBLE	AVERAGE POINTS	POINTS POSSIBLE
Editing: Caps & Punctuation	13.3	16	14.4	16	14.7	16
Spelling	3.8	4	3.9	4	3.9	4
Sentence Structure	13.5	16	14.0	16	14.4	16
Meaning	14.2	17	14.7	17	15.3	17

### PRES Associates, Inc. Analysis Report for Georgia, Indiana, and Mississippi

Analyses were performed to examine changes in student performance on the state English language arts assessments among *Shurley English* schools. Multilevel modeling was performed to determine if changes in performance from the initial data point (2005 for IN and GA and 2008 for MS) to 2009 were statistically significant. As previously noted, while researchers were able to obtain data since the 2005 testing year, given the significant change on the Mississippi state test only data from 2008 and 2009 testing years were analyzed for Mississippi.

Data was aggregated across all three states and grade levels (3rd to 8th) in order to determine if the overall change in the percent of students proficient on the state language arts assessments was significant.<sup>7</sup> Results showed that this was the case with student performance among *Shurley English* schools increasing significantly over time,  $\beta$ slope=1.97, t-ratio=6.30,  $p < .001$ . Figure 1 shows the changes observed over time by state.

Figure 1. Percent of Students Proficient in English/Language Arts in Shurley English Schools by State and Test Year



Among *Shurley English* schools in Georgia, Mississippi, and Indiana, results showed a significant overall gain in the percent of students who were proficient on the English/language arts state assessments over time across all states.

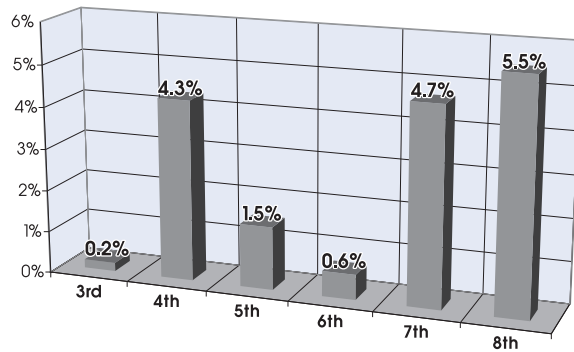
It is important to note that proficiency standards did not change during the time periods examined. Thus, any changes in performance are likely to be due to real changes in student abilities and skills.

In addition, trend analyses were conducted to examine if these gains across states were also seen within each grade level. In other words, analyses focused on whether there were significant changes among 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Results from multilevel models showed that 4th and 5th grade students in *Shurley English* schools



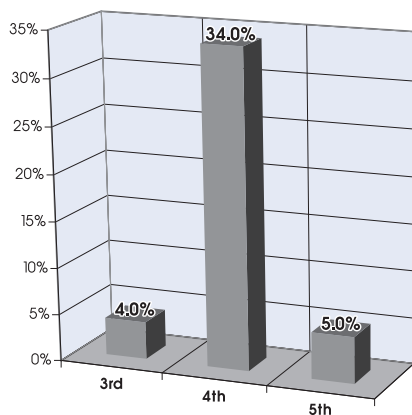
showed significant gains in language arts performance,  $\beta_{\text{slope}}=4.31$ ,  $t\text{-ratio}=6.21$ ,  $p<.001$  and  $\beta_{\text{slope}}=1.55$ ,  $t\text{-ratio}=2.92$ ,  $p<.01$ , respectively. Figure 2 shows the average increase in the percent of students in *Shurley English* schools who were proficient in the language arts assessments by grade. In addition, Figures 3–5 show the average percent of changes observed for each state.<sup>8</sup> Of note is that gains were observed in the majority of cases—and no declines in performance were observed.

**Figure 2. Overall Average Gains<sup>9</sup> in Percent of Students Proficient in English/Language Arts in Shurley English Schools by Grade Level**



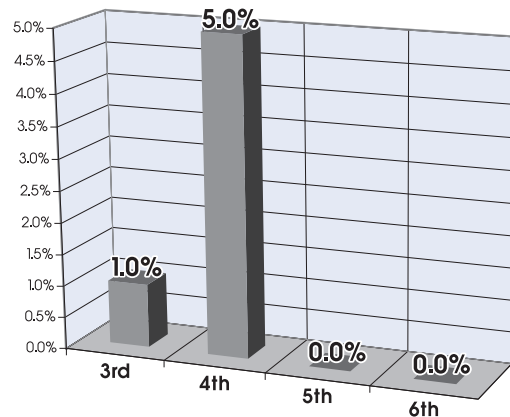
Results showed that 4th and 5th graders in Shurley English schools demonstrated significant language arts gains. Specifically, the percent of 4th grade students who were proficient increased by 4.3% and the percent of 5th grade students who were proficient increased by 1.5%. In addition, while students in 3rd and 6th grades showed small improvements, the percent of 7th and 8th grade students who were proficient substantially increased by 4.7% and 5.5% respectively, although these latter findings were not significant.

**Figure 3. Average Gains Between 2005 and 2009 in Percent of Students Proficient in English/Language Arts in Shurley English Schools by Grade Level: Georgia**



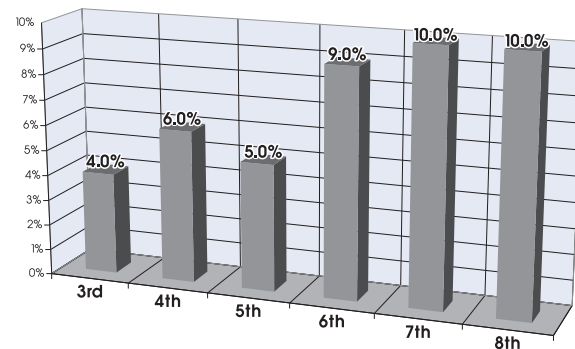
Among Georgia students in Shurley English schools, 4th grade students made the largest gains between 2005 and 2009 as noted by the 34% increase in the percent of students proficient in the Georgia English/language arts test.

**Figure 4. Average Gains Between 2005 and 2009 in Percent of Students Proficient in English/Language Arts in Shurley English Schools by Grade Level: Indiana**



From 2005 to 2009, the percent of Indiana 3rd and 4th grade students proficient in the language arts state exam increased over time (1% and 5%). No changes were observed among 5th and 6th graders.

**Figure 5. Average Gains Between 2008 and 2009 in Percent of Students Proficient in English/Language Arts in Shurley English Schools by Grade Level: Mississippi**



Mississippi students in Shurley English schools demonstrated improvement from 2008 to 2009 at all grade levels, with the largest increases occurring at the 6th to 8th grade levels (9–10%).

*Across the states of Georgia, Mississippi, and Indiana, results showed a significant improvement in the percent of students in Shurley English schools who were proficient in language arts over time. In general, this positive pattern of results was also observed across grade levels and individual states*

<sup>7</sup>Statistical analysis by state is not appropriate given the small sample sizes involved.

<sup>8</sup>To calculate, the difference in performance from one year to the next was calculated. These difference scores were combined to obtain an overall change score.

<sup>9</sup>Note that although 7th and 8th graders demonstrated the largest amount of growth, due to the more limited sample size at these grade levels (and power), statistics did not reach statistical significance.



- Comments and Testimonials



Comments and Testimonials



Fannim Elementary School  
Office of the Principal

The Shurley Method Language program accomplishes the following in a bilingual class. It facilitates retention of material and helps the students apply concepts taught because of the large amount of drill and repetition. They are able to maintain skills and apply them appropriately. The Shurley Method has also made them much better readers. They master sentence structure with ease and enthusiasm which builds their self-confidence. Students learn grammar at a level exceeding the grade level curriculum requirements. Consistent repetition and daily practice of all the skills taught make this program successful with bilingual students.

*Irma Portillo*

**Irma Portillo**  
Second Grade Bilingual

5425 Salem Drive • El Paso, Texas 799



Fannim Elementary School  
Office of the Principal

I have really enjoyed using the Shurley Method with my fourth grade bilingual class. This method has helped my class to identify and use the four different kinds of sentences. Punctuation is taught and stressed with the sentences. I notice that teaching parts of speech is difficult, but not for children who use the Shurley Method. They not only learn the four kinds of sentences but how to use adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, etc. They know the parts of speech and how and where to use them in a sentence. This, of course, leads to the writing of a good paragraph which is crucial to a fourth grader due to the TAAS. I really do enjoy using the Shurley Method.

*Rachel Salcido*

**Rachel Salcido**  
Fourth Grade Bilingual

5425 Salem Drive • El Paso, Texas 79924 • (915) 821-5623





## School Success

The Picayune School District is reaping the benefit of a language program developed by a former teacher determined to make the English language easy for eighth graders.

The Shurley Method English Made Easy series of language instruction was developed by Brenda Shurley, a teacher who turned frustration with the lack of language instruction retention into a new curriculum with remarkable results.

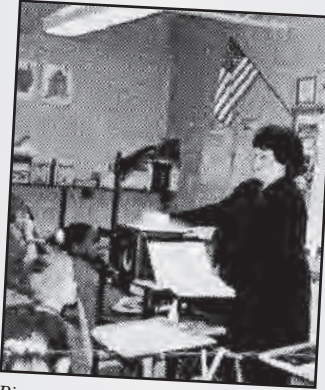
"Most of Shurley's students disliked English mainly because they did not understand it," says Nancy Downing, a Picayune teacher who uses the Shurley Method with her fourth grade students.

Shurley began writing her own English program in 1971, determined to "reach children with different learning abilities to instill a love of learning, and to give students a solid foundation from which to build advanced writing and speaking skills," Downing writes. Shurley joined forces with co-author Ruth Wetsell in 1987 to develop a complete language program for students in grades 1-8.

The program was piloted at South Side Elementary School in Picayune in 1996, with selected students in grades 3-6 participating. The remaining students in the grade levels continued with the traditional Language instruction.

"The results were dramatic," notes Downing. "The children

### Language program developed by former teacher benefits Picayune school students



*Picayune Fourth Grade Teacher Nancy Downing uses the Shurley Method English Made Easy program to help students master the English language.*

using the Shurley Method seemed to grasp grammatical concepts far beyond their expected grade level curriculum requirements." The same students also had developed a love for English.

Following the success in the 1996 school year, all students in grades 1-6 throughout the school district were brought into the Shurley program.

"Although not formally measured, the success rate was undeniable," the district reports. "Standardized test scores in language (ITBS) increased. Children were happy and felt successful in language learning. It was apparent that the program engendered success in students and took the frustration out of language learning as well as instruction.

The district has observed other positive effects of the Shurley Method. "Probably the most evident is the systematic development of writing skills." Students now

view writing as a process of communication and show excitement about meaningful writing topics.

The program provides students opportunities for oral presentation and publication of their work.

"Teaching children to work together collaboratively, to take risks, to practice democracy and to be truly connected and engaged in their learning is truly a goal of all accomplished teachers," says Downing. "The Shurley Method English Made Easy provides multiple opportunities for peer tutoring, editing partnering, student/teacher conferencing and parent/child interaction."

The district is now looking at applying the skills in other curriculum areas. "Children are able to respond to math problems, articulate their thinking and justify their answers with the structure provided in the Shurley process," Downing notes. "In the science and social studies, children are able to make real world connections because they have a base of knowledge from which to draw in learning to communicate these ideas to others."

For more information about the Shurley Method English Made Easy series of language instruction, contact Downing, South Side Upper Elementary School, 1500 Rosa Street, Picayune, MS 39466; (601) 798-1105.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was compiled from an article written by Picayune teacher Nancy Downing. The photo of Downing on this page was supplied by Tracy Dash, a member of the staff of the Picayune Item Newspaper.*

June 6, 2000

Dear Brenda Shurley:

I have experienced enormous success and true enjoyment using the Shurley Method of teaching English.

The Shurley Method is based on a hierarchy of basic English concepts which are presented in small increments in a systematic manner. Its reasoned approach sets it apart from any other published modern program I am familiar with. Also, its "jingles" serve as permanent mnemonic devices for the parts of speech and sentence construction. It provides a simple, enjoyable way to learn a concept on a continuum, and offers more than sufficient practice and review. In fact, all previously learned concepts are reviewed constantly.

It is hardly possible for any student, regardless of age or previous knowledge, not to be successful in learning all the basic written language skills.

From the scripted text of the teacher's edition, anybody with a desire to teach could successfully implement the program for any child or adult.

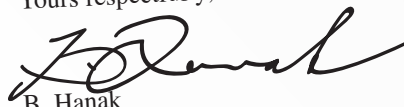
I have witnessed the highly successful learning and the unbridled enthusiasm students display towards the Shurley Method. I have visited classes from kindergarten through sixth grade and have started to teach my own children, using the Shurley Method of teaching English.

My three children, ages 9, 12, and 15, were introduced to the Shurley program, Level 4, in mid-April of this year. My two older children (12 and 15 year-olds) were adopted by us from Russia last November (1999). Of course, they could not speak, read, or write our language. Today, after two months in the program, they have completed Lesson 64, and have written their first friendly letter, independently, to an aunt in Canada. Their successes and enthusiasm for the program lead me to conclude that anybody whose mother tongue is not English would profit enormously from the Shurley Method, given an English-speaking person willing to teach.

In my opinion, the Shurley Method of learning English is so enormously successful because it is a structurally-reasoned, conceptually-based language program, offering students the opportunity to learn concepts within a framework of previously learned skills. Rather than learning concepts in isolation, the program invites daily success and enjoyment for the learner.

In short, it ensures success, which promotes joy at being successful, which promotes further desire to learn. It promotes a "positive chain reaction."

Yours respectfully,



B. Hanak  
Parent and Teacher  
Houston, Texas



## Coffee County Board of Education

300 Hillsboro Boulevard, Box 5  
Manchester, Tennessee 37355-2701  
(615) 723-5150 • Fax (615) 723-5153

August 25, 1997

Mr. & Mrs. Shurley:

I had the opportunity this past year to visit some of our classrooms using the Shurley English method of instruction. It was exciting to see students were learning at such an early level. In one second grade class I saw students identifying parts of speech which are usually not learned until a much higher level. As they were using the chants to review the sentences they were all participating and successful in their work. Finding it hard to believe that these students really knew this material, I asked them questions which they easily answered without the chants. Later, when I visited intermediate grades, I saw that these skills were integrated into writing activities and the students were able to apply everything they had learned in chants and other techniques.

I find this method of instruction an effective alternative to the traditional lecture/worksheet approach to learning. It certainly lends itself to the type of students we have in our classes today. Since all students are actively involved, discipline improves and grades improve. This is an excellent program, and I am glad to see my teachers so enthusiastic about teaching it.

I look forward to working with your company.

Sincerely,

Bobby Cummins  
Superintendent

Loretto, TN 38481  
August 21, 1997

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to commend you on the Shurley Method. I can say good things about the program. Last year I piloted the program for nine weeks in my fourth grade class. I was utterly amazed at the results. After the nine week period, there was no doubt in my mind that the program was going to do wonders for my English class.

Before the Shurley Method, I hated the thought of having English class each day. Not only did I hate teaching English, but my students hated it also. This was not true with the Shurley Method. English with the Shurley Method was a total turn around in not only my eyes, but most importantly in the eyes of my students. For the first time in my career as a teacher, the students were actually enthusiastic about having English class. As a matter of fact, on the last day of school, after all books had been taken up, they were still begging to learn more of the Shurley Method. (Now if that's not a plus, I don't know what is.) In the course of a year we far exceeded what I had to teach according to the Tennessee Curriculum Guide. As a matter of fact, by Christmas I had covered everything I had to teach, except letter writing. The reason I finished so early was because the students were learning at such a fast pace and were interested in learning. It doesn't take a genius to realize that a child learns better and faster if they are doing something they enjoy doing. Throughout last year, there was hardly a week that went by that I didn't have someone from other schools in the county observing my English class. The news seemed to spread like wild fire. Everyone who observed my class was very amazed at what my kids knew. Because of the success of my English class, my principal has allowed several other teachers in my school the chance to try out the Shurley Method in their classrooms. Also, several other schools in my county have purchased the program as well.

I truly feel that the Shurley Method is an important part of any English program. The repetitious techniques used in this program are very effective. I think this program should be a part of every school's English curriculum.

Lisa Johns  
4th grade teacher



Colorado Springs

SCHOOL  
DISTRICT

Building Tomorrows Today

Dr. Terry N. Bishop, Superintendent  
Judith McCollum, Principal

October 19, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

As the principal of an elementary school that has used *Shurley English* for the past three years, I am proud to write this testimonial for this year's *Why It Works Booklet*. I am a firm believer in the *Shurley Method* of teaching English and grammar. Having previously been a secondary language arts teacher, I watched teenagers struggle with grammar concepts for years. No matter how I tried to present the material, too many students relied on guessing as their strategy for identifying parts of speech and diagramming sentences. When I was introduced to the *Shurley Method* a few years ago, I was amazed. Finally, a former English teacher had cracked the grammar code for students. Brenda Shurley combined her years of teaching experience with the brain research to design a program that works.

My elementary school had not had a formal grammar curriculum for years; consequently, it was no surprise that our students' reading and writing scores were low. Some people might have pointed to our 48% free/reduced lunch rate as an excuse; however, my teachers knew we could do better, so we began searching for an answer. We piloted *Shurley English* in two classes for a semester and liked what we saw. First grade children easily learned the jingles. Parents were blown away that their six-year-old children not only knew the parts of speech but also knew grammar that they themselves had forgotten, such as object of the preposition and prepositional phrases. We were soon ready as a staff to implement the program in grades K through 5 for the following school year. Our subsequent state test scores speak for themselves in terms of success. The reading scores for grades 3, 4, and 5 have steadily risen from the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in 2002 to over 80<sup>th</sup> percentile in 2006. We are particularly proud of our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade writing increase from 38% in 2002 to this year's score of 80% and our 5<sup>th</sup> grade writing, which moved from 59% to 81% over the same time frame. We attribute the growth in these two content areas to the addition of *Shurley English* to our curriculum.

According to Leslie Waldorf, my fourth grade teacher who looped up with her third graders this year, "I believe there is a direct correlation between our 2006 writing scores and all the grammar we did last year. *Shurley* helps the students recognize a complete, meaningful sentence. In addition, they now know how to vary the beginning of paragraphs with prepositional phrases, which shows they are working at a higher level than using a traditional topic sentence. I have even begun using *Shurley English* with my own tenth grade son. He is learning the songs and performing much better in his high school English class. I love *Shurley!*"

Sincerely,

Judith McCollum, Principal

Katharine Lee Bates Elementary • 702 Cragmor Road • Colorado Springs, CO 80907  
(719) 328-5400 • FAX (719) 260-8827 • Email: mcoljs@d11.org • www.cssd11.k12.co.us/bates/



THE PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINE FOR TEACHERS K-8

# creative classroom

KIDS  
DISCOVER

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2003 \$3.75

Grammatically Correct... Besides using rubrics for evaluating student writing, Angelillo also suggests keeping students' writing over the year in a folder for periodic evaluation, and scheduling regular conferences that focus on written conventions.

## Singing the praises of Shurley English

Brenda Shurley, along with Ruth Wetsell, developed an unconventional approach to teaching traditional skills because her eighth-grade English students had such poor retention of skills.

"Shurley English," a K-8 program designed to teach children with different learning abilities, features concrete steps that relate a definition to a concept, a concept to a skill practice, and skill practice to writing and editing. Shurley believes that competent writing begins with sentences and expands to paragraphs, letters, reports, and other longer pieces. Consistency in the use of terms and skill practice build a strong foundation as new skills are added at each level. The most unique feature of Shurley English is its 18 different jingles that children chant or sing. These jingles teach definitions and roles of the parts of speech. The rhythm, rhyme, and repetition help children remember them. First-graders learn jingles for a sentence, noun, verb, adjective, article, preposition, and object of the preposition. For example:

This little noun

Floating around

Names a person, place, or thing.

With a knick knock, paddy wack,

These are English rules.

Isn't language fun and cool?

A Prep Prep Preposition

Is a special group of words

That connects a Noun Noun

Noun

Or a Pro Pro Pronoun

To the rest of the sentence.

In the next step, sentences are analyzed word-by-word using an oral series of questions. This **Question and Answer Flow** enables a group to learn the role of each word in any sentence. For example, a sentence goes on the board: *The birthday present arrived yesterday.* Then the teacher asks: "What arrived?" Children say, "Present - noun." Finally, students compose **practice sentences** using the parts-of-speech labels they learn, and they expand sentences they write by replacing words with synonyms, antonyms, or other words.

Teachers at Zion Lutheran School in San Francisco have seen progress after just a year of using the Shurley method three times a week. They say that now students recognize the components of a good sentence and that understanding sentence structure expands to writing different kinds of paragraphs and genres across content areas because they know the basics. The group work is multi-sensory, provides immediate feedback and constant review, and encourages teacher-student interaction. Best of all, teachers claim children apply what they learn to their writing.

## The Windward Way

Dr. Judith Hochman, former head of the Windward School for learning disabilities in White Plains, New York, developed a structured writing program to help students with a wide range of abilities become competent writers. Hochman believes that

Have students read...

To learn GUM, students write every day for a (30 minutes), and read

Do not have students

want them to understand the rules. Knowing basic tool for thinking about language helps students

Work with language

The goal is to have students theories about how language underline every part of sentences.

Be picky about what able to teach a few key thoroughly rather than a of rules to remember.

Learn what to teach errors. "Errors are the according to Piaget. E students' logic and a

Don't expect neat fact, anticipate mistakes learning something a piano player who year-old writer

Also, children don't be surprised if you see the

Have fun with Ellie Grossman, pianist and don't get death. If sports b



# Making a Difference in the Middle

A newsletter for Middle School Administrators of Kansas

March 1998

KASSP—Serving The Secondary Building Administrators of Kansas

## A Word From The President



...to work using Technic and Lego systems which can be hooked up to computers and given movement commands. Technology classes are another area of strength. These classes are taken by all students one hour each day. Expectations are high as students use IBM computers to go far beyond keyboarding skills. Here you

...in bow... of districts. The size of the setting doesn't determine the quality of the education. We who are fewer in population are motivated to provide the latest in field research. We want to enable each student to achieve his personal best while in our care. The "voice" of this small school is one to be heard!

...and issues. Our student body is... of the diverse community of Topeka, as we believe that we are fulfilling our mission to provide the opportunity for our students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens.

### The Shurley Method

Mark Buck, Principal - Medicine Lodge Middle School

A few years ago, as an assistant principal, I was taking a group of students to a school function. I can't remember the function we were going to, but I will never forget what I heard on the bus. As you know, when students get on a bus to go somewhere, they usually begin to sing songs. As I listened, the songs I heard coming from the back of the bus were not the songs I had heard in the past. I listened closer and could not believe my ears; they were singing songs about English. No teacher was leading them; they were doing this because they enjoyed it. Wow, what a concept! Kids singing songs on the bus about English, and they were not forced into it. This was my first encounter with the Shurley Method. I had to find out more about this program.

The problem with the typical "English" class is two fold. First, many students dread English, because they are not successful in learning the concepts and rules they are taught. Second, many students don't understand how to use the rules and concepts in their everyday speaking and writing. The Shurley Method is a great program for grades 1-8 that turns students on to grammar and writing with dramatic results. **WOW!!!** This is the typical response to seeing the Shurley Method for the first time. It is a wonderful, exciting way to teach English and writing. This program, authored by teachers Brenda Shurley and Ruth Wetsell, uses repetition, fun, and student participation to build a strong grammar foundation. The definition jingles and sentence Question-Answer Flow teach students to understand how all parts of a sentence fit together. One of the amazing things about this program is the participation from the class.

I have observed many classes, now, doing the Shurley Method. Here are some of the comments I have heard: "Can I go to the board first to diagram a sentence?", "Can I lead the jingles?", "Can I show you I can do it by myself?" Now, correct me if I am alone on this, but I can't remember saying any of these things in English class.

We observed and studied the Shurley Method last year and decided to wait and put it in the schedule this year. Our teachers are excited about the program, and it has been a great success for us. We teach the Shurley Method from 1st grade to 8th grade. Back in November, we went to the Board of Education and demonstrated our progress, and to say the least, they were very impressed. At the March B.O.E. meeting we will have 1st graders demonstrating the Shurley Method.

I have had administrators and teachers from other districts come to our school to observe this program. Everyone leaves excited about sharing this information with their schools. If you are looking for a program to help your teachers make English an exciting, interactive class, look at the Shurley Method.

**KASSP Theme  
1997-1998**

**"Success is a  
Journey  
Not a Destination"**



Our Focus...Student Success

## ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 13, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

LEONORA P. MILES  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
4215 BAKERS FERRY ROAD, S.W.  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30331

WAYNE S. JACK Ed.D.  
PRINCIPAL

404-505-6730  
404-505-6741 FAX

wsjack@atlanta.k12.ga.us

I am writing this letter in support of the Shurley Method English Program. I have seen first hand, the benefits of this particular program.

We are in the third year of implementation of the Program. It is being used in grades first through fifth. I learned about the Program while attending an instructional retreat several years ago in our district. There was a classroom teacher at the retreat who presented information about how well her students performed in English/Language Arts on the Georgia Criterion Referenced-Competency Test (GCRCT) by having been exposed to the Shurley Method.

Miles Elementary is an America's Choice School. America's Choice has a standards-based literacy program in which students are engaged in writing for one hour daily. After having previewed the Shurley Method, I was convinced that our students needed this program to augment our writing program. I saw the potential benefits from the daily reinforcement of the jingles, vocabulary study, classification of sentences and progress checks that were built into the program. Through the use of the Shurley Method, students have been able to become better writers and readers because they understand the job of each word in a sentence. They understand how to make their writing more interesting through proper use of the parts of speech.

Our test scores have increased in language arts for the past two years as measured on the GCRCT. This has enabled Miles to make Adequate Yearly Progress without difficulty each year. Our scores for grades three through five in Reading/Language Arts for 2004 were 69 percent Meeting or Exceeding Standard; for 2005 - 82 percent Meeting or Exceeding Standard; for 2006 they held at 82 percent Meeting or Exceeding Standard, even though the test was changed to a more rigorous format using the new Georgia Performance Standards.

In closing, I think the Shurley Program has been of great benefit to the students at Miles Elementary School. The teachers have embraced it and see the value the program has added as they instruct their reading and writing classes.

Sincerely,

Wayne S. Jack

The Atlanta Public School System does not discriminate in any of its employment practices, policies, or programs. Resolution, 130 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30303

From: Joe Sershen  
Sent: Monday, October 02, 2006 12:26 PM  
To: FLREP@Shurley.com  
Subject: Shurley Success

I am a fourth grade teacher at Chocachatti Elementary School in Hernando County Florida. I have been using the Shurley Method for approximately ten years in conjunction with "Power-writing" and a strong Daily Oral Language (DOL) component. It has been a welcomed addition to our Language Arts curriculum. Shurley-taught students have a complete understanding of all the parts of speech, and consequently they know how to apply that knowledge in their writing. Using adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases has become commonplace in their every day writing. Writing scores at this school have been at the top of the county for many years. The Shurley Method plays a big part in the success of our student's Florida Writes scores.



# Shurley — There's a Better Way

In October of 1989, I visited Ms. Jennifer Bradshaw, a third grade classroom teacher in the Jenks East Elementary School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, as part of my Oklahoma entry-year assignment. To say I was impressed would be an understatement. The method of English instruction being used was not only dynamic and effective, but also seemed to meet more of the Oklahoma minimum criteria of effective teaching than any method I had previously seen in seven years as a Higher Education Representative on entry-year committees.

My notes relative to this observation state that the teacher demonstrated clear organization, lots of student participation, time on task, excellent questioning techniques, good use of support systems, terrific verbal flow, and great eye contact and movement patterns. She also provided a classroom climate conducive to learning, superior anticipatory set and closure, modeling, clear directions, positive feedback, and enthusiasm.

During the post observation conference, Ms. Bradshaw modestly told me that what made learning English enjoyable for the students was *The Shurley Method, English Made Easy*. She went on to say that all 18 of the third grade teachers were using this system. I decided to learn more about this program. Mrs. Karen Vance, the principal, and Mrs. Luanna Urton, Ms. Bradshaw's teacher consultant, were happy to educate me.

The *Shurley English* program was developed by Brenda Shurley, a classroom teacher in Cabot, Arkansas. Ms. Shurley was frustrated because her students were not able to remember or apply information and concepts introduced to them as part of their English program. She began to realize that a student could not be expected to maintain a skill unless there were daily opportunities to practice and apply the information.

*Shurley English* maintains that effective instruction in English must be founded upon an understanding of how the eight parts of speech work together in a sentence. When you learn how to put a sentence together, part by part, then you are capable of tearing it apart or repairing it because you know how every part fits together to make a good sentence. Each sentence contains only what has been previously taught. Once a concept has been taught, it always appears in every set of sentences. Students are kept on task continually through each lesson using verbal, auditory, and visual activities. It is the consistent repetition and daily practice of all skills taught that make this program successful.

For each of the eight parts of speech, the children are taught jingles to help them remember how to identify the function of each word in the sentence. If at any time during the group lesson the children cannot label a part of a sentence with confidence, the class reverts back to the jingle to help them identify the part of speech.

Ms. Shurley provided one all-day session of inservice education for the teachers so they would know how to use the materials. The manual is very extensive, well organized, and provides detailed explanations. I asked Ms. Bradshaw, "As a first year teacher, how did you feel when asked to adopt a rather complex and programmed method of teaching?" "Confused," she replied. But she hastened to add that she is "...amazed at the students' level of retention and understanding." Her feelings now that she has five

months behind her? "...privileged to be a part of the pilot program." Ms. Bradshaw added that the students are extremely pleased with their posttest scores compared to their pretest scores.

*Shurley English* is highly motivational for teachers as well. They view it as an interesting alternative to the textbook. "Shurley English has built up my confidence as a teacher. My students feel successful, and I find great pride in what I'm teaching them. *Shurley English* has changed my life," stated Jamie Hudson, third grade teacher. Four months after the third grade teachers began the program, they were joined by 13 fourth grade teachers.

One of the most important parts of *Shurley English* is the Question & Answer Flow. This is when the sentences are classified. The Question & Answer Flow is done in a rhythmic, enthusiastic manner. The students are very active participants, which increases retention of information in their short-term memory. The repetition is essential for transferring the information into their long-term memory.

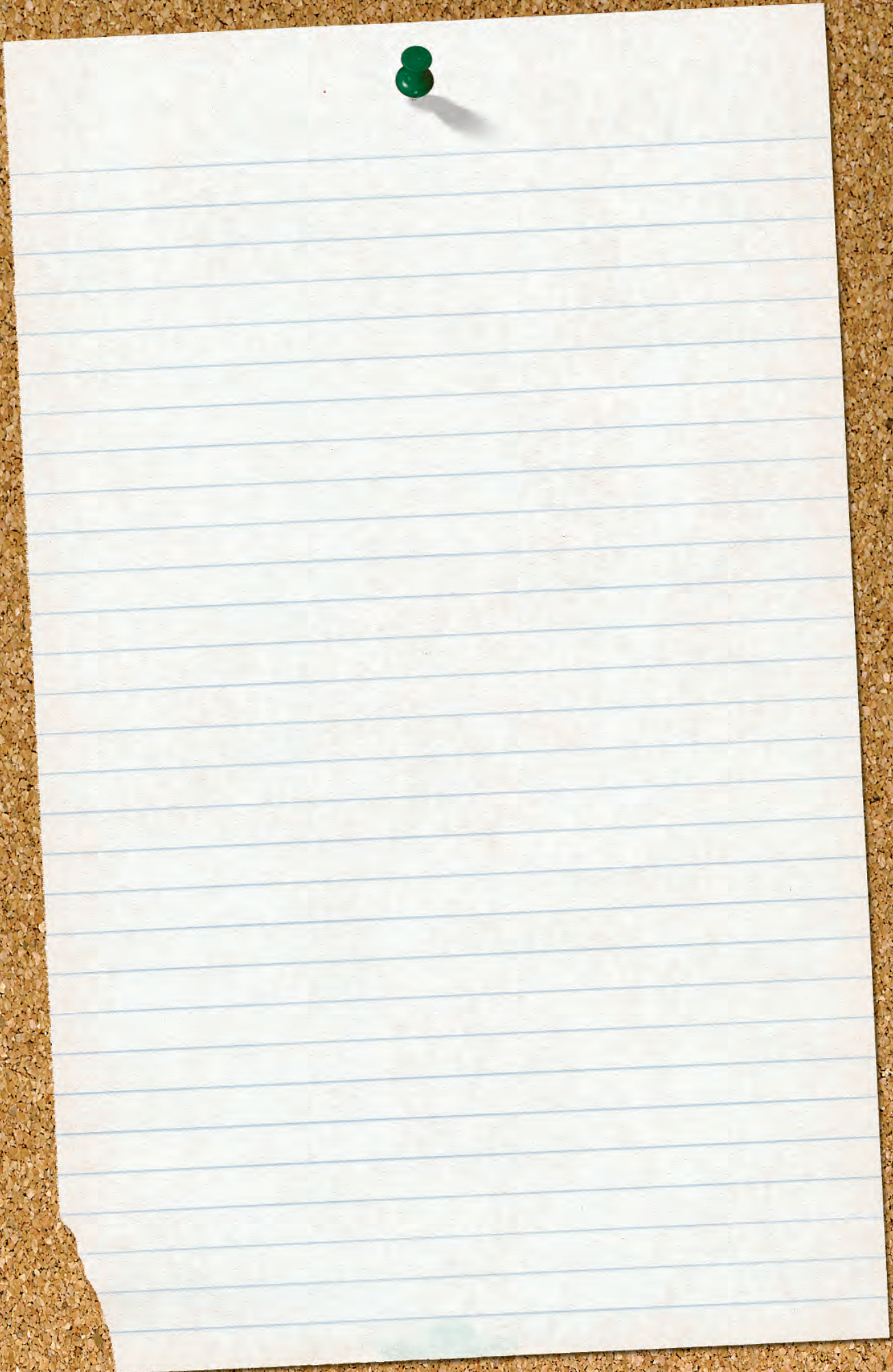
The *Shurley English* program was introduced at Jenks East Elementary School in September of 1989. The program has many advantages over the traditional textbook technique of teaching English. Students demonstrate a much more positive attitude about English, and many students claim English as their favorite subject. This enthusiasm carries over into their everyday work habits because they feel so much success with their learning. The program has been effective with students of different learning capacities and styles. Children who have demonstrated difficulty in learning have gained new attitudes about themselves because they are so successful with *Shurley English*. Students retain their understanding of language skills because skills are presented in a logical order and enough repetition is used to master each concept. This program uses many of the most important principles of learning: motivation, retention, transfer, and reinforcement. Vocabulary and reading skills improve because of the large amount of oral reading. The students' writing skills also improve because they are able to expand their writing by increasing their use of adverbs and adjectives.

Third and fourth grade teachers at Jenks East Elementary School indicated that *Shurley English* has changed their approach to teaching English grammar and changed the attitudes of the children they teach. Students gain self-confidence along with a working knowledge of grammar and writing skills. Dr. Kirby Lehman, Jenks Superintendent of Schools, had this to say: "In my estimation, *Shurley English* is dynamic. Personally and professionally I want my own son and daughter immersed in the program."

This entry year committee member is excited about the program and is pleased to salute Ms. Bradshaw, Mrs. Urton, Mrs. Vance, and all the other pioneers at Jenks East Elementary School.

Dr. Wesley W. Beck  
Associate Professor of Education  
Northeastern State University  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma







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