

Implementing GLAD Strategies in a Distance-Learning Context

by Sara J. Robles—Dual Language Instructional Coach, School District U-46, Elgin, IL

Necessity is the mother of invention—Plato

While none of us expected to move drastically from in-person to online instruction, that is exactly what we did in March of 2020. Like many of you, I was left with questions of how to adapt my dual language instruction to a virtual space. *Where do I start? What does this look like? What, if anything, from my physical classroom can be adapted and used successfully in a distance-learning format?* Through this period, I was fortunate to discover the Seesaw platform, which, in concert with Project GLAD strategies and Loom recording tools, turned out to be a marvelous combination. Through some trial and error, I found ways to adapt some of my go-to GLAD strategies with the aim of developing all four language domains. Students were given both asynchronous and synchronous lessons during the week, which worked together in tandem. Rather than describe a single lesson, I will describe what I refer to as “lesson threads” which refers to the work done by students throughout the course of a week, both independently and in “live” sessions, all connected to a central content and language objective.

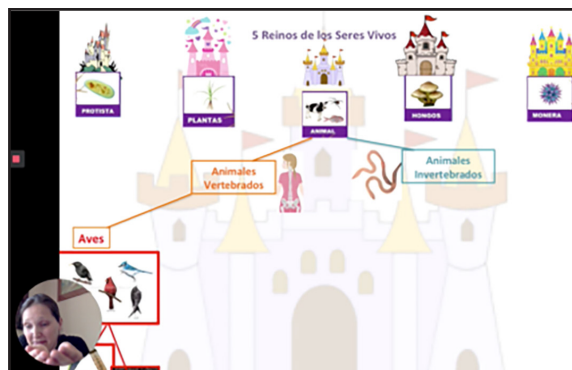
Asynchronous Introduction to a New Concept: Developing Oracy and Key Content Vocabulary

To kick off the final science unit of the year, I wanted to continue to use the Graphic Organizer Input Chart. I realized that showing a huge paper chart during a Zoom session would be logistically challenging, so I moved from paper to a slide presentation. Using the Loom recording option to show both the presentation and my face simultaneously, I moved slowly and systematically through the Graphic Organizer Input Chart, offering a bird’s-eye view of material from the unit. Students could see my face as I presented key terms from the unit and could practice the TPR gestures along with me, even asynchronously! Even though they would be watching the video on

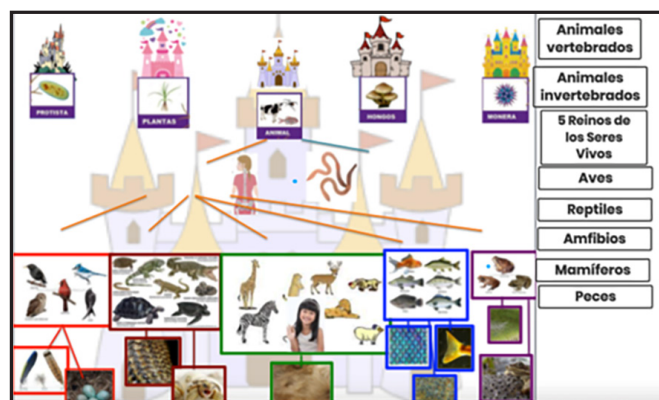
their own, I was sure to leave pauses for students to practice both gestures and words along with me, as we had once done in person in the classroom.

As in the classroom, I kept the video short (less than 10 minutes). Once it was complete, I included the Loom video as the first step of the Seesaw activity instructions. Students were asked to watch the video, repeat and gesture along with me, and then respond in Seesaw. Their first Seesaw response was to leave me a video showing me the TPR/key terms they had learned in the video. Second, students were given a template of the same organizer from

the video without the labels, in which they read and placed the “word cards” where they belonged. Just like in-person GLAD instruction, I used color-coding, and the multiple types of responses mimicked the repetition we would have had



The Graphic Organizer Input Chart was presented using Loom so that students could see the teacher's face and follow her TPR gestures.



in the classroom, reviewing the organizer over several days. Seesaw was a fantastic medium for this introduction, as students could navigate independently through the work and respond in multiple ways. Being able to respond with voice messages allowed ongoing back and forth exchanges between the students and me, similar to the feedback of the in-person classroom. Reviewing students' response videos and word-card work served as formative assessment and allowed me to prepare to clarify concepts and to offer a deeper application of content vocabulary in later lessons.

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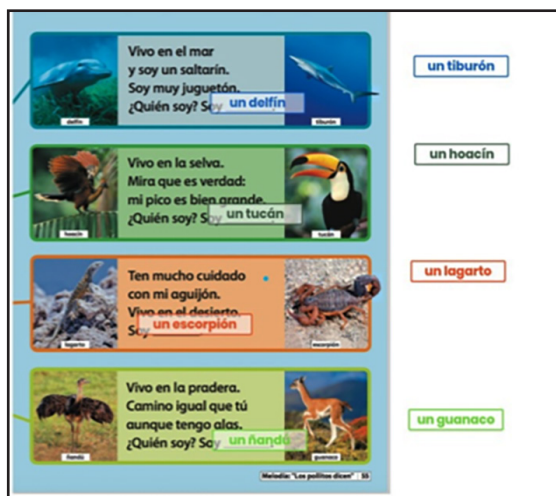
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Synchronous Advanced Application: Clarification of Concepts, Differentiation, and Deeper Application of Content

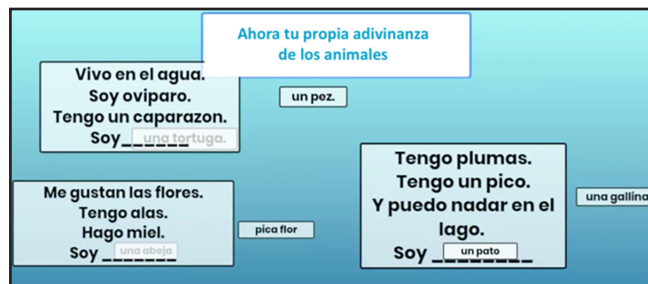
A few days after students were introduced to the new topic of study with the Graphic Organizer Input Chart, we met as a class via Zoom. I wanted to be sure to clarify a few concepts, such as the characteristics of amphibians vs. reptiles, which I noticed had been a sticking point when I reviewed the students' video responses to the Input Chart. After I clarified this aspect, then came the moment to add difficulty and differentiation. After a quick teacher-led review, I asked for students with higher proficiency in the target language to take over as the teacher while all the other students participated, either making the TPR gesture or repeating the key vocabulary. Finally, the class played a game *¿Quién soy?* in which students asked yes or no questions to guess which animal they were. The guesser closed their eyes while the rest of the class could see a photo of a mystery member of the animal kingdom. The guesser used key vocabulary and deductive reasoning (i.e., *¿Soy mamífero?* *¿Tengo plumas?*) while the rest of the class answered questions with thumbs up or down. Students of all proficiency levels were engaged listening and asking questions, as well as offering the occasional *pista*, if the guesser was stuck.

Asynchronous Reading and Writing

To conclude the week, students were given a passage from our district's literacy resource. The activity required students to read riddles about the animal kingdom and answer them using a word bank. I set it up in Seesaw so that students first read the passage for fluency (recording their voice as they read), and then later answered questions for comprehension (either writing or moving words on the page).



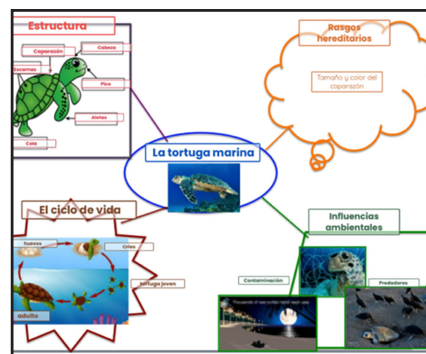
The final step was for students to write original riddles using both writing and audio recordings. It was fun for everyone to guess and give more clues in an ongoing conversation, all centered around the key content vocabulary presented from the Input Chart. After I read and responded to students' work, I shared the results with the whole class, so the class community could see and celebrate each other's efforts.



Additional GLAD Strategies

After this initial lesson thread, the unit continued with the support of a variety of GLAD strategies via Seesaw and Loom. Below is an overview of subsequent lesson threads, based on key GLAD strategies.

🕒 **Pictorial Input Chart** Using the same technique of a Loom recording with both PowerPoint and video combined, I presented an example from the Graphic Organizer Input Chart to the students. Just like in-person teaching, I presented and organized specific categories in comprehensible chunks that were color-coded. Since we were looking in depth at the animal kingdom, I presented an example of a reptile—the sea turtle. In this case, instead of having students respond in writing, I requested that they respond orally, telling me something they learned and sharing any remaining questions. In the classroom, I would have physically modeled this and given the students sentence frames. In Seesaw, sentence frames appeared as dialogue bubbles along with oral instructions and supports. Similar to the Graphic Organizer, the second part of the response to the Pictorial Input Chart included sorting “word cards” and having students move either pictures or text onto the chart as an additional layer of processing and reflection.

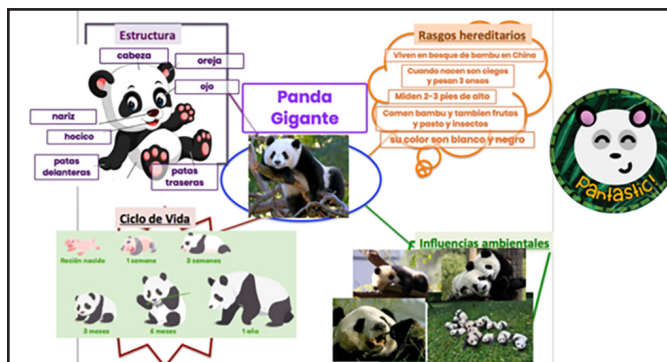


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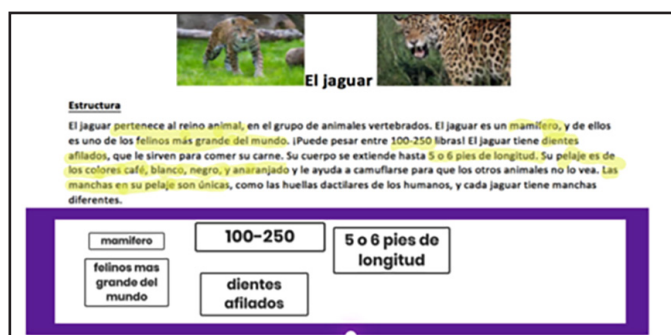
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Unlike in the classroom, where we might have presented only one part of the Pictorial at a time, I recorded the entire thing, since students had the whole week to watch the video as many times as they liked in the asynchronous format. Students' initial Seesaw responses were only the jumping-off point, as I continued to leave and receive voice messages on activities long after the initial submission. The remaining assignments during this week were all interconnected to this initial Pictorial, such as a sea turtle-related *dictado*, a biliteracy strategy from Literacy Squared® that supports cross-linguistic transfer and the development of metalinguistic awareness (K. Escamilla et al, 2014), and a subsequent word-work lesson, as well as a virtual sea turtle field trip and reflection. The synchronous meeting for this lesson thread also included a sea turtle read aloud and ongoing questions added to our inquiry list.

● **Independent Pictorial Input Chart:** After interacting in numerous contexts with the initial Pictorial Input Chart, students were given a blank Pictorial template, with the same, color-coded categories. In the classroom, groups of students might have selected an additional member of the animal kingdom to study, but in the asynchronous-instruction world, this became an independent project. Using student-friendly websites, such as National Geographic Kids, students used pictures and words to describe their selected animal in each of the predetermined categories. Seesaw allowed students to answer these questions through pictures, photos, text, and voice recordings. Students shared what they had learned during this lesson thread's Zoom session. Some students created art projects to represent their research, others showed their finished Pictorial Input Chart. This thread lasted over the course of several weeks, as students then used their personal Pictorial to write informational text in small chunks over a period of days, using the Seesaw tools to edit and give feedback.



● **Expert Texts:** After the sea turtle Pictorial and their own personal Input Charts, I reintroduced expert texts, which we had begun using in the classroom before the quarantine. Again, this strategy was layered on top of the other GLAD strategies, and followed the same color-coded categories, to help aid in comprehension and chunking information. Seesaw is a powerful tool for differentiation, as assignments can be copied and slightly varied, to account for different student needs. Students at grade level and above read the expert texts, highlighted key points, and used drawings/text to keep notes.



Students who needed more support were able to listen to audio recordings of the expert text in each category and respond with pictures and notes, as they were able. Student work was celebrated both in synchronous meetings and in the community space on Seesaw, where students gave each other “likes” and asked questions about their work, similar to the sharing process in the physical classroom.

While we never could have predicted the rapid shift to distance learning that happened last spring, this time of challenges has also given birth to new ideas and approaches. The necessity to reach our language learners, while still offering high-quality instruction has pushed the limits of how we can apply GLAD strategies in multiple contexts and formats, both in person and with multiple technologies. Since then, my district has adopted a new Learning Management System, but Project GLAD continues to prove an invaluable tool, moving with us from the brick-and-mortar school building into the virtual-instruction space.

References

- Escamilla, K., Hopewell, S., Butvilovsky, S., Sparrow, W., Soltero-González, L., Ruiz-Figueroa, O., & Escamilla, M. (2014). *Biliteracy from the start: Literacy Squared in action*. Philadelphia, PA: Caslon Publishing.