ESL AND MAINSTREAM CO-TEACHING: NEGOTIATING THE PLANNING, INSTRUCTING, AND ASSESSING PROCESS

by

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

I began co-teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) three years ago at a large rural middle school in the upper Midwest. Teaching ESL involves teaching English to students whose first language is either not English or whose first language is a combination of English and another language spoken at home. Co-teaching is a teaching model in which an ESL teacher teaches a general education class with a mainstream teacher. Both teachers work together to differentiate instruction and deliver content in a way that is most comprehensible and accessible to the English learners (ELs) in the class. In this way, ELs learn English through the content, not in isolation.

In my first year in my current district, the 2010-2011 school year, I co-taught sixth-grade reading, math, social studies, and science. The next year, the 2011-2012 school year, I co-taught two sections of sixth-grade social studies and one seventh-grade English class. While all the content teachers with whom I taught were open and supportive of both our ELs and me, none of us was entirely prepared to provide adequate support for our ELs due to a lack of extensive common planning time, a superficial knowledge of one another's content expertise, and new relationships in which neither my co-teachers nor I was very familiar with one another's teaching styles, classroom procedures, and overall teaching objectives.

The school I teach at is a large, rural middle school (grades six through eight) in the upper Midwest. Over the past 15 years, the community has seen an influx of immigrants from Mexico, contributing to a burgeoning ESL population and increased federal funding to support a district-wide ESL program to better service the linguistic and academic needs of this new group of students. The 1997-1998 school year was the first year my district became eligible for ESL federal funding. By the 2000-2001 school year, the district saw the total identified number of ELs increase to 206 from only 72 students just three years earlier. Last year, the 2011-2012 school year, the district identified 322 ELs. These native Spanish speakers began to change the traditionally white, native English speaking demographics of both my school district and its surrounding communities.

In 1997, the district hired its first ESL teacher and adopted the traditional pull-out model of ESL that is still widely used in elementary schools both in my district and around the state. A pull-out model of ESL involves the ESL teacher pulling ELs from their mainstream classrooms once a day for the equivalent of a class period, or about 45 minutes, in order to give them isolated English language instruction. About ten years ago, ESL programs began to change from this traditional pull-out model to an inclusion model in which the ESL teacher goes into mainstream classrooms to give ELs the linguistic support they need alongside their content teachers. At many secondary schools, including my own, co-teaching became the new inclusion model of choice, touted as the best way to give ELs the language support needed to comprehend the language used in their content area classes.

What is Co-teaching?

Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger (2010) describe co-teaching as an approach that provides specialized services to individual students in a general education classroom. “Specifically, co-teaching involves two or more educators working collaboratively to deliver instruction to a heterogeneous group of students in a shared instructional space” (Conderman, 2011, p. 24). In this environment, teachers blend their expertise, share materials, and develop common instructional goals. In theory, co-teaching sounds ideal. ELs are able to learn alongside their native English-speaking peers. They are given the language support they need from the ESL teacher without losing any content instruction from their mainstream teacher. They do not feel isolated or singled out by being pulled away from their regular classes to receive ESL support. Instead, they are given all the attention, support, and language instruction they need through their co-teachers, who collaborate and plan effective lessons in which language and content are blended perfectly. Unfortunately, co-teaching, if done well, is much more challenging than it may seem.

Co-teaching Challenges

For co-teaching to work, both the ESL teacher and the mainstream teacher must have a good working relationship. Both teachers must be willing to work together, be able to find common planning time, be flexible in lesson planning, and be willing to learn about and serve a group of students who may at times have cultural differences, learning style differences, and linguistic needs that can be challenging to address when they do not align with the general learning needs of the school’s dominant student population.

According to Arkoudis (2006), “In negotiating the curriculum with the mainstream teacher the ESL teacher has to have a firm understanding of her own subject discipline, as well as being aware of the pedagogic needs of the mainstream teacher” (p. 417). In addition, both co-teachers need to be effective at handling conflicts that are sure to arise as two teachers work to navigate a field that has traditionally been dominated by teacher independence.

Role of the Researcher

I conducted a case study about one ESL co-taught seventh-grade English classroom at the middle school where I teach. I address the research question How does the ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiate the planning, instructing, and assessing process? I am the ESL teacher in the co-taught class that I am studying. The class is one that I co-taught once before in the previous school year. I am co-teaching this class with the same seventh-grade English teacher with whom I taught the class last year.

As the primary researcher in this study and as one of the main participants, I worked to be as objective as possible in my observations and reflections. There are a few biases that I must first address. First, my co-teacher and I have a good relationship, and I respect her as a teacher and as a friend. In my study of the different processes we went through to plan, instruct, and assess our class, I viewed my co-teacher as someone who wants to help our ELs and who wants to co-teach in the most successful way possible. Secondly, I feel that co-teaching is an effective form of providing ELs the language support they need in an inclusive environment. This means that even when we experienced challenges or did not see immediate positive results among our students, I

believed that other factors were at play and not that co-teaching is an ineffective ESL program model. I kept a journal documenting my planning sessions with my co-teacher throughout a seven-week unit we taught on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain (1876). I kept a list of the dates and times that we spent over the course of seven weeks engaging in the planning of our unit. I also reflected, in a journal, on our co-instruction of the lessons put together during our co-planning sessions. Finally, I discussed the effects of our co-planned lessons and instruction of those lessons based on both informal and formal assessments of our students that we did on a regular basis. Informal assessments included observations of students' levels of engagement, students' oral feedback, and our perceived understandings of whether students seemed to be responding well and learning the material. Formal observations included a final test on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. I also conducted a focus group to give students in the co-taught class the opportunity to rate how well they thought the co-taught class was going in terms of ease of understanding, level of help they received, and acquisition of new concepts and material.

After my research on co-teaching the seven-week unit on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, I describe the results of what I observed in our co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing process. I began my case study at the end of January before the start of the third quarter of the school year when the mainstream co-teacher and I initially planned our The Adventures of Tom Sawyer unit. I continued my case study over the course of the seven-week unit until the end of the third quarter of school. At the end of the unit in

March, I reflected on the successes and challenges we faced co-teaching in order to improve this unit and our co-teaching in the future.

My goal is to describe in detail the time, challenges, and realities involved in an ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiating the planning, instructing, and assessing of a co-taught class. My hope is that this case study will make the co-teaching process more transparent, serving as a guide for teachers new to the ESL co-teaching experience. While the co-teaching situation I describe in this study is not readily generalizable to other co-teaching situations, I hope that it can be used as a basis for understanding the co-teaching process as well as a tool to educate other teachers about the realities of co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing.

Background of the Researcher

I began teaching five years ago in a large urban school district. I first taught sixth-grade social studies at a large middle school in which 90% of my students qualified for free and reduced lunch. Over 60% of my students were ELs. I was a social studies teacher and I had no formal training or knowledge of how to effectively meet the linguistic needs of all the ELs in my classes. After my middle school experience, I taught social studies at a large high school in the same district. Once again I was faced with the challenge of educating ELs. Again, I was overwhelmed. The ESL teacher at the school was overworked and aside from visiting him when my students had him for ESL study hall to discuss my students' homework questions, I did not effectively give them what they really needed: English language support through the content I was teaching. I did not know what questions to ask, I did not know what they needed, and I felt disappointed that

I could not do more for them. It was then that I decided to get my ESL teaching license with the hopes of not only providing my ELs with a better education, but also with the hopes of advocating for these students who often find themselves in situations where they struggle with English and are not given adequate support. At school these students often find lessons and assignments inaccessible or incredibly challenging, not because the teachers are bad or do not care, but because teachers either are not aware of the many struggles ELs have in acquiring the complex language needed to keep up with their native English-speaking peers, or because teachers feel busy and do not have the time or training to effectively modify assignments or lessons to better accommodate the ELs in their classes.

Research Question

In this study I address the research question How does the ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiate the planning, instructing, and assessing process? In order to do so, I conducted a case study about one ESL co-taught seventh-grade English classroom in which I am the ESL teacher working together with a mainstream seventh-grade English teacher.

In Chapter One I introduced my research by establishing the purpose, significance and need for the study. The context of the study was briefly introduced, as was the role and background of the researcher, and the question at the heart of my study. In Chapter Two I provide a review of the literature relevant to co-teaching, collaboration, and ESL program models. Chapter Three includes a description of the research design and methodology that guides this study. Chapter Four presents the results of this study. In

Chapter Five I discuss the major findings of my study compared to what I found in my literature review. I will then discuss the limitations of my study, implications for professional practice, recommendations for future research, and a plan for how my study will be communicated.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this case study I address the research question How does the ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiate the planning, instructing, and assessing process? I explore and describe the factors that are involved in co-teaching an ESL seventh-grade English class over the course of a seven-week unit on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain.

This chapter examines the research on co-teaching. I will begin the chapter by introducing what co-teaching is and how it can be envisioned differently by different groups of people. I will then give a brief history of co-teaching including the legislation that led to an increase in co-teaching around the United States. I will then discuss the factors that make co-teaching programs successful as well as the factors that affect the success of co-teacher relationships. Finally, I will discuss what the literature says are best practices for ensuring effective co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing. This chapter ends with a brief summary of the gap in research on ESL co-teaching and a summary of what is to come in ensuing chapters.

What is Co-teaching?

In current research on co-teaching and team teaching, both terms are used to describe the partnership between two teachers working together to jointly plan

curriculum. Team teaching differs from co-teaching, however, because with team teaching, teachers plan together but deliver instruction separately, while with co-teaching both teachers plan and instruct a common group of students within the same instructional setting (Cook & Friend, 1995). I will use the term co-teaching throughout my study.

Co-teaching can be envisioned in many different ways. For the purpose of my study I will focus on Murawski's (2008) definition which states that "co-teaching exists when two professionals co-plan, co-instruct, and co-assess a diverse group of students. Both teachers provide substantive instruction to all students on a daily, consistent basis. Neither is considered the main teacher of the class; they are equals" (p. 1). While I am examining co-teaching between an ESL teacher and a mainstream seventh-grade English teacher, co-teaching can refer to any two professionals collaborating for the purpose of providing meaningful instruction to diverse groups of students in a common setting (Cook & Friend, 1995). As the ESL co-teacher in my study, I will be examining how I co-teach with a mainstream seventh-grade English teacher to instruct a seventh-grade English class of which 40% of the students are ELs. Together we co-plan, co-instruct, and co-assess with the goal of providing academic English language support through grade level academic content.

Davison (2006) points out that a subtle but very serious flaw occurs when the ESL teacher forgets the significance of that title and instead approaches the co-taught class with the mentality of 'two teachers are better than one.' Davison (2006) sums up the significance of the ESL teacher's role by stating that the ESL teacher's job is two-fold: to try to ensure that the content area in which the teachers are working is as accessible and

as EL-friendly as possible so that students succeed in that subject, but at the same time, “using the content area as a catalyst for systematic and planned language development” (p. 40).

A common misconception of co-teaching is that it involves two teachers simply taking turns teaching. While this may be one aspect of co-teaching, it is important to understand that co-teaching can look very different depending on the lesson and the students involved. However, not knowing how the lesson is organized and how it will proceed places the special education teacher (or in my case, the ESL teacher) at a disadvantage of being ineffective for both her students and for her co-teacher (Gately & Gately, 2001).

Dove and Honigsfeld (2010) outline seven different co-teaching models or possible ways in which a co-teaching pair can teach together in the same classroom. As they point out, a successful co-teaching pair will design lessons so that each teacher moves among the different roles outlined in Table 1 and is not pigeonholed into one daily style of co-teaching.

Table 1

Co-teaching Models

Co-teaching Models	Teacher and Student Arrangement
One Student Group: One lead teacher and another teacher teaching on purpose	While one leads, the other teacher can give mini-lessons to individual students in order to help reinforce the information being taught.
One student group: Two teachers teach the same content	Both teachers direct an entire lesson to the whole class together at the same time.
One student group: One teacher teaches, one assesses	One teacher takes the lead and teaches the whole class while the other teacher assesses certain students through observations using lesson specific checklists or rubrics.
Two student groups: Two teachers teach the same content	The class is divided into two groups of students. Both teachers teach a group of students the same content using differentiated learning strategies.
Two student groups: One teacher pre-teaches, one teaches alternative information	The two teachers purposefully assign students to one of two groups depending on their ability or readiness to understand a new concept or skill being taught. One teacher may take the group that needs extra support and pre-teach them certain concepts while the other teacher takes the more ready group and may teach them relevant advanced or supplementary skills.
Two student groups: One teacher re-teaches, one teaches alternative information	The teachers divide the students into flexible groups in which one teacher may re-teach information to a group while the other teacher teaches alternative information. Students can change groups as needed.
Multiple student groups: Two teachers monitor and teach	Teachers put students in multiple groups in which both teachers work together to monitor and facilitate student work while focusing closer attention on those students with particular learning needs.

To summarize, co-teaching looks different depending on the teachers involved, the lesson being taught, and the learning needs of the students in the class. To co-teach effectively, teachers need to share not only their classroom space, but also their classroom resources, teaching styles, and ideas. In my opinion, co-teaching demands an incredible amount of time for pre-planning and collaboration. Teachers must decide upon the process for instruction, classroom management procedures, classroom expectations, and student assessments.

A Brief History of Co-teaching

Co-teaching has recently become a common model of inclusive ESL instruction as schools in the United States become more diverse. In the 2010-2011 school year, ELs made up 13% of the total students enrolled across the nation. In Minnesota during the same school year, ELs made up 6% of students and that number is growing (Ed Data Express, 2010-11). In Minnesota alone EL enrollment in schools increased by 129.1% from 27,337 students in the 1997-1998 school year to 62,636 students in the 2007-2008 school year (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 1997/1998-2007/2008).

Cruickshank (1997) states that ESL programming in the United States has largely been determined by constitutional, statutory, and legislative changes. The United States Supreme Court ruled in Lau v. Nichols (1974) that it was unconstitutional to not provide specific language services to ESL students. This created the rise of widespread transitional bilingual and separate ESL classes for those students. Civil rights legislation and the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 (Bilingual Education Act [BEA], 1968) further supported school efforts to provide special programming for ELs. While this legislation

provided an overall structure through which to implement ESL programming, the actual organization of specific programs was developed at the state level. However, the most common form of ESL at the secondary level has been the creation of separate bilingual or ESL classes which follow or parallel the mainstream curriculum, but which are comprised of only ELs. These classes are often organized as beginning, intermediate, or advanced ESL and focus on teaching English grammar and vocabulary. While decades of second language acquisition research has supported teaching language through content, co-teaching has only recently become a more common means by which ESL teachers can support language acquisition in mainstream classes.

In addition to the rise in numbers of ELs in United States schools, recent legislation such as the passing of No Child Left Behind (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002) legislation in addition to a number of reauthorized Special Education Acts including the updated Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA], 2004), has prompted teachers and administrators to find new ways to ensure that all students have access to the same curriculum. Teachers must also make sure that students are held to the same high standards despite any special physical, mental, or linguistic needs they may have.

While co-teaching was originally implemented as a way to better instruct students who qualified for special education services within the mainstream classroom, it has more recently become a collaborative model for ESL and mainstream teachers. As Conderman (2011) states, “co-teaching can help schools comply with the spirit of NCLB provisions by arranging for teachers with content expertise to jointly plan and deliver

instruction with special educators to ensure the success of all students" (p. 25). While Conderman is speaking of the special education co-taught setting, his findings can be applied to the ESL co-taught classroom.

Factors that Determine ESL Co-teaching Success

Murawski, a special education professor who has done research on special education co-teaching, outlines five keys to co-teaching in inclusive classrooms. While Murawski's research is based on co-teaching in the special education classroom, I find that many of her findings are applicable to the ESL co-taught classroom. Murawski's (2008) five keys to co-teaching are as follows: "(1) know what co-teaching is and when it is needed, (2) recognize that co-teaching is a marriage and you are the matchmaker, (3) make scheduling a priority, (4) monitor success, (5) give feedback and ensure evidence-based practice" (p. 2). While it is easy to know and appreciate the importance of factors that make a co-teaching program successful, I find it much more difficult for teachers to truly ensure that each of the above keys to co-teaching are actually being developed and put to good use. For co-teaching to be successful, both co-teachers and administrators must have a clear definition and vision of what co-teaching looks like and all of the extra work it entails. Both teachers need to recognize that co-teaching can be more or less successful based on individual teacher's personalities, teaching styles, willingness to step out of one's comfort zone, and communication style. Finally, I believe that for co-teaching to be successful, effective and continuous collaboration must occur. Without constant collaboration, especially during the first few years that a co-teaching pair works

together to co-teach, the true potential of co-teaching to meet the needs of ELs will not be met.

Cruickshank (1997) carried out interviews with a number of secondary schools to try to identify models of successful ESL programs and what they look like. Success, or effectiveness, was based on both ESL teachers and mainstream teachers' assessments as well as on his own measure of success as measured by a number of different categories ranging from 'very effective' to 'effective' to 'less successful'. Cruickshank found that flexibility in program organization was the biggest factor that successful ESL programs had in common. Program flexibility meant that change occurred among ESL program models not only year-to-year, but also term-to-term. Schools with flexible ESL teaching models could adapt to changing school personnel, and success was often linked with having ESL teachers who had the autonomy to decide program options. Successful programs were ones where decisions were made by the ESL staff in consultation with other teachers and the administrators.

Having a flexible ESL program also allows the number of ELs, their ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, and linguistic proficiency levels to determine how ESL programs are organized rather than relying on executive decisions. These flexible ESL programs may allow for a few co-taught classes where appropriate as well as a few sheltered instruction classes depending on individual student needs as well as changes in number of students and staff.

Within the special education context of co-teaching, Murawski and Dieker (2008) point out that for a co-taught class to truly be successful, the student-teacher ratio must be

kept low. They argue that a good rule of thumb is to keep the natural proportions of individuals with special needs at 20%. If a class must have a clustered group of more students with special needs, for example 30%, then it is important that the 30% of special needs students reflect a range of needs and not all the same need. For example, 20% of the class may comprise ELs while five percent of the class may qualify for special education services, and another five percent may have attention or other behavioral needs. However, too great a number of students with language, learning, or behavioral challenges may jeopardize the benefits that co-teachers are hoping to see.

Cruickshank (1997) also found that schools with more successful ESL programs tended to build their programs around their strengths, as well as the strengths of the mainstream teachers. With regard to co-teaching, it is important that team teaching or co-teaching programs are implemented among teachers who are open and willing to support this type of ESL teaching model. Dieker and Murawski (2003) point out that at the core of co-teaching is relationship building and co-teachers often find that collaborating with more than two to three different teachers on a daily basis makes it challenging to build relationships and teach various content areas effectively. While Dieker and Murawski (2003) are focused on special education co-teaching, the importance of time to develop relationships holds true for the ESL co-teaching relationship. It is important for the ESL teacher to teach with just one or two mainstream content teachers over the course of multiple years in order to have the time to truly develop an effective co-taught class. In addition to finding co-teachers who are open to working together, time must be provided within the school day for the two teachers to plan instruction and assessment.

Once again, for co-teaching to be successful, effective and continuous collaboration must occur. Dieker and Murawski (2003) elaborate on the importance of common planning periods for co-teachers. However, if a common planning hour is not possible for co-teachers, especially when the ESL teacher is co-teaching with more than one teacher, both teachers and administrators can work on ways to make extra planning time for teachers willing to co-teach. Murawski (2008) lists a number of ways that common planning time can be found for co-teachers: hire a substitute, use times when students are engaged elsewhere, or get administrative or teacher coverage. Furthermore, administrators can provide stipends or bank instructional minutes so teachers can have additional planning time.

Navigating the Co-teaching Relationship

"Collaboration can connect, but it can just as easily divide" (Hargreaves & McMillan, 1994, p. 213). It is very important when choosing a co-teacher to choose a teacher and subject area where there is the most possibility for negotiation. Some areas of the mainstream curriculum are much more fixed than others, which can create an unsympathetic environment in which to negotiate ESL curriculum (Davison, 2006). Furthermore, it is important that both teachers are open and supportive of joining into a co-teaching relationship. Roth and Tobin (2004) point out that co-teaching involves changing the way one teaches, which can not only be uncomfortable, but can even be threatening if the co-teaching relationship has been mandated, rather than freely chosen. Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) outline four key strategies to follow when planning a co-teaching partnership: (1) establish regular avenues of communication, (2) identify

leadership roles and responsibilities, (3) outline decision making strategies such as when decisions can be made individually or would be made together, and (4) review available co-teaching models to determine what lesson instruction will look like.

Gately and Gately (2001) outline three developmental stages of the co-teaching relationship: the beginning stage, the compromise stage, and the collaborative stage. At the beginning stage, both co-teachers are guarded and may struggle to build trust and develop effective interpersonal communication, which involves being able to effectively manage their use of verbal, nonverbal, and social skills within the classroom. In the beginning stages of co-teaching, there often appear to be “invisible walls” that separate the space of the two teachers. As co-teachers teach together over a longer period of time, they transition to the compromise stage in which both teachers are able to communicate more openly and honestly. However, at this stage, the communication may still be marked by a give and take style of communication in which there may be a sense of one teacher having to give up in order to get. Finally, co-teachers move into the collaborative stage in which both teachers model effective, open communication and interaction. They understand one another’s teaching style and become more comfortable sharing a common space and common teaching materials.

In addition to learning to communicate effectively, co-teachers must develop a shared understanding of the physical arrangement of the classroom, a shared familiarity with the curriculum, and an agreement on curriculum goals and modifications. Co-teachers must have adequate time to engage in constructive instructional planning in

which both teachers must decide on how instruction, classroom management, and assessment will be handled.

Gately and Gately (2001) developed a rating scale for the special education co-teacher and for the mainstream co-teacher. These co-teaching rating scales can be effective tools in identifying teachers' strengths and weaknesses in the co-taught classroom For my purposes, I will modify the special education co-teaching rating scale so that it can be used for the ESL teacher. I kept all aspects of the original special education rating scale, but took out the numbered items that dealt with special education Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This co-teaching rating scale can be found in Appendix A.

Co-planning

In co-planning, both teachers actively contribute to the planning process by suggesting instructional methods, materials, assessments, and accommodation and modifications for students with diverse learning needs (Conderman, 2011). Co-teaching goals need to be carefully identified and articulated in terms of their purpose, process, and problem-solving strategies for success. Dove and Honigsfeld (2010) discuss how co-teaching members must have a shared understanding of the different co-teaching models and knowledge of effective ways to execute each model. An important component of co-teaching is understanding one another's primary role in the classroom. The general education teacher (the mainstream grade level content expert) primarily provides the content objectives, and the ESL teacher supports the lesson through language objectives. Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) define those language objectives within a lesson as

encompassing either academic features specific to the lesson or as incorporating basic target vocabulary depending on the language proficiency levels of the students in the class. The language objectives are designed to help the ELs in a class acquire the academic language needed to learn the academic content being taught. Language objectives are language goals that pertain to reading, writing, speaking or listening. These objectives may be designed with the intention that students meet the objectives at the end of a lesson, a unit, or by the end of the course. However, while the ESL teacher creates language objectives specifically for the ELs in a class, language objectives have proven beneficial for all students, especially those who may struggle with reading or writing (Himmel, 2012).

As stated in numerous other studies on co-teaching, the most effective way to overcome co-teaching challenges is for teachers to partake in ongoing, regularly scheduled collaboration. In Keefe and Moore's (2004) study of high school special education co-teachers, they found that many co-teachers felt that they were planning on the fly, after school, or at lunch.

In order for both co-teachers to be equals in the classroom, each teacher must prepare clear expectations for both themselves and the students during each lesson. For these issues to be properly addressed, time must be built into the regular school day for co-teachers to collaborate. Dove and Honigsfeld (2010) note that scheduled time for planning instruction is one of the essential ingredients to the success of co-teaching for ELs. However, most teachers are not given adequate time to plan co-taught lessons for ELs. If adequate co-planning time is not set aside and used effectively, it is often the ESL

teacher whose role in the classroom becomes diminished. Keefe and Moore's 2004 study found this very phenomenon with co-teachers expressing concern over the diminished role of the special education teacher whose role often consisted of modifying assignments or helping individual students rather than planning the curriculum and engaging in large group instruction and assessment. Teachers in their study attributed the special education teacher's lack of content knowledge as being a major contributing factor as to why the special education teacher took a backseat in large group instruction and assessment.

Finally, for co-planning to be most effective, both teachers need to have a clear conceptualization of the task. Co-teaching is not simply another pair of hands. When co-planning, both teachers must contribute equally. Both co-teachers need to approach a new co-teaching relationship with willingness to let go of control a bit and try new things (Murawski & Dieker, 2008). Dieker and Murawski (2003) state that even if time is made available to co-plan, it is not always time used productively. Especially if a co-teaching relationship is relatively new, the discussion between co-teachers often revolves around the mainstream content teacher sharing the content curriculum with the ESL teacher. The general educator may then use limited planning time to plan broad instruction for the class, leaving little time for co-teachers to synthesize their planning in order to plan the details of daily lessons or to discuss the specific learning needs of students in the co-taught class. This can result in the ESL teacher arriving for class without a thorough understanding of the specifics of the day's lesson- another factor that can further marginalize the ESL teacher as merely a classroom assistant and not a true equal. Furthermore, research has shown that incorporating language objectives into content

lessons is challenging since mainstream teachers can get immersed in their content and may not easily recognize the language demands of the curriculum, while at the same time the ESL teacher may struggle to cover the content causing both teachers to easily lose direction and control (Davison, 1992).

Kramer, Lundgren, & Mabbott (2010) discuss a way that ESL teachers can work with mainstream teachers to create language objectives using Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, 1956). Part of effective co-planning between an ESL and mainstream teacher is creating clear unit and lesson objectives. This helps keep both teachers aware of and involved in the class expectations. An ESL teacher should work with the content teacher to align appropriate language objectives with the content being taught. Kramer, Lundgren, & Mabbott (2010) discuss that the ESL co-teacher, and even a mainstream teacher, can examine the language needed to comprehend the content objectives of a lesson or unit. The teacher can then identify which vocabulary words or language structures are most imperative for students to know. If the teacher is selecting vocabulary to teach, she can divide the words into two categories: content words and function words. Content words are what most teachers would identify as key vocabulary terms that students should study and understand. These words can be nouns, verbs, adverbs, or adjectives that have concrete definitions and can often be visualized. These words are held together in a sentence by function words. Function words cannot be easily defined or visualized. These include words like even though, instead, and although. Once a teacher has identified the language requirements of a lesson and the language needs of the students in the class, she

can begin writing language objectives to make sure that the content being taught is a vehicle for language.

Kramer, Lundgren, and Mabbott (2010) describe how teachers can use Bloom's taxonomy (1956) to structure their language objectives. Bloom's taxonomy is a list of six thinking skills that are in order from least to most cognitively demanding. As the thinking skill increases in difficulty, so too does the language one needs to know in order to achieve the skill. Table 2 shows each of Bloom's taxonomy's six thinking skills and the corresponding language one would need to know at each skill level.

Table 2

Bloom's Taxonomy and Language Functions

Bloom's Taxonomy Paired with Typical Language Functions
1. Knowledge- define, list, label
2. Comprehension- describe, report, paraphrase, explain
3. Application- interpret, generalize
4. Analysis-compare, contrast, differentiate
5. Synthesis- synthesize information
6. Evaluation- evaluate, decide, predict

Therefore, teachers must be able to know the language they want their students to produce, the thinking skills required to produce that language, and how to best combine that knowledge into language objectives that support the content being taught. Increased collaboration between an ESL and mainstream co-teacher during the planning process

can shed light on the content and language ELs are expected to know allowing both teachers the opportunity to co-plan the best instruction for ELs.

Co-instructing

If adequate co-planning has been effective, then each co-teacher should already have established the roles and responsibilities each teacher will have while co-instructing before the instruction begins. Working together before a lesson or unit to map out content and language objectives can be key to keeping both teachers and students focused during instruction. Most importantly, Friend (2007) states that the co-teachers should discuss how to make sure that the instruction appears seamless to students and that both teachers work with all students even while addressing individual needs. Throughout a lesson, teachers share a common vision in terms of how to handle classroom issues such as discipline and grading.

Teachers should work where they are strong and address where they are weak (Dieker & Murawski, 2003). If teachers are alternating their use of the different models of co-teaching, both teachers should become comfortable with taking the instructional lead on a frequent basis. Both teachers must work to circulate the room so that one teacher is never checked out from the lesson and so that no one teacher becomes the main teacher of a certain group of students in the class. If one teacher is taking the lead, the other teacher should be asking, what he or she can do to add to the lesson.

Co-assessing

An advantage of having two teachers in the room is that it allows for an easier system for collecting data on student achievement, behavior, and areas of improvement

(Murawski & Dieker, 2008). Assessment in the co-taught classroom needs to include conversations and a system for evaluating individual students with the flexibility to change certain standards or expectations to meet individual needs, while holding all students in the class to high academic standards (Gately & Gately, 2001). Friend (2007) outlines a series of questions that co-teachers should ask to ensure that both teachers are establishing criteria for assessing the quality of a co-teaching program. “Are both teachers actively engaged in the instructional process? Do both teachers contribute to the discipline and classroom management? Are they grouping students in ways that will help them meet learning goals? Are they addressing student-learning needs and making use of each teacher’s strengths?” (p. 7).

Before the start of a semester, teachers should talk about a variety of grading options and determine which options work best with which group of students (Friend, 2007). Both teachers should work together to decide what types of grading adaptations each one is most comfortable with. It is important to note that although the students in a co-taught class are getting extra academic and language support, students are still held accountable for meeting learning objectives which align with state and district subject area standards.

Aside from only using student achievement scores to assess the quality of a co-taught class, teachers and administrators should also use curriculum-based and other detailed measures of learning (Friend, 2007). Co-teachers can work together to not only gauge students’ reactions to co-taught classes, but also the reactions of parents who have children in a co-taught class.

Gap in Research

Davison (2006) argues that the co-teaching model of ESL delivery is still relatively under-theorized and that it needs to be further evaluated and conceptualized in order to be most effective. Davison notes that a major factor contributing to this problem is the lack of available criteria for evaluating co-teaching effectiveness generally. Most of the little research that has been done on co-teaching has mainly focused on the special education co-teaching process. Less research has been done to specifically address co-teaching as a model for best addressing the language needs of ELs in inclusive learning environments.

Research Question

In this study I address the research question How does the ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiate the planning, instructing, and assessing process? To do this, I will examine the factors that affect an ESL co-taught class by describing how an ESL teacher and a mainstream seventh-grade English teacher negotiate the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing process involved in teaching a seventh-grade co-taught English class over the course of a seven-week unit on The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. The current research on co-teaching is heavily focused on the special education co-taught classroom. Over the past ten years, more has been written on co-teaching as an ESL program model. Much of the research on co-teaching has focused on co-teaching relationships as well as the challenges and successes of co-teaching programs. In my study I examined one co-taught ESL classroom in order to better highlight the specifics of how co-teachers can work to plan, instruct, and assess a co-taught class. I examined

only one classroom in order to most accurately describe how planning transforms into lesson plans, which transform into instruction, evaluated by both the co-teachers and the students in the co-taught class, as well as by the school's principal. There is a consensus in the literature surrounding best practices involved in making an ESL co-teaching relationship and collaborative process effective. I took what I have outlined as best practices affecting a co-taught ESL program to describe the reality of a co-taught class within a school bound by a distinct administration, set teacher schedules and expectations, as well as a unique body of students whose individual needs cannot be controlled. I will thoroughly describe the planning, instructing, and assessing processes that two co-teachers must navigate in order to co-teach.

Summary

In this section I reviewed the literature on co-teaching. I have defined co-teaching and given a brief history of co-teaching as a teaching model to better instruct students with diverse needs in inclusive environments. I have discussed both the factors that affect co-teaching programs and the professional relationship between co-teachers. Finally, I have outlined what the literature says on the three main areas of focus of my study: co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing in the ESL co-taught classroom.

In Chapter Three I will describe the methods I will use to best describe the process through which two middle school teachers work together to co-plan, co-instruct, and co-assess a co-taught seventh-grade ESL English class. First I will describe the research method by which I will structure my study, then I will describe both the location and the study participants as well as the process by which I will collect my data including

my own observations and journals I kept at each stage of the co-teaching process. I will then discuss the interviews that I carried out with the seventh-grade English co-teacher as well as the principal of the middle school. Finally, I will describe the focus group that I conducted with students in the co-taught class in the middle of our unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

In this case study I address the research question How does the ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiate the planning, instructing, and assessing process? In answering this question, I explore and describe the factors and steps involved in planning, instructing, and assessing an ESL co-taught English class. I focused my study on the planning, instructing, and assessing of a seven-week co-taught unit based on reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain. This chapter describes the methodologies used in this study. First the rationale and description of the research design are presented along with a description of the qualitative research paradigm. Next, the data collection protocols are presented along with a description of the location of the study and the participants.

Research Paradigm

In this study, I research one ESL co-taught seventh-grade English class to describe the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing that is involved in the co-teaching process. The focus of my study in this class is on a seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. To complete this study, I engaged in descriptive classroom research. Dörnyei (2007) defines classroom research as a term used to describe any investigation that uses the classroom as its main research site. Often research regarding second language learning is done in the classroom, as the classroom is the “primary

research site in applied linguistic investigations and the unique features of this context have a strong bearing on the way we can conduct research in it" (p. 160). More specifically, I conducted a case study of one ESL co-taught seventh-grade English class in order to better illustrate the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing process. As McKay (2006) notes, "researchers generally select a case study methodology if they believe that contextual conditions are highly relevant to their research focus" (p. 71). In my research, I am examining the co-teaching process as it relates to one specific co-taught class. Therefore, a case study is an ideal research method because it is concerned with detailed descriptions related to a specific event or scenario. It provides an explanation of the events related to the case and it blends a description of events with an analysis of them (McKay, 2006).

Doing a descriptive case study is the best way to gain a more thorough understanding of the teaching and learning process for the ELs in a co-taught class. However, there were some challenges involved with conducting this study. First of all, the teacher as the researcher can create some issues such as remaining unbiased. In addition, finding time to conduct observations in one's own classroom can be difficult. Finally, a challenge of conducting a case study is that findings are not always generalizable. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the study is as reliable and valid as possible (McKay, 2006). To ensure the reliability and validity of my study, I used a variety of qualitative data collection techniques such as interviews, observations, journal writing, and a focus group to gather data.

Qualitative research is a descriptive form of research that uncovers information about people, relationships, and environments. Qualitative research is beneficial in the case of my study because it is more sensitive to the individual and researcher being studied. Unlike quantitative research which is more data driven and which attempts to eliminate variability, qualitative research can uncover subtle meanings and provides more flexibility when reality does not line up with what the researcher had originally anticipated (Merriam, 2009). In my study, I used interviews, observations, journal writing, and a focus group to ensure that I best understood the realities involved with co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing in the co-taught classroom.

Participants and Setting

Participants

I focused my study on a co-taught seventh-grade ESL English class. First, I will describe myself, the ESL teacher, and the mainstream seventh-grade English teacher with whom I co-teach. I am a 27-year-old female ESL teacher who has been teaching ESL for three years at the middle school at which I currently teach. I have co-taught sixth grade reading, social studies, math, and science. Last year was the first year that I added the co-taught seventh-grade English class, which is the focus of this study, to my teaching schedule. This year I am teaching two sheltered instruction language arts classes to sixth-grade ESL students, a sixth-grade sheltered instruction social studies class, a co-taught sixth-grade ESL social studies class, and the co-taught seventh-grade ESL English class.

I will use the pseudonym Ruby to refer to the mainstream seventh-grade English teacher with whom I co-teach the seventh-grade English class this year, for the second

year in a row. Ruby began teaching seventh-grade English five years ago at the middle school where we both now teach. This year Ruby will teach four sections of seventh-grade English in addition to our one co-taught ESL seventh-grade English class.

The students in the co-taught class range from 12-13 years of age. There are twenty-two students in the co-taught class. Of the twenty-two students, nine are ELs. All of the ELs are either from Mexico or are second generation Mexican Americans and speak Spanish as their first language. Two of the non-ELs in the class are African American while the remaining 11 non-ELs are Caucasian and native English speakers. Of the nine ELs in the class, only two met the state grade level reading standard as measured by the state reading assessment given each spring. Of the 13 non-ELs in the class, five students did not meet the state grade level reading standard while seven did meet the grade level reading standard. One non-EL student scored high in reading, meaning that she exceeded the state grade level reading standard.

According to the ACCESS (ACCESS for ELLs, 2011) test, a new language proficiency assessment given to ELs in the spring of each year, all of the ELs in our co-taught class are either ‘developing’ or ‘expanding’ in terms of their English language development. The ACCESS test assigns students an overall numerical score of one through six that represents an average of each EL’s proficiency level in each of the four English language domains: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. In addition to an overall English proficiency score, each student gets a score of one through six for each language domain. Each numbered score correlates to a certain progress level (entering

through reaching) that describes each EL's English proficiency level. The breakdown of numerical scores and corresponding proficiency level descriptions is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

ACCESS Scores 1-6 and English Proficiency Descriptions

1	2	3	4	5	6
Entering	Beginning	Developing	Expanding	Bridging	Reaching

If a student receives an overall language score of a 5 (bridging) and has no individual language score of less than a 4, the student can be considered to stop receiving ESL services in the district. All of the seventh-grade ELs at the middle school receiving direct ESL support have overall language scores between a 3.0 and a 4.9 and can be described as either 'developing' or 'expanding' their English language skills.

Most of the ELs in the district are long-term English learners, meaning that they were either born in the United States or have been in the United States attending school in English for at least three to five years. The breakdown of the ELs' language proficiency scores according to the spring ACCESS test in the co-taught class is shown in Table 4. All of the names used are pseudonyms.

Table 4

Co-taught EL Language Proficiency Scores

Name	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Overall
Ociel	4.2	2.7	2.1	3.5	3.0
Yamileth	5.0	2.7	2.6	3.5	3.3
Nevara	4.7	2.4	3.3	3.5	3.5
Gabriela	4.2	4.4	3.9	3.8	3.9
Maria	4.7	3.2	5.0	3.6	3.9
Jorge	5.5	5.1	6.0	2.9	4.3
Leo	6.0	4.4	5.2	3.8	4.6
Daniella	5.0	4.4	5.0	4.5	4.6
Esteban	4.7	6.0	6.0	4.0	4.9

The last participant in my study was the middle school's principal. He was included in my study because he plays a role in deciding which classes he would like to see co-taught. He also plays a role within the district of promoting co-teaching as an important ESL program model at the middle school. I interviewed him to find out what his definition of co-teaching is and to find out his understanding of how a co-taught class should be structured and executed. The principal, whom I will refer to with the pseudonym James, is in his sixth year as principal at the middle school. He is supportive of the ESL program at the middle school and provides the other ESL teacher and me a large amount of flexibility and power to decide on best ESL programming for the school's ELs. James is currently working on a dissertation involving the Latino youth in the district. This past summer he went on a two-week trip to the district's sister city in Mexico to speak with former and current students from the middle school who are currently living in Mexico. While James is supportive of the decisions made by the two

ESL teachers, he is under pressure from the state to increase the test scores of the ELs at the middle school who continue to not meet state standards as shown by state assessments in both the academic areas of reading and math.

Setting

My research took place at the middle school in the seventh-grade ESL co-taught English classroom. The middle school is part of a large rural K-12 school district in the upper Midwest that has a total enrollment of 3,709 students. The middle school, grades six through eight, has an enrollment of 888 students. The average student-teacher ratio is 29.5:1. Of the 888 students enrolled in the middle school during the 2012-2013 school year, 63 students, or about 7% of the total student body qualifies for direct ESL services.

The co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing, which are at the heart of my study, took place in the co-taught classroom, which is the full time classroom of the mainstream seventh-grade English teacher.

Data Collection

Interviews

The first method of data collection is an interview. Merriam (2009) states that interviews can be necessary to get information about past events that are impossible to replicate. I interviewed the seventh-grade English teacher, Ruby, who co-teaches the seventh-grade ESL co-taught English class with me. Ruby and I co-taught this class once before during the 2011-2012 school year. I interviewed Ruby to find out how she felt our co-taught class was going so far this year compared to last year. I asked what she felt was going well and what she felt could go better. This interview was given right before we

started our seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. I interviewed Ruby again at the end of our unit. In the second interview I asked Ruby what she felt had gone well during our unit, what has improved and what still needs to be improved in our co-taught class in terms of co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing. I asked her what she thinks can be improved for the following quarter. The interview was semi-structured meaning that I asked her a mixture of more or less structured interview questions in which all questions were asked flexibly. I know Ruby well so the interview was structured more like a conversation in which there was not a predetermined wording or order.

I interviewed my principal to get his opinion of what a co-taught class should look like. I interviewed him to get more information about how he thinks a co-taught class should be structured, how much planning time should be built into the school day for co-teachers, what the students in the class should look like (how many ELs, students with behavioral issues, and special education students should be in the class), how many total students should be in the class, and how he measures the success of a co-taught class.

Journaling

The second method of data collection I used is journaling about what I observed in the co-taught ESL English classroom. Dörnyei (2007) states that classroom observation is a highly developed data collection approach typical of examining learning environments. He further states that "while structured classroom observation has maintained a prominent position in classroom research, information about classrooms is

also gathered by self-report techniques such as surveys, interviews, and diary studies" (p. 164).

I observed the co-teaching process at the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing levels. I kept a detailed journal noting the length of time and details of my planning sessions with Ruby. I recorded certain planning sessions to get a better sense of what our conversations sounded like as we navigated both the seventh-grade English curriculum and the new ESL World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards (2012), which I used to help guide and modify instruction.

During instruction I carried out a more quantitative, highly structured form of observation in which I observed students' participation and engagement in the lessons and looked for links or patterns between what was co-planned and what actually happened in the classroom. I discussed my observations with Ruby to see if we agreed on student engagement levels throughout different lessons. I reflected on my initial observations with Ruby and worked with her to come up with a more qualitative understanding of how students performed during specific lessons. In addition to discussing my observational findings with Ruby, we also gathered more formal qualitative and quantitative post lesson assessments including small quizzes as well as more formal end of unit evaluations. These combinations of structured observations coupled with less structured observations that naturally occur when co-teaching a class provided me with direct information that cannot always be gathered through self reports.

Classroom observations and journal entries need to be as clearly and honestly recorded as possible. In order to make my findings more reliable and valid, I triangulated

my observational findings with a student focus group that added the perspectives of the students in the class to my own understanding of the co-taught class. While Ruby added her perspective and point of view through our discussions that were included in my observations and journal recordings, the individual interviews I carried out with her allowed her a more focused forum in which to further support or question the observations I made. Finally, the interview with the principal added further reliability and validity to my findings.

Focus Group

The third method of data collection I used was the student focus group. According to Simon (2000), a focus group is "a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. It is conducted with approximately seven to ten people by a skilled interviewer. The discussion is comfortable and often enjoyable for participants as they share their ideas and perceptions. Group members influence each other by responding to ideas and comments in the discussion" (p. 8). I used a focus group to gather information from a random group of eight students in the co-taught class. I held the focus group with students in the middle of our seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The purpose of the focus group was to find out how students perceive the co-taught class. Some of the advantages of using a focus group to gather information from students are that they may feel more comfortable speaking if they are with their peers. Students may be able to more easily agree or disagree with one another, feeding off their peers to provide me with more in depth feedback.

However, some limitations of conducting a focus group are that it can be difficult to keep a group on task and focused on the key questions at hand. Time is limited for all participants. Questions may also be limited due to the time constraint of the focus group meeting. It may be challenging to gather the verbal data and then to analyze and interpret it. One more limitation that Merriam (2009) points out is that focus groups work better when the participants do not know each other in order to minimize discomfort discussing potentially sensitive issues. With that said, Merriam (2009) also states that focus groups, for that very reason, may also be poor choices when the topic at hand is sensitive or personal. The students did not appear nervous sharing their perceptions of the co-taught class with me and did not seem to hesitate when sharing their opinions with me.

Procedure

Interview: Ruby

I began my study before the start of our seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by interviewing Ruby, the seventh-grade mainstream English teacher who co-teaches the seventh-grade ESL class with me. I asked Ruby, 'How would you define co-teaching in your own words? What went well last year? How do you perceive my role as the ESL teacher in our co-teaching relationship? What challenges did you and your co-teacher face? How has co-teaching improved this year? What specific things would you still like to see change?' I audio recorded all of Ruby's responses using the app iTalk on my iPad and transcribed the most salient parts.

At the end of the seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, I interviewed Ruby again. I asked her how our third quarter unit differed from our unit last

year. I asked her what about our unit went better this year and what did not go as well. I then asked her what specific parts about the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing process of our third quarter unit went well and which parts were challenging and still need improvement. I audio-recorded this interview using the app iTalk on my iPad and transcribed the most important parts.

Interview: James

As part of my third year as a teacher in the district, the principal observed me teaching at two different points during the year. Because I could choose which classes I wanted him to observe, I had him observe my co-taught class with Ruby both in October and again in February while we were teaching *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* unit. After he had observed my co-taught class with Ruby twice, I interviewed him to find out what his definition of co-teaching is and how he would define ESL co-teaching success. I asked him the following questions: 'How would you define ESL co-teaching? How big do you believe an ESL co-taught class should be and how would you describe the balance of a co-taught class in terms of specific student needs? How do you measure the success of a co-taught class?' I also asked him the following questions: What specific strengths or positive aspects of our co-taught class did you observe? What areas do we, as co-teachers, need to improve? What areas of growth or change did you see? I recorded his response using the app iTalk on my iPad and then transcribed parts of his responses.

Journaling

I began formally keeping a journal of my weekly co-planning sessions with Ruby once we had begun planning *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* unit. I journaled after each

of our co-planning meetings. We had one big co-planning meeting at the beginning of third quarter to map out our unit. During this initial meeting, Ruby and I went over the specific language needs of the students in our class and how we could design assessments to better understand the progress our students were making in terms of meeting our predetermined content and language assessments. Ruby and I also had shorter meetings on a daily or weekly basis during which we checked in to discuss a day's specific lesson. At these meetings we talked more about the logistics for each day's specific lesson and I journaled about each of those meetings. I observed our co-taught class on a daily basis and journaled daily about how the day's plan went and whether the students responded to the lesson the way we hoped they would. Finally, I analyzed the summative assessment given at the end of the unit to see if our unit objectives had been met, which students met them and which students didn't and why. I continued this pattern of observing and journaling on the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing processes of co-teaching during our seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. I described in detail the challenges and successes we experienced while trying to co-teach according to the best practices as described in the literature.

Focus Group

I had a focus group with eight students, both EL and non-EL, from the co-taught class. I had these eight students participate in the focus group in the middle of our unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* to better understand their perceptions of the co-taught class, what they thought was going well and what they thought could go better.

To choose the student participants, I asked students in our co-taught class to raise their hands and give me a number between 1 and 21. I randomly called on eight different students and wrote down the numbers they gave me. Then after class I looked at our class roster and wrote down the names of the students whose names correlated with the numbers that students had given me. I had already received permission from most of the students in our co-taught class to participate in a focus group so I double-checked that the chosen students had turned in their permission slips, which they had. Then I asked them individually if they were willing to participate.

The seventh-grade at the middle school has a common study hall period fourth hour called Flex. Since this study hall period is after the third-hour co-taught class and because fourth hour is my prep hour, I was able to use this time to conduct the focus group. I met with the students once before we actually did the focus group to briefly explain what would happen and what their responsibilities would be as a part of the focus group. On the day of the actual focus group I had students sit in a circle. I had copies of the questions I was going to ask for each student so that all students knew what the current question being discussed was. I asked the students five questions, but I had extra follow up questions on hand if the discussion died down. I allowed 40 minutes for the focus group. I asked the following five main questions:

1. Describe as many different ways that being in a co-taught class is different from being in a class with just one teacher. Which do you like better, your co-taught class or your classes with just one teacher? Why?

2.What do you think is going really well in your co-taught English class this year? What are your co-teachers (Mrs. T & Ms. V) doing well?

3. What is challenging about the co-taught class? What could your co-teachers (Mrs. T and Ms. V) do to help make the class better?

4. How are your co-teachers' jobs the same and how are they different? For example, what does Mrs. T do or what is she more responsible for? How is that different from what Ms. V's job is?

5. Do you see your co-teachers as equal teachers or does one teacher seem to have more power or respect? Why do you think that?

I audio recorded the focus group using the app iTalk on my iPad and then transcribed salient responses. While analyzing the audio, I focused on patterns of successes or improvements that Ruby and I could use to improve our co-taught class.

I analyzed the interviews and focus group data as I completed each one. The observations and journal keeping were an ongoing process. All of the data collection took place during our seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. This data was used to describe in detail how Ruby and I negotiated the planning, instructing, and assessing involved throughout a unit in our co-taught class.

Ethics

When doing qualitative research with human participants it is important that the researcher has accepted the responsibility to respect the rights, needs, values, and desires of the informants. Before embarking on my data collection, I got permission from the principal of the middle school, Ruby (the English co-teacher), as well as all of the

students in the co-taught class and their parents. In order to get permission to use the above humans as participants in my research, I gave each participant a written consent form on which I clearly stated my research intent and how the data would be used. All of the participants remained anonymous in my research. I used code names for all human participants as well as for the middle school, school district, and state in which the research occurred.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described the methods I used to collect my data. In Chapter Four, I will use the data I collected to best describe how two teachers work to plan, instruct, and assess a unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in a seventh-grade co-taught English class. I will describe the results of what I observed in the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing process. I will then describe how the success or challenges of each category of our class's co-teaching was defined from the perspectives of the co-teachers in the class, the students in the co-taught class, and the school principal. Chapter Four presents the results of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

In this study I address the research question *How does the ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiate the planning, instructing, and assessing process*? This chapter will explain the results of this study. The first part of this study will be the interview that I did with Ruby, the mainstream seventh-grade English teacher with whom I co-teach, before we co-taught our seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. I will then describe my own observations as the ESL co-teacher in the ESL co-taught English class. I will describe our co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing process involved over the course of a seven-week unit. I will then describe the second interview I did with Ruby at the end of our seven-week unit. Next, I will discuss a focus group I conducted with eight students from my co-taught class with Ruby. The focus group was conducted half-way into our seven-week unit with a random combination of both EL and non-EL students. Finally, I will describe an interview I did with our middle school principal, James. This interview was conducted after he had observed two of my co-taught class periods with Ruby.

Interview #1 with Ruby

I interviewed Ruby two weeks before we began teaching our unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in her classroom. I wanted to interview Ruby to more specifically find out how she defines co-teaching, how she views both of our roles in the

co-taught class, as well as what specific successes and challenges we have faced while co-teaching. Finally, I asked her how our co-taught class has improved after having co-taught together for a year as well as what specific things she thinks still need to improve or what she would like to see change in our co-teaching.

When I asked Ruby how she defined ESL co-teaching, she said that she had learned a lot about co-teaching after having taught with me for the past year and a half. She said that her understanding of co-teaching had changed from how she viewed it before co-teaching with me to how she sees it now. She said that she had initially learned a lot about co-teaching from the book *Collaboration and Co-Teaching Strategies for English Learners* by Andrea Honigsfeld and Maria G. Dove that I had given her to read during the summer of 2011 before we co-taught together for the first time. It was after reading that book that Ruby had made sure that I had my own space in her classroom and had managed to get me a desk and Macbook so that I would have my own workspace. She said the book made her realize that there is more than just one way to co-teach and that she loves that there are different co-teaching models. She mentioned that revisiting that book after having co-taught for awhile would be a good thing to do and that perhaps in the future the book could even be the focus on which we could negotiate the process of planning, instructing, and assessing our co-taught class. She said that she likes the shared duties of the co-taught classroom where both teachers are responsible for everything: the teaching, the presentation, the evaluation, and the planning. It is not one teacher doing all the work and the other teacher merely assisting.

When I asked Ruby what she felt went well in our co-taught class last year, she laughed and asked, “Did some things go well?” One thing she said that went well is that we both learned a lot. She said that we got to know each other and it gave me a chance to see and learn about how the seventh-grade English curriculum is set up. She said that our first year co-teaching together last year allowed her to experience teaching a group of students that so clearly had different learning needs from any other class she had taught before. She said that it made her think of a variety of different ways to teach the same concepts that went beyond merely differentiating instruction. Ruby said that she felt like there were so many students in our co-taught class last year who got more attention than they probably had ever had from a class at the middle school. Moreover, she felt like that extra attention was important for both the ELs and non-ELs who were in our co-taught class last year.

When I asked Ruby how she perceived my role in our co-teaching relationship, she began by observing that it is interesting that she is the language teacher, yet she is also the one who needs help teaching the language. She said that what I, as the ESL teacher, do is that I bring my knowledge not just of language to our co-taught class, but my knowledge of how ELs acquire language. She said that I bring a different perspective when we work together on a class activity, worksheet, or assessment. She said that I do not always bring a solution, but that I bring an awareness of the needs of the students in our co-taught class. Ruby continued by saying that if I can bring those issues or needs to her attention, then together we can create the best ways to meet the needs of the students in our class. Ruby added that she feels like it is invaluable to have another brain looking

at the same kid. She commented on how I bring my experiences having worked with many of the current seventh-graders in our co-taught class when they were in sixth grade. Ruby said that sometimes what a teacher may confuse with a language issue, may actually be more of a “teenage issue” and that because I have known many of the students for a length of time, I can help to separate out a student’s struggles and pinpoint a cause of those struggles. Ruby said that I provide the leadership role in reminding her of the specific needs of our ELs as well as the importance of pre-planning lesson objectives and sticking to those throughout a lesson and a unit. She said that after having worked more with language objectives in our co-taught class this year, she feels more comfortable with them and would like to begin using them with the rest of her English classes.

When I asked Ruby what challenges she felt like we faced as we negotiated the co-teaching process, she said that we needed to work on finding a balance between the different models of co-teaching and we needed to learn to blend our roles in the co-taught class. I chimed in that it is easy to fall into routines in which one teacher takes the lead or more responsibility during specific parts of a lesson like dealing with behavior issues or grading assessments.

Ruby stated that the number one challenge with co-teaching is that we do not have a common planning time built into our school day. However, we both agreed that this year co-planning is a bit easier because we both already have a year of co-teaching under our belts and I have already become familiar with both the English curriculum as well as Ruby’s teaching style. Then again, Ruby added that other times the planning this year seems to involve more time than last year because we can focus more on EL strategies

during our shared planning time rather than on just the English curriculum. Ruby feels like we have improved on what we had done with our co-taught class last year and noted that rarely have we been able to go back and just repeat exactly what we did last year. Sometimes Ruby admitted she wished we had more planning time during the school day or at least compensation for the extra effort put in outside of the school day. On the other hand, Ruby acknowledged the importance of what we have done co-teaching and said that she wished we could share a bit more about what we do in our class with the rest of our school's staff and faculty.

Ruby also commented on how even the time of day that a co-taught class is scheduled can make a difference. She described how last year our co-taught class was during sixth hour at the end of the day when many students are tired and when she had already taught her regular English classes four other periods. She went on to say that third hour, the period we co-teach this year, is a much better time to have a co-taught class because students are so much more focused. Ruby also has second hour prep that allows her to change her teaching routine to better prepare for our third hour class. We then talked about how time of day can affect student learning and we decided that in first hour many students may still be waking up, making second and third hours, in our opinions, ideal co-teaching class periods.

I then followed up with asking Ruby if teaching a co-taught class is more stressful or challenging than teaching her regular English classes. She said that the actual hour itself is less stressful and challenging because she loves the fact that there are two teachers in the classroom. What she said she does find stressful is that she sometimes

feels like we spend a lot of time outside of class planning and she wonders how to make outside planning goals be the most effective in the classroom. Sometimes she finds herself asking, “Are they even listening?” Sometimes she feels like it can be challenging to engage a class of learners who struggle with English and sometimes she wishes we were better at engaging our students. She continued by saying that sometimes she doesn’t think that our ELs can relate to, nor have they experienced 90% of what she talks about in class. She wondered about how much of the literature we teach in seventh-grade English could be more closely related to what our ELs know and have experienced and how much that would help them.

I then asked Ruby about the structure of a co-taught class and if she feels like it is a good thing having a large group of ELs and struggling students together in the same class, many of whom are tracked together in extra-support classes or together in co-taught classes at more than one point throughout the day. We talked about how when ELs or other struggling students are placed in mainstream classes, their struggles may be less obvious or may go unnoticed by a mainstream teacher. She said that when you have a co-taught class in which the majority of students struggle, it is very apparent if students are not following along or are disengaged, which can be challenging because you are forced to change your lessons rather quickly.

Ruby commented that it can be difficult to teach a lesson one way throughout the rest of the day and then to have to rethink it or re-plan entirely how you teach it for students in a co-taught class. At the same time, she discussed how she does not want to create a co-taught class where students are not being challenged because she has

eliminated worthwhile components of lessons she does with her other classes. She said that there are some activities that she has chosen not to do with our co-taught class or not to bring up with me because she thinks it would be too much added stress for struggling readers. She cited a reading log, where she has students keep track of books they have read throughout a quarter. She has her other classes keep reading logs, but not our co-taught class. She wonders if that was a smart choice since she can name a handful of students in our co-taught class this year whom she thinks would really benefit from keeping a reading log and may really love it. I then added that we should be more mindful in the future of providing students with the same challenging opportunities Ruby is offering seventh-graders in her other English classes so as not to lessen the integrity of the objectives of our co-taught class.

When I asked Ruby what she would like to see change with our co-taught class or what specific goals she has for third quarter, she talked about wanting to get students moving around more. She said she would like to see them be 'more on task active' which can be enriching for students, but also challenging for students, unless the activity is very well structured. She said that students would have to feel confident and capable to do an activity where they are moving around the classroom in a less teacher-centered lesson. Then she asked, "What if students actually stood up and shared their journals with another student or passed their journals to a student to their left?" She wants to keep the motivation high and part of that is keeping the language at or right above their level so that they can feel successful. In order to do that, Ruby added it would be beneficial to do more formative assessments so we could always be very aware of what our students are

capable of doing and understanding. Then she said, “We’ve never heard some students read aloud. Should we do more reading aloud assessments? How do we incorporate the iPad into our teaching next year with students?”

Thinking ahead to our upcoming third quarter and unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Ruby admitted that she was apprehensive. She said that there are some units that lend themselves better to co-teaching than others. She wondered how we could chunk *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in a way to make it manageable and comprehensible for our ELs. Ruby then commented on how just the look of the book is so intimidating.

When asked about the successes she has seen this year or how our class has improved from last year, Ruby said that she does not think that the kids have a clue that she is the English teacher and I am the ESL teacher. She said that she does not think the students feel it is weird to have a co-taught class in seventh-grade because many of them either had a co-taught class in sixth-grade or have another co-taught class in seventh grade since many of them are in a co-taught math or science class taught with the other ESL teacher at our school. Ruby said that we have done a much better job this year organizing our lessons with a daily agenda that includes concrete objectives, a homework or planner entry, and a journal question which is posted daily for students to see right when they walk into our class. Ruby talked about how this year we have saved each day’s agenda so that we can easily refer to it for future planning needs or if a student is absent. I have also done a better job posting our daily agenda on my classroom website since Ruby’s website only has the assignments for her mainstream classes. Having our co-

taught class assignments on my website is helpful for parents and specialty teachers who work with students in our co-taught class.

One of the things that Ruby thinks is so fun is when we share personal things about ourselves. Whenever the students hear us use the other's name, they are instantly engaged. She mentioned that the more we talk about when we were in middle school or make the literature relevant to them, the more excited they get about whatever we are teaching. Ruby commented on how she knows that the students watch how we interact and that it's important for students to see adults working together in a positive manner. She said that it is great that during class we may or may not have the same opinion, but we are able to work together.

Initial Unit Co-planning Session with Ruby

Ruby and I met at the middle school for two and a half hours on a Saturday to create an overall plan for how we wanted to structure our seven-week unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. We had taught this unit once before when we co-taught together last year; however, we wanted to take our co-teaching experiences over the past year and a half and restructure how we taught the unit in order to make it more accessible to our ELs and struggling readers.

We spent about an hour mapping out how we wanted to pace the reading of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The day before, the other ESL teacher at our school and I came across copies of the novel in an eighth grade storage room. These copies were larger versions of the books than the small text versions that we had previously used with students. The copies had large colorful pictures and a larger font making them more

student-friendly. Ruby and I decided to use those copies with our co-taught class. Because the copies were older and no teacher was using them anymore, we decided it was okay to let students mark in the books in pencil. These larger texts proved to be beneficial and less intimidating than the smaller version of the novel with tiny font that Ruby uses with her other classes.

Last year we had our students fill in a chapter-by-chapter study guide in which they answered about three to four basic recall questions about each chapter. This year we decided not to use that study guide. Instead, we decided to structure our unit to reinforce reading strategies and the elements of fiction that we focused on during the first half of the school year. We also wanted to continue to explicitly teach more vocabulary on a daily basis throughout our reading of the novel. We planned on dividing up the book into three key sections. In the first section our study guide focus would be on the exposition, rising action, and the introduction of conflict in the novel. In the second section, our study guide focus would be on the main themes of the novel including superstitions and the climax. During the third and final section of the novel we would focus on the falling action, including the conflict resolution and conclusion.

Next we planned that during our first week of the unit we would build our students' background knowledge of Mark Twain and the period in which he was writing. To plan this part of our teaching, we used the new Common Core English standards (2012) as a basis for how to structure our unit. We decided to focus on the standard: "Compare and contrast fictional and real accounts of historical settings and characters". We did this by comparing and contrasting fiction with non-fiction when teaching the

setting of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. We talked about creating a sheet where students could compare and contrast what in the novel was based on true historical events or parts of Mark Twain's life and which parts were purely works of fiction.

During the second hour of our meeting we discussed that we wanted to try to add to students' vocabulary knowledge by introducing a new set of vocabulary words on a weekly basis. Along with this new vocabulary, we would also revisit old vocabulary that we had taught in prior weeks. We also discussed wanting to create more formative assessments throughout this unit to track student progress.

Finally, we decided to create a routine for our students. Each Monday we planned to introduce new vocabulary (about 16-18 words) from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. On Tuesdays we would start class with a brief five-point assessment on the reading or vocabulary that we had read or reviewed from the day before or from class that day. We would try to link the assessment with our daily objectives. On Wednesdays we would focus on reviewing vocabulary or reading comprehension homework assignments. On Thursdays we would have a vocabulary assessment and on Fridays we would have another brief five-point objective-based reading comprehension or vocabulary assessment.

Co-planning During the Unit

Ruby and I continued our co-teaching routine each day throughout the seven-week unit. To keep ourselves organized and on the same page, we tried to meet at least once a week after school for at least an hour to plan the week's overall structure and to identify the key objectives on which we wanted our lessons to focus. We also met every

day after our third hour co-taught class during fourth hour, a time when I had my preparation hour and Ruby had study hall. Fourth hour is when most seventh-grade students have a common study hall period called Flex. Most seventh-grade students are assigned to one fourth hour study hall teacher, but they are allowed the flexibility to go to different seventh-grade teacher classrooms to get more in depth help in a certain subject. Often during fourth hour Flex, Ruby had some time to talk about how our lesson that day went, which students were engaged, or to discuss the results of our bi-weekly assessments to better understand which students were following along and meeting our daily objectives and which students needed extra support. I also used this time during fourth hour to assist students from our co-taught class who needed help with the homework or who needed extra support because they had missed class or needed concepts re-taught or reviewed because of doing poorly on an assessment. In addition to meeting in person to discuss our co-taught class, Ruby and I also exchanged over fifty different emails regarding our seven-week unit. See Appendix B for a chart showing all of the formal times Ruby and I met to specifically plan something for our co-taught unit.

We structured the beginning of our class during our third quarter unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* the same as we had the rest of the year. Students come in and they begin responding to a daily journal question. Students then write their homework in their planners, and read aloud the posted daily objectives before reviewing the homework assignment and beginning the day's lesson that during our third quarter included reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* aloud in class.

Ruby and I worked together after class during fourth hour each day to plan the following day's daily journal questions. The questions were intended to allow students practice using new vocabulary words in complete sentences. The journal questions also allowed students further practice using *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* to cite direct quotes to support their claims when making evaluative statements about certain characters or events in the novel. The journal time was also an opportunity for students to make connections to the text and to discuss some of the larger themes about which Mark Twain wrote. These themes are often relevant to seventh-graders today such as using reverse psychology to get others to do something for you that you do not want to do, tormenting a sibling behind an adult's back, making up excuses to get out of doing something you do not want to do, last minute cramming for an exam, trading with friends, lying to get an award, acting out to get attention, and wanting to disappear forever after getting in a fight with someone or after embarrassing yourself in front of others. In order to further structure the journals for ELs, we created sentence starters to help guide their writing. We also planned the journal question so that vocabulary terms were constantly being recycled to increase student exposure to them. Finally, we used graphic organizers like Venn Diagrams to help structure student language when having them compare and contrast in their writing and discussions.

An important part of structuring our class was co-planning the daily objectives. Each day, I thought about our weekly goals set during our after school and fourth-hour meetings. Then I thought about what we would accomplish during class and what we wanted students to be able to do. Each day we had approximately four or five objectives

that students were to meet. Almost all the objectives were language objectives asking students to write, listen, speak, or read. We also wrote objectives asking students to practice using the language function 'compare and contrast', which we repeatedly taught, modeled, and practiced throughout this unit. Examples of language objectives we used during our unit were "Read and listen for what Tom Sawyer does to alleviate his melancholy feelings", "Listen for times in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer when Aunt Polly is perplexed and Tom is stealthy", "Discuss new vocabulary terms and corresponding pictures", "Assess your vocabulary knowledge by writing five vocabulary terms in five complete sentences", "Write three complete sentences comparing and contrasting Mark Twain's childhood in Hannibal with Tom Sawyer's childhood in St. Petersburg", "Use the words *also, similar to, but,* and *however* in your journals to write five complete sentences comparing and contrasting conflict in Tom Sawyer's life with conflict in Mark Twain's life", "Cite evidence from The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by writing direct quotes that illustrate three key character traits of Huckleberry Finn", and "View and pronounce new vocabulary terms".

The objectives almost always had new or old vocabulary words and we used the first part of our class after daily journaling to have students read and discuss the objectives aloud. Certain words we used repeatedly in our objectives throughout our unit (aside from read and listen) included the verbs *discuss, analyze, assess, infer, examine, predict,* and *differentiate*. In order to practice new vocabulary, we also included new vocabulary words in our objectives such as *melancholy, mischievous, comprehend,* and *identify*. To practice the language function to compare and contrast, we taught and used

compare and contrast function words in our objectives such as *however, but, on the other hand, as well as, similar to,* and *also*. Often our bi-weekly assessments would test students on the words we used and reviewed in our daily objectives as well as on the language function compare and contrast.

In Ruby's other non-co-taught classes, she had students do most of their reading of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* for homework or independently and silently in class. Ruby occasionally read aloud to students, yet the majority of the reading students did independently. Unlike Ruby's other classes, we decided to do most of the reading of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in class. Ruby loves to read the story aloud and we felt that it would be most beneficial to our ELs to hear the text read by a fluent reader. However, the text is much too long to read in its entirety in a seven week time period when students only have English class for 50 minutes, five days a week. With journal writing, vocabulary review, concept teaching, and assessments taking up the first 30-35 minutes of class each day, we were often only left with the last 15-20 minutes to read aloud to students at the end of class. Therefore, Ruby and I used our Friday after school meeting times to discuss our class and to map out how we wanted to structure the reading for our classes for the following week. Ruby is well acquainted with the text and I had already read the book twice before. Therefore, we chose which sections were most pertinent to moving the plot along and which sections were not as essential for our students to read word for word. During those parts, Ruby planned to summarize the text.

Some of the vocabulary words that Ruby teaches in her other classes from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* are very challenging, especially for ELs. These low frequency

words such as *expectorate, mirth,* or *alacrity* are ones that a seventh-grade student would not typically read or hear on regular basis even in academic settings. Last year, our first year co-teaching, we taught those low frequency academic terms that Ruby used in her other classes with our co-taught class. However, for our co-taught class, this year we agreed that it was more important to focus on words in the novel that are commonly used in everyday speech, or which show up more frequently in literature or texts students come across on a more regular basis. Therefore, we focused on teaching higher frequency words like *sympathy, hesitate, tranquil, isolated, scheme, anxious, contemplate, mischievous,* and *perplexed*. There were, however, some words in the novel that are not as commonly used but which are used frequently throughout the book and are therefore pertinent to understanding large portions of the text. These words included *miscreant,* to refer to the story's villain Injun Joe, *stealthy* and *furtive,* to refer to many of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn's actions, and *melancholy* to refer to how Mark Twain frequently describes how Tom Sawyer feels throughout the novel. To create a list of words we would teach, I read the entire novel before our unit and then made a list of every vocabulary word which I thought our students may struggle with. Then, I went back to it and circled those words that were either high frequency words, meaning words that are important for students to know in a variety of contexts in everyday academic or social settings, or words used by Mark Twain frequently throughout the novel.

One other change Ruby and I made from Ruby's non co-taught classes were to show parts of the movie *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Selznick & Taurog, 1938) while reading the novel instead of showing the entire video at the end of the unit as a final

reward. Both Ruby and I discussed how important it is to give students visuals as they read. Therefore, we decided to show the first 45 minutes of the video during the third week of our unit in order to give students another means by which to better understand the story's exposition, both the setting and characters, of the novel. We also planned to show the next 45 minutes the following week to give students another visual in order to better understand some of the main plot events of the story including Tom and Huck witnessing the murder of Dr. Robinson by Injun Joe, Tom and his friends escaping to Jackson's Island, and Tom and his friends showing up to their own funeral.

Co-instructing with Ruby

Each day at the start of class, Ruby and I took turns introducing the daily journal entry and monitoring student writing. Ruby also used this time to check up on student grades, work individually with students, take attendance, briefly conference with me about the day's lesson, or to respond to other teachers' emails regarding student behavior or progress in our class. Ruby also used this time to meet with our class's educational assistant. Our educational assistant is a woman who is in our class each day to help with the four students in our class who are labeled as having an Emotional Behavioral Disorder, or EBD. We also have a couple of non-EL students who really struggle academically and Ruby was able to use the time that I was leading the initial parts of the day's lesson to contact student parents or to get in contact with the school psychologist or social worker. Ruby also had a behavior-tracking sheet for a couple students in our class that she was able to fill out whenever I was in the front of the room leading a lesson. During this journaling time at the start of the hour, I collected homework, conferenced

with students, or assisted students who were struggling to answer the journal question. The journal writing lasted anywhere from five to ten minutes depending on how difficult the question was or depending on how many students we wanted to share their responses with the rest of the class.

After journaling Ruby and I took turns reviewing daily homework assignments. Then, if it was Monday, we took turns introducing new vocabulary; if it was Tuesday or Friday I led students through the five-point reading or vocabulary assessment. For this quick quiz, each student was given a small 4X3 sheet of colored paper on which to write their responses. The quiz questions were projected on the front screen under the daily objectives, planner entry (homework assignment), and journal question. While I gave directions at the front of the room, Ruby wrote out how we wanted students to structure their quiz responses by writing out the format on her own 4X3 sheet of paper under the document camera. Wednesdays we went straight to the reading after journal, planner, and objectives were completed. On Thursdays we gave our vocabulary assessment from the words we had introduced on Monday and reinforced both while reading the novel in class and on daily homework assignments. While students were working on assessments, we moved fluidly throughout the room, checking in with students, answering questions, and clarifying directions and expectations.

At the end of the hour each day while Ruby read *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* aloud, I sat with the text at her desk and used the document camera to follow the text while she read so that students could follow along in their own books. I moved a sheet of paper over the text as Ruby read to assist students in following along as Ruby read or as

she skipped sections while summarizing. I often interjected to point out key vocabulary words that we had already studied or that I thought students should know. I may also have interjected during parts that I felt students would not understand. Ruby was also conscientious to check for understanding or to clarify confusing or outdated references that our students may not pick up on.

The first week of our unit went well. We began our initial journal having students tell us what they knew about life in the United States in the 1800s or 19th century. We asked students to tell us of any significant historical events that may have happened during that time as well as anything they knew or thought they may know about Mark Twain. As we anticipated, few students were able to tell us anything. Therefore, we knew we had to begin this unit by building their background knowledge of the time period as well as pre-teaching them quite a bit about Mark Twain. Therefore, we began the unit by showing students carefully selected clips from Ken Burns' documentary (Burns, 2001) on Mark Twain. Students began taking notes on an organizer I had created that included key historical questions and vocabulary pertaining to the historical time period in which Mark Twain lived and wrote. [See Appendix C]. We introduced new vocabulary from the documentary including the terms *conscience, apprentice, tragedy, dialect, satire*, and *race*. We finished week one by introducing students to the main characters in the novel and discussing the differences and similarities between the real world Mark Twain lived in and the fictional one he created in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Ruby has a student friendly picture book with information on Mark Twain's life and the period in which he wrote called *Mark Twain for Kids* (Rasmussen, 2004). We spent a couple different days

showing it to students under the document camera in order to further build their background knowledge for our unit.

During the second week of our unit I created a characterization chart in which students could fill in information about key characters in the novel by first describing character actions or descriptions and then a section where students could cite evidence from the text to support their claims. [See Appendix D]. As we read during this second week, we paused to allow students time to add to their character charts. Ruby and I found that many students struggled with directly quoting a text and so we modeled how to find a quote and then how to copy it word for word and cite it correctly. We frequently used the document camera to teach this objective. We continued to discuss and add to our characterization notes through the third week of our unit at well.

During this third week of our unit we watched the initial part of the movie *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Selznick & Taurog, 1938) to give students a better visual into the time period, what some of the characters looked like, and how they acted. As a journal question this week, we asked students to use the language structure compare and contrast to discuss how their own mind pictures or understanding of the setting and characters of the book differed or were similar to how they were depicted in the video. This gave students yet another opportunity to practice comparing and contrasting. We further practiced comparing and contrasting by having students compare and contrast the main character Tom's relationship with Becky, a girl he likes, with how middle school students today deal with their crushes. Students filled in a Venn Diagram noting the comparisons and differences between the two. Students then used the diagram to write

complete sentences. Often when modeling how to use this language structure, I provided students with sentence frames to help guide them.

During the fourth and fifth weeks of our unit we focused on the main conflicts of the story. We had taught and had students practice how to identify both internal and external conflict in an earlier unit on short stories back in October. However, many students needed the word ‘conflict’ re-taught. We journaled about different forms of conflict and then I created a two columned conflict sheet on which students could write down conflict from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* on the left column and then the conflict that actually happened in Mark Twain’s life on the right column. In each column students would write if the conflict was internal or external. I sent this sheet to Ruby and she revised it to make it even more student friendly. [See the revised conflict sheet in Appendix E]. During the fifth week we paused while reading both *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and the *Mark Twain for Kids* book to add to our conflict notes. We also spent a period of class continuing where we had left off watching *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* to give students a better visual understanding of key conflicts in the plot. We practiced the language concept of compare and contrast once again both by having students compare and contrast conflict in the novel with conflict in Mark Twain’s life. We also had students compare and contrast the video with the novel in a daily journal question in which students completed another Venn Diagram and then wrote out complete sentences.

During the sixth week of our unit we shifted our focus from teaching the beginning stages of fictional plot (exposition, rising action, and conflict introduction) to

the main themes and climax of the action. We used the next two weeks to really delve into superstitions, a recurring theme in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. I collaborated with Ruby during fourth hour after class to create a note taking sheet where students could write down Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn's superstitions and then write down how Tom and Huck act on those superstitions as well as the result of their actions [See Appendix F]. We had discussed the term superstition at the beginning of our unit and had revisited the term both while reading and in our objectives. However, once we asked students to take notes on specific superstitions, many struggled. We modeled how we wanted students to fill in their superstition notes organizer under the document camera. Ruby identified a couple of superstitions from the book for the students and then I wrote down how we wanted students to fill in their notes. While Ruby read aloud this week, I would often have us pause and write down the superstition in their notes. Then students' homework was to complete the rest of the chart describing how Tom and Huck acted on those superstitions and what the ensuing results were, often events that significantly changed the outcome of the plot.

Because the climax in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* occurs towards the end of the story, the falling action and conflict resolution were our focus during our last week in the unit. During this week we had students make final predictions in their journals as to how they believed the story would conclude. We also believed that students had enough background knowledge at this point to read parts of the book that we would have otherwise summarized on their own for homework. Ruby and I both genuinely felt that students were excited after reading the climax of the novel that many had the internal

motivation to continue reading outside of class. We encouraged our stronger readers to finish the book at their own pace during this last week. However, before reading more pertinent parts during this last week as a class, Ruby asked students to share questions about parts of the book that they had read for homework and about parts where they were confused. Ultimately, Ruby summarized those parts that students had independently read to keep struggling readers on track and to catch up those students who may have been absent or otherwise had not read. When we finished reading the novel as a class, Ruby and I gave students time to complete a test study guide modeled after the actual test we were going to give students the next day. Both Ruby and I had worked to modify this review that was significantly upgraded from the review we had created the year before. Finally, students took a final assessment on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* that both Ruby and I worked to modify.

Co-assessing with Ruby

During the initial planning stage of our unit we discussed wanting to have more frequent formative assessments to track student progress. Last year, during our first year co-teaching, we didn't have many formative assessments on students' reading comprehension while reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. We had students answer a few recall questions on each chapter as we read and we had about three or four vocabulary tests. Then we had our final summative assessment on the novel at the end of the unit.

Ruby and I were not satisfied and we knew that in order to best plan our weekly and daily objectives we would need to check students' comprehension of the novel,

understanding of language structures we had taught like compare and contrast, as well as vocabulary. I checked students' journals on a more frequent, informal basis to check that they were correctly using the language structures we had taught. We assessed students' reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge on a bi-weekly basis in the form of quick five-point assessments, based on our daily objectives given at the start of class after the journal writing each Tuesday and Friday. A few times we gave these assessments at the end of class when we wanted to assess what students had retained from the reading that day. Most of these five-point assessments we factored into students' grades in our class. A few we used for our own personal knowledge, especially when we felt that we hadn't done a good enough job teaching the objectives we wanted students to meet, which we knew when the average quiz score was less than two or three out of five points. Each of these five-point assessments were taken directly from our daily objectives based either on what we had just read from the novel (to create reading comprehension questions), or on vocabulary we had recently reviewed, discussed, or journaled about. Other times the assessment focused on one of the main concepts we were working on such as conflict, comparing and contrasting, superstitions, and the components of plot in fiction. Most of the time, I created the assessment directly after class during fourth hour. This way I could either collaborate with Ruby or check for her approval. At other times, I created the assessment while we were reading aloud in class by quickly jotting down questions.

Another form of assessment Ruby and I focused on was our vocabulary assessments. Initially, I created the vocabulary assessments to be given each Thursday.

These assessments were basic matching each word with its corresponding definition. Each week we introduced approximately 16-18 words that would be the focus of the week. About two thirds of these words were new, while the remaining one third were review words that we had already studied. The simple matching assessments were easy to create and quick to grade. As each student finished, Ruby and I walked around the room with a key and graded each assessment on the spot so students could get immediate feedback. Students really enjoyed this and some even became competitive about their vocabulary quiz grades, motivating one another to study harder and begging Ruby and me to create a list of more challenging vocabulary words and assessments. Eventually, we created assessments where students used word banks to fill in vocabulary terms to complete sentences about the novel. Some students felt like sentence completion using vocabulary terms was easier, while others struggled much more.

Ruby and I ultimately realized that while some students could easily match words and definitions, they really struggled understanding the part of speech of a new word and how to correctly use new words in complete sentences. Therefore, we created homework reviews that had students practice using new words in complete sentences. Students then shared these sentences with us after their journal writing so that Ruby and I could give them feedback. We also increased the amount of vocabulary students had to use in their journal writing and then structured how the vocabulary was used in a sentence by giving them sentence starters or sentence frames.

Aside from being able to effectively use new vocabulary in complete sentences, we also noticed that students were able to memorize new words for the week, but many

quickly forgot those new words two or three weeks later when we reused words in an assessment or in a daily journal question. Ruby and I decided to link images with words in order to increase new vocabulary retention among students. I therefore created a vocabulary picture matching exercise that students completed for homework each week. I divided our 16-18 word list in half and created a sheet with images representing half of the vocabulary words. On Monday after Ruby and I introduced half the words, students had to match each word with an image. Then on Tuesday students shared which images they thought best represented each vocabulary term. Not all of the images only correlated to one word so students had fun defending which words they thought best described each picture. Then on Tuesday when we introduced the remaining eight to nine words, students matched the remaining words with images for homework that night. Ruby and I saw a clear increase in student word comprehension after students had opportunities to match pictures with words.

One other vocabulary quick assessment we've used in prior units, which Ruby and I discussed would have been good to do during our *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* unit as well, is cutting out vocabulary words and definitions. We either cut out the vocabulary words and definitions beforehand to save time or we have students cut out words and definitions during class. Then we give students time to match up words and definitions on their desks. Ruby and I circulate the room and check for student vocabulary comprehension. Once a student has successfully matched up the words with their correct definitions, we allow students to paste the words and definitions in their journals.

Aside from the quick five-point mini assessments, vocabulary assessments, and journal writing, Ruby and I broke up the reading by asking students to respond to questions in front of the class. We also posed questions and then had the students share their responses with a partner before sharing as a large group or sharing the next day in their journal writing. If Ruby or I posed a question to a student in front of the class, we randomly called on students or tried to ask a student who we thought may have needed to become more engaged in the discussion. If the student was unsure of the answer, Ruby or I moved on to another student and then the other teacher conferenced with the first student until he or she felt confident enough to respond to the question in front of the class. If students were sharing opinions, predictions, or general questions about the reading, Ruby and I always circulated the room to listen in on conversations to ensure that everyone was following along and participating.

The main items that we graded during our unit included daily journal writing, homework, seven vocabulary assessments, eight daily objective five-point quizzes, and our study guide notes on characters, setting, conflict, and superstitions. A final test review and test followed. All of the above items were formative, quick assessments except for the official journal grade, which was tallied at the end of the unit out of 30 points, and vocabulary assessments, each of which were around 18 points. I did all of the grading except for the vocabulary assessments, which we split since we moved around the room at the same time grading them as students finished. Whenever I graded the five point quizzes, I often checked in with Ruby about student responses and we always discussed the results of the quizzes. However, since I used my fourth hour prep to grade

most assessments in order to get immediate feedback, Ruby had a study hall class to manage and wasn't able to sit down and get the grading done immediately. Instead we would meet about the results and then that would directly affect how we planned our class the next day.

At the end of the unit, Ruby and I met and we discussed both the unit test study guide she uses with her other classes as well as the study guide we had modified from the year before. Ruby and I decided that we had done a much better job of co-teaching *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* this year than last year. We had met our initial goals of teaching more vocabulary and of formatively assessing students on a nearly daily basis and in such a way that we were able to restructure our daily plans to meet our students' specific learning needs. We had held our class to the same English language standards, yet had modified the language in a way to make it more accessible. I therefore took the end of unit test that Ruby uses with her other classes and added more vocabulary to it so that we changed it from vocabulary being worth a total of ten points to making vocabulary a total of 25 points. I also changed the layout of the multiple-choice sections to make them easier to read. Finally, I changed a couple of the short essay questions to ones that required students to practice using language structures we had taught, such as compare and contrast. Aside from those minor changes, the summative assessment, which Ruby uses with her other classes, is nearly the same as the one we used with our co-taught class. I also modified the test review to mirror the test so that students would know exactly what vocabulary words they would need to know as well as which characters, specific plot events, character quotes, and short essay discussions and

sentence structures for which they would need to prepare. I worked with a few students after class during fourth hour on the test study guide and was pleased that the girls with whom I worked were able to complete the guide nearly independently using their own notes and what they had retained from the unit. I gave students participating points for completing the study guide by test day. Ruby and I had also given our co-taught class the opportunity to complete the two short essay questions for the test on their own time the evening before to allow them more time to complete the writing. This way they would have more time on our test day to complete the rest of the test. The unit summative assessment was out of 72 points. Our third hour did well with 15/20 students scoring 58 points or higher on the assessment, meaning that they had met the overall unit objectives we had wanted them to meet by the end of the unit. Three students partially met the overall unit objectives with test scores between 51 and 57 points out of 72. Finally, we had two students who did not meet the overall unit objectives with scores of 45 and 48 out of 72 points.

Interview with Ruby at the end of the Unit

I interviewed Ruby again at the end of our unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. It was interesting listening to Ruby's observations of our co-taught class before third quarter, knowing how much we had restructured our class to meet goals we had set for our class at the end of second quarter. During this second interview I asked her specifically about our unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and how it differed from how we had planned, taught, and assessed the unit last year. We also discussed the successes and challenges we faced during the past quarter teaching this unit together.

A goal Ruby had mentioned having in her first interview was keeping the academics equally challenging in both her mainstream classes and co-taught class. The first thing she said when I asked her how our unit differed last year from this year was that the most powerful moment for her was when she set the final assessment that she used with her mainstream classes next to the one we used with our co-taught class and they were nearly the same. The only difference was that the test for our co-taught class had more vocabulary on it. She said that she was positive that there wasn't a question she could ask her mainstream class about *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* that our co-taught class students wouldn't know.

I then asked her specifically what went better this year with the unit compared to last year. She said that we focused on teaching many more vocabulary words, we quizzed more on vocabulary, and that overall our students were much more successful in learning and retaining the vocabulary we taught over the past quarter, something that she would like to see continue into fourth quarter. She also felt that watching parts of the movie *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* really helped both to provide students with an extra visual as we read, but also was a source of motivation among students.

In Ruby's initial interview before the unit, she expressed concern about whether our co-taught students could handle reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and whether they could stay engaged with the reading. However, in this second interview Ruby commented on the importance of teaching quality literature for students instead of picking a less challenging text. She spoke to the fact that the main themes in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* can easily be made to relate to kids today.

I then asked Ruby what in her opinion did not go as well. She said that no matter how we teach *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, for some kids it would always be a struggle. We have a couple of ELs in our co-taught class this year who do not have behavior problems, who worked hard during the unit, completed all the assignments, but who still struggled to do well on our formative assessments and, in turn, the final summative assessment. At the same time Ruby commented that those few students seemed to be engaged in their learning, participated in class, and said they enjoyed reading the book. She further said she felt that even those students who didn't always do well on our assessments seemed to genuinely like it when we asked them questions during class or gave them our short five-point quizzes to check for their understanding. However she asked, "What do you do with those students who continually do poorly on the formative assessments and still 'don't' get it'?"

We also struggled with students who were absent on days when we read and reviewed important parts of the story, especially if those students weren't capable or willing to read on their own. I was always available to help during their fourth-hour study hall after our co-taught class, but students did not always take the initiative to come work with me, causing a few to miss key components of the story.

I then asked Ruby to describe the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing process of our third quarter unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Right away she mentioned, as she had during her first interview, that a real issue with co-teaching is finding time to co-plan and to meet when we do not have a common preparation period. She said that while she feels we have not spent as much time planning our units together

as we did last year, the time we have spent this year is much more productive because she does not need to spend that time teaching me the seventh grade English curriculum. She observed that in planning co-taught classes for future years, the time of day of the co-taught class and how it fits into her teaching schedule is important to consider. She talked about how it has been nice having her second hour preparation period before our co-taught class so that she can make copies or review our day's lesson so that we are both prepared for when our students come to class. At the same time, I feel lucky to have my preparation period fourth hour so that I can immediately grade our third hour assessments or meet with Ruby, or even meet with our co-taught students during fourth-hour Flex.

In terms of co-instructing, Ruby says that at this point she feels like we can practically finish one another's sentences while teaching. She said that there may be days where one of us isn't feeling so well or is tired, but the other teacher always steps it up so that we can create a positive and productive class. She said that she does not think that the students ever feel like they have "one main teacher" and "one helper teacher". Ruby and I agree that students view us as equals in the classroom when we are instructing.

With co-assessing, Ruby said that compared to last year's unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, we had a wider variety of assessments this year for students to show us what they know. She likes that we have been consistent with beginning each class period with posted daily objectives. In this way, students know right up front what they will be responsible for learning that day in class. Most importantly, Ruby discussed how she felt like our students this year and especially during our last quarter felt like they were given the tools to be successful. We matched the objectives with the material for which we held

students accountable. We repeated and re-taught concepts with which we found students struggling. Ultimately, we both felt like our students felt a sense of pride and accomplishment at the end of our unit.

Student Focus Group Results

While both Ruby and I have clear ideas and perceptions about how we co-plan, co-instruct, and co-assess, I wanted to get a better idea of how our students feel being in our third-hour co-taught English class. Therefore, I felt it was important to have a focus group with our students in order to ask them questions about what being in a co-taught class is like, whether they think it is effective, and what suggestions they have for Ruby or myself to make the class a better experience.

I randomly chose eight students to participate in my student focus group. Then I asked them individually if they would be willing to participate. All students agreed to be part of my focus group. All of the names are pseudonyms.

The next day, students stayed after class with me and went with me to an unused classroom during their fourth-hour Flex study hall period. I handed each student a copy of the six questions I planned on asking them and briefly described what the purpose of my study was and that I would be recording them with the iTalk app on my iPad. Students at first seemed shy to share but quickly warmed up.

First, I asked students to describe as many different ways that being in a co-taught class is different from being in a class with just one teacher. Right away, Esteban said that the co-taught English class is more fun. Sophie said she thinks the teacher does not need to do all of the jobs and is not as stressed especially if everyone is talking. Samantha

said that if one person has a problem going on, then the other teacher can take over and Cassie said that there are more teachers to ask questions to and that there's more help.

I then asked students, "Are there any other specific ways that having two teachers is different from having one teacher or how does our third hour co-taught class feel different from other classes?" Esteban spoke up again saying that he feels better in third hour because it is more exciting than other hours. Samantha said we have more group conversations in third hour, unlike other classes where only one student seems to talk at a time. Both Sophie and Gabriella agreed. Sophie said our co-taught class seems to be livelier unlike some classes where all you get to do is individual seatwork. Sophie also said that if a student needs help with something, the student doesn't need to raise his hand for ten minutes because there's always a teacher that can immediately help you.

My next question was, "Which do you like better, your co-taught class or your classes with just one teacher? Why?" Nevara spoke up right away saying that she likes having two teachers because you get more help from two teachers and you know your co-teachers better. She said that it is good to feel close with your co-teachers. Sophie said that she likes co-taught classes better because it is not as quiet or boring, it is more fun and Samantha said that you get more one on one time with the teacher.

I then prompted Gabriella to add her own thoughts to draw her into the discussion. I re-posed the question to Gabriella about whether she likes her co-taught class or classes with one teacher more and she said she likes the co-taught class because she feels very comfortable in it and because she feels like she gets more help in the co-taught English class. Maria chimed in by saying that teachers in co-taught classes are

more specific about what they say and how they teach. David said he likes the co-taught class because if another teacher is helping a student, there is always another teacher to ask and Cassie added that the co-taught English class seems to go more smoothly than classes with only one teacher. She said that the co-taught class feels more organized.

I then posed the third question, “What do you think is going well in your co-taught English class this year? What are your co-teachers doing well?” Sophie said that we are doing well because we have certain jobs. For example, I tell what the journal question is while Ruby is in charge of leading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* reading. She said we seem to take turns a lot. Esteban said that it really helps when Ruby and I provide students with sentence starters to help their writing. Nevara added that we always give definitions for big words that are easy to understand and Maria said that we explain things really well and we are specific in our explanations.

I then asked my fourth question, “What is challenging about the co-taught class? What could your co-teachers do to help make the class better?” Nevara said that we spend too much time journal writing. Samantha added that once in a while we could have some free journal writing time. Esteban commented that he really wanted to watch more of the movie and that we needed to spend more class time reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. All the students agreed with this, especially that we should spend more time reading during class.

Following up on their input about our daily reading aloud of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, I asked the students if it was beneficial for Ruby to summarize certain parts of the book and if that was confusing or helpful for me to have the book open under the

document camera and to flip through the book as Ruby skims or summarizes different parts of the text. Everyone right away said it was helpful. All the students felt like the picture and vocabulary matching activities worked well. Nevara said that they needed more time to study the vocabulary and to work with it. Esteban said that we should play more vocabulary games to practice. He also said that we should spend less time journal writing at the start of class. Cassie added that sometimes it is hard to think of five sentences to write about certain journal questions that we ask. She also said that we should not spend as much class time allowing students to share their journal responses since it takes up a lot of time. Samantha suggested we allow students to sometimes only write three or four sentences, instead of the mandatory five sentences, for their journal responses. She said that we could allow students sitting in a different row each day to volunteer to share their journals to encourage different students to participate.

I then asked students, “How are your co-teachers’ jobs the same and how are they different? For example, what am I more responsible for? What is Ruby more in charge of or responsible for? How are our jobs in the class different?” Nevara said that I am the main speaker in class and that I introduce lessons. Samantha said that one of us is the assistant and the other teacher is an assistant and together we both make the teacher. Students agreed with that and that there is not a main teacher and a helper teacher. Sophie said we are both helpers. Aside from Ruby having the job of reading most of the novel aloud, students said that we have equal responsibilities. Esteban added that I do most of the main talking work and then Ruby will comment or take over during different parts of a lesson.

Finally I asked students, “Do you see your co-teachers as equal teachers or does one teacher seem to have more power or respect? Why do you think that?” Samantha said that she feels like we both have equal respect and students agreed. Sophie said that when someone gets in trouble that Ruby has more power over the student because I am less assertive when there is a behavior issue in the classroom. Students all agreed that Ruby has more power or respect with discipline issues. Gabriella noticed that there have been times when Ruby leaves class to work with a student or to deal with an issue and I keep the class going, which she respects. However, she added that she agrees that Ruby has more respect when someone gets in trouble because Ruby gets really mad and I do not get as mad. David added that when Ruby yells everyone gets scared, but that I do not yell.

Interview with James, the Principal

I interviewed James, the principal of the middle school, on February fourth in the middle of third quarter after he had observed my co-taught class with Ruby on two separate occasions. I wanted to get a better idea of what his thoughts are on the co-teaching process as well as his insight into my co-taught class with Ruby. The first question I asked James was, “ How would you define ESL co-teaching?” He said that co-teaching in general is when two uniquely qualified teachers get an aspect of synergy going together in a classroom. He said that it is not one teacher helping another teacher, but truly constructing a new way of teaching. He then discussed how there need to be clear advantages and a defined objective for having any co-taught class because ESL co-teaching is going to cost twice as much as putting one teacher in a class. In the case of

ESL co-teaching, James said that those advantages and objectives are very specific based on the students we choose to put in a co-taught class.

He said that at the middle school, one of the main reasons we co-teach is to have a teacher who is very knowledgeable and has a very sound foundation in ESL support a mainstream content area teacher by making sure vocabulary and other language skills are at the forefront of instruction. He said that co-teaching is having two pairs of eyes and ears working together to adapt the lesson to the specific needs of the ELs in the class. He said that even if a mainstream content teacher over time becomes very comfortable and knowledgeable about ELs, co-teaching is still beneficial because it provides a check and balance to make sure that every lesson incorporates language learning. James says that he thinks co-teaching, when it is set up right, can benefit almost any instructional environment.

However, James believes that there is merit to having a defined co-teaching period where the ESL teacher co-teaches with a mainstream content teacher for a certain period of time and then eventually moves on to co-teach with a different mainstream teacher. After this period of time, the mainstream content teacher will have a better understanding of how to teach ELs and will be able to apply that knowledge independently to ELs in mainstream classes. James believes that this method of having an ESL teacher co-teach with a mainstream content teacher for a limited amount of time will be the best practice for spreading the positive impact of co-teaching over a wider area.

I then asked James, “How big do you believe an ESL co-taught class should be and how would you describe the balance of a co-taught class in terms of specific student

needs?" First James said that he wouldn't look at structuring the size of a co-taught class any differently from any regular content class. "Of course", he said, "I don't think you should double the number of students in a co-taught class just because you have two teachers". He did say that with co-teaching it probably would be important to have a pre-determined maximum number of students and that because the student make-up of a co-taught class is based on identifying students who would benefit from the co-teaching arrangement, that population may naturally be a smaller group. Also, depending on the needs of the students in the co-taught class, an intentionally smaller class size may be beneficial.

James went on to say that the best way to structure the students in a co-taught class is to define the objective of the co-taught class and then to select students who match that objective. Therefore, if the objective of the co-taught class is to teach language, then it doesn't matter why a student needs that language support (they could be a struggling reader, qualify for ESL, have a disability, or have a short attention span). If their needs match the objective of the co-taught class, then they will benefit from being in the class. He said that sometimes we can prioritize which students are in a co-taught class based on which students have the greatest need to be in the class, which can be a sliding scale. He also said that how students are scheduled in a co-taught class may be based on funding. For example, if the school is relying on special education or ESL funding, then we have to identify a certain percentage of students in a co-taught class who fit into those categories that generate funding.

The third question I asked him was about how he measures the success of a co-taught class. He said that he would measure it the same way as he would any section. He would measure it by individual student growth and not composite scores. He said that the students in a co-taught class may not always be the students who will meet state standards and so we are not looking to see them meet necessarily a standard set way above their level, but to see if they have made growth towards reaching that standard and if the co-taught class is accelerating that growth. He said that in some circumstances, the growth data may not be determined from a state test, but may be gathered from formative or summative classroom assessments.

He said that growth may also be measured in more qualitative ways like with a survey or even discussions with students about how the co-taught class met their individual social or emotional needs. For example, for some students, a co-taught class may improve their self-esteem or boost their confidence levels, a factor which may be real turning points for them. He said that co-teaching creates a unique situation because if one student is having a bad day or has a problem that needs to addressed, a teacher in a co-taught classroom has the flexibility to deal with a student individually while the other teacher can continue the lesson. James said that that moment could be the most important day of a student's school year. Just having that one-on-one teacher contact could make all the difference in the world.

Next I asked, "What specific strengths or positive aspects of our co-taught class did you observe?" James said that it appears that both Ruby and I are very familiar with the material. He said that when he observed, it was clear that we both knew the lesson's

objectives and that there was an outward conversation between us while we taught that everyone in the room could hear. He also said that Ruby and I have a more subtle kind of communication when we exchange a look or a nod that James says he believes takes time to develop. He said that both Ruby and I seemed very comfortable teaching together.

I then asked James, “What areas do we, as co-teachers, need to improve?” He said that more time helps teachers evolve. He said being able to repeat lessons or units for the second time is a plus because units get stronger each cycle around. One thing that can be tough, he said, is that teaching relationships can get so strong that it can be hard to break them up. But he believes that at a certain point, co-teachers need to separate so the ESL teacher can start another teaching relationship and the mainstream content teacher can move on with new and improved material. This way the effects of co-teaching can make positive impacts in more places.

He said another area we could improve upon is trying to use more quantitative data throughout the year to structure our co-taught class. He said most teachers seem to be very aware of the qualitative data of students, but not necessarily as knowledgeable about student test scores or how they are progressing quantitatively.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described the results of my study, which aimed to answer the research question How does the ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiate the planning, instructing, and assessing process? This chapter described my initial interview with my co-teacher Ruby about her own observations about co-teaching, as well as the challenges and successes she feels like we have had over the course of nearly two years

teaching together. I found that giving Ruby the time to reflect on what she thought was going well and on what she thought should change was beneficial to our planning of the unit for *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

I then described my own observations of the co-planning, co-instructing, and co-assessing process over the course of a seven-week co-taught unit. I found that two teachers really benefit from teaching a unit together more than once. Sitting down together as a co-teaching team to map out goals and objectives for a unit is beneficial as well as taking the time to discuss what did and did not go so well teaching a unit previously. I found that having time to constantly reflect and meet during the school day about a co-taught class is essential. Finally, I found that more frequent formative assessments help to keep both teachers and students on track to meet pre-determined learning objectives in a unit.

I then discussed the interview I did with my co-teacher Ruby after we taught our unit on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. I found that having enough time to plan a co-taught class, when the co-taught class occurs during the school day, and how the co-taught class fits into each teacher's schedule are important factors to consider when creating a co-taught class.

To triangulate my understanding of the co-teaching process along with Ruby's observations, I then discussed the results of a student focus group and interview with the middle school principal. Students agreed that both Ruby and I were equal teachers in the co-taught classroom. They felt like they were given extra support that they do not always feel like they get in a classroom where there is only one teacher. Students also

commented that they felt comfortable in the co-taught class and that they knew that it was a place where they could feel successful.

James, the middle school principal, acknowledged that co-teaching can create a very positive and unique experience for both teachers and students. However, from an administrator's perspective, co-teaching is expensive. While he believes that time can strengthen the effectiveness of a co-taught class, he believes that in order to be the most effective, an ESL teacher should only co-teach with a mainstream content teacher for a limited amount of time before moving on to work with new mainstream content teachers to better spread the knowledge of how to teach ELs to other teachers in the school.

The final chapter discusses the major findings of my study compared to what I found in my literature review. I will then discuss the limitations of my study, implications for professional practice, recommendations for future research, and a plan for how my study will be communicated.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

In this study I address the research question How does the ESL and mainstream co-teaching team negotiate the planning, instructing, and assessing process? This chapter will contain the major findings of my study compared to what I found in my literature review. I will then discuss the limitations of my study, implications for professional practice, recommendations for future research, and a plan for how my study will be communicated.

Co-planning: Major Findings

One of my major findings in terms of co-planning was the importance of having time built into the school day for co-teachers to plan as well as the importance of both teachers to be willing to make time outside of school to plan. Even though Ruby and I do not have a common prep hour, our schedules allow us to meet daily, immediately after our third hour class, if only for five minutes, to touch base about the day's lesson or to quickly run ideas past one another about the following day's plan. Because we both have some flexibility in the hour following our co-taught class, there are some days when we are able to spend a total of ten to fifteen minutes planning. This need for constant collaboration, especially during the first few years that a co-teaching pair work together,

is what Murawski (2008) cited as being essential for a co-taught class to best meet the needs of its ELs. Co-teachers need the time not only to plan curriculum goals and modifications, but also to build relationships, which are at the core of co-teaching (Dieker & Murawski, 2003).

Dieker and Murawski (2003) elaborated on the need for common planning periods for co-teachers. However, in reality, the brief overlap of time Ruby and I do have during the school day that we can use is often not enough. We both had to be willing to spend extra time outside of school to meet in order to effectively plan our co-taught class. While Ruby and I would like to be compensated for our time planning outside of school, the realities of our school budget do not allow for such compensation to occur. Murawski (2008) suggests finding time for co-teachers to plan by hiring a substitute, using times when students are engaged elsewhere, or getting administrative or teacher coverage. However, none of these options are possible at our school aside from using times when students are engaged elsewhere. Therefore, aside from meeting when we can either outside of school or during fourth hour after our class, Ruby and I often meet while students are journaling at the start of class to touch base for the first five minutes of class. Of course this ‘on the fly’ style of co-planning, which is common in many co-teaching partnerships, is only useful for touching base, clarifying an already established plan, or checking in with one another about a specific student or parent email. ‘On the fly’ planning is not sufficient for planning objectives or the realities of an entire class period (Keefe & Moore, 2004).

Finally, both administrators and co-teachers need to understand that every co-taught class is a different prep hour for both co-teachers. Ruby, my co-teacher, instructs five sections of seventh-grade English. However, our co-taught section involves a very different prep from the rest of the sections she teaches. While our units that we teach match the units she teaches in her other classes, we are constantly reworking them and modifying them to best meet the language needs of the students in our co-taught class. Therefore, Ruby is never following the same lessons she does with her mainstream class in our co-taught class. The same holds true for the ESL teacher. Each different co-taught class an ESL teacher instructs is a different prep hour. If an ESL teacher is expected to co-teach with four different co-teachers, that ESL teacher has four different preps. This can prove challenging, especially when the ESL teacher must coordinate those preps to match the schedules of the different mainstream teachers with whom she co-teaches.

My second major finding in terms of co-planning matched what Murawski (2008) found, that both co-teachers need to have a clear definition of what co-teaching looks like and the work it entails. To achieve a clear definition of co-teaching, both teachers need time to develop a shared vision of what their co-taught class should look like and then be able to openly and honestly communicate so that they can create that shared vision.

When Ruby and I first began co-teaching together last year, we did not have a shared vision of what our class should look like. It was only my second year co-teaching and Ruby had never co-taught before. It took time and patience on both of our ends to develop a shared vision for our class. However, Ruby’s willingness and openness to change how she has traditionally planned, taught, and assessed her other English classes

to best meet the needs of our co-taught class has proved invaluable in creating the shared vision for our co-taught class that we have now. She was willing to do what Murawski and Dieker (2008) found to be so important for co-teachers to do: let go of control a bit and try new things. Ruby was flexible when lessons did not always go according to plan and she was comfortable turning over her lesson plans and class to me. At the same time, she was very honest with me about what she thought was not going well and what needed to improve in our class. This shared vision allowed us to plan more effectively this past year and allows me, as the ESL teacher, to contribute equally to the co-planning process. This is vital, especially because when adequate planning time is not set aside and used effectively, it is often the ESL teacher whose role in the classroom is diminished (Keefe & Moore, 2004).

While Ruby and I have a shared vision of co-teaching, the time it takes to do well, and our main objectives for our class, the principal of our middle school, James, differs in his vision of co-teaching. James appreciates the work and time it takes for co-teachers to truly become equals in the classroom. He acknowledges that the co-teaching relationship will only become stronger and more effective with time. However, while Ruby and I would like to continue co-teaching past this second year, James is thinking ahead to how he can best expand the good things we have done to other subject areas and grade levels at the middle school. He sees my role as one in which I train mainstream teachers at our school in how to teach ELs so that I co-teach with a content teacher for a year or two and then move on to spread my knowledge.

However, the research suggests that co-teachers should work together over the

course of multiple years and that the ESL co-teacher should never work with more than one or two mainstream content teachers at a time. This way the ESL teacher will have more time to devote to building a relationship with those teachers and to work on structuring an effective co-taught class (Dieker & Murawski, 2003). Furthermore, Cruickshank (1997) found, in his research, that the most successful ESL programs were ones in which ESL teachers have the autonomy to decide program options in consultation with other teachers and administrators.

Co-instructing: Major Findings

One of my major findings in terms of co-instructing was the importance of establishing a routine throughout a unit both for co-teachers and for students. Once a routine is established, co-teachers can develop a more clearly defined role in the classroom that makes for smoother instruction. That way, even if co-teachers do not get a sufficient amount of time to meet and discuss a specific plan for the next day, they know what is expected of them during the lesson and can adapt appropriately.

To establish a routine in the co-taught class, both teachers need to have had the time to effectively plan overall unit and lesson objectives ahead of teaching a unit, to have developed a shared vision of the co-taught class, and to have developed an open form of communication that happens not only during the planning process, but also during instruction (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). To do this, it is important for both teachers to understand one another's primary role in the classroom. The mainstream general education teacher mainly provides the content objectives and the ESL teacher supports the lesson through language objectives (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). This means

that the ESL teacher must clearly understand the content in order to be able to identify both the vocabulary and language structures that ELs need to know in order to access the content. The mainstream teacher must also understand and support the ESL teacher's role in the co-taught class by being open and willing to modify lessons, adjust unit pacing, and by being supportive of class time being used to teach language.

Another key factor in establishing an effective routine while co-instructing is having had the time to reach what Gately and Gately (2001) call the collaborative stage of co-teaching. This stage may take co-teachers two or three, or even more years teaching together to reach, and it is when two teachers are able to effectively manage their use of verbal, nonverbal, and social skills while instructing. I feel that due to the fact that Ruby and I have made time to frequently plan and effectively communicate, we have reached the collaborative stage in only our second year of teaching. At this point, both Ruby and I understand one another's teaching styles and are comfortable sharing a common space and materials. This allows both of us to make instruction appear seamless and to work with all students while addressing individual needs (Friend, 2007).

James, our principal, mentioned in his interview that while observing Ruby and me teach, it was apparent that we both knew the material and that we felt very comfortable teaching together. He said that he could see we have both an outward form of communication while instructing as well as a more subtle form of communication which allows us to keep our class on pace with smooth transitions either when changing our teaching roles or when transitioning from one activity to the next during a lesson. Students in our co-taught class pick up on this as well. During my focus group, students

commented that it seemed like our co-taught class runs more smoothly than other classes because if one teacher needs to deal with a student issue, is having trouble explaining a concept clearly, or needs time to find something, the other teacher can take over and continue the lesson without interruption.

Co-assessing: Major Findings

One of my major finding in terms of co-assessing was that it is important to not only assess students on whether they met certain lesson or unit objectives as measured by both formative and summative assessments but it is also important to measure individual student growth towards meeting those objectives. Ruby and I worked hard to create key content and language objectives, to give our students the tools to meet those objectives, and then to assess students on those objectives. During our *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* unit, we frequently checked for student understanding to help guide our instruction. If students did not do well on an assessment, we re-taught the concept being tested or we allowed students to retake assessments after meeting with us. Ruby frequently communicated with parents of students who were not making progress and then the two of us discussed how to better assist those students in our class. We also communicated with one another regarding how to grade assignments, how to give feedback, and what to count as part of a student's grade and what not to count.

However, something that Ruby and I both found challenging was deciding what to do with a few ELs in our class who were not meeting our learning objectives during the unit as measured both by our frequent formative assessments and our final summative unit assessment. These students worked hard in class, paid attention, participated, and

completed both in class and homework assignments throughout the unit. They genuinely seemed to enjoy reading *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. However, these students repeatedly scored lower than other students on both our five-point reading comprehension and vocabulary assessments we gave twice a week as well as on the weekly vocabulary assessments.

Ruby and I met with one of the student's parents during an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. IEPs are programs set up for students who qualify as having a specific learning disability by a special education teacher in order to help them more easily reach certain educational goals. At this meeting, we discussed ways for his parents to help reinforce concepts and vocabulary at home. Both Ruby and I had met with the other two students' parents as well. As the ESL teacher, I knew that language played a role in them not always meeting the learning objectives at the same rate as other students in the class. However, I felt that the objectives we were teaching and holding students accountable for were not too hard for them to meet. We were giving them the language support they needed. I was also available every day after our class to help re-teach concepts or to clarify parts of the reading during those students' study hall classes. While those students occasionally sought out my help, they had other homework and therefore did not see me on a daily basis for English help outside of our co-taught English class.

Because the rest of our students were doing well and because we wanted to keep the pace of our class going at a rate that would most benefit the greatest number of students in our co-taught class, we didn't always slow down to re-teach or reinforce

concepts that those few ELs still were not mastering. However, it was apparent that those students were still doing well in our class. They consistently had cumulative grades that were either Bs or Cs. Two of those three struggling ELs were in my focus group and it was clear that they not only enjoyed our class, but that they were learning and they felt successful, even if they were not mastering the objectives on every assessment.

While these students may not have had the language or academic ability to get an A in our class, they were making progress and real academic growth. It was then that I realized that Ruby and I would need to develop assessments that not only measured a student's mastery of an objective, but that also measured individual student growth.

When I interviewed our principal and asked him how he would measure the success of a co-taught class, he said that he would measure it by individual student growth and not composite scores. If Ruby and I are truly working to hold students in our co-taught class accountable for the same learning objectives she has for students in her other English classes, just by using a different vehicle to get them there, mainly extra language support, then we need to also understand that certain students may need more time to meet those objectives, even if given extra support.

Along with realizing the need for more assessments that measure individual student growth in an ESL co-taught class, another major finding was the need to differentiate assessments in the ESL co-taught class. Not all students in a co-taught class are ELs and not all students struggle with reading or writing. In a co-taught class, like ours, some students may need more of a challenge than other students. At the same time, a few students who really need quite a bit more support than others in the co-taught class.

It is best for co-teachers to meet, as Friend (2007) advises, before a unit to discuss a variety of assessing options to determine which options work best with certain groups of students. At the same time, it is important to remember that all students should be held accountable for meeting the same learning objectives that align with grade level content standards.

Finally, the biggest finding was the importance of giving more frequent formative assessments to track student progress and the importance of giving students immediate feedback. With two teachers, we were more readily able to collect data on student achievement and behavior, which is a major advantage of assessing in the co-taught classroom (Murawski & Dieker, 2008). Even when Ruby and I struggled with how to best help the few students who were not always doing as well on our assessments as we hoped, we were aware of their struggles and could take the extra steps to support them. Because we made the frequent assessments part of our weekly unit routine, students were not surprised that we were holding them accountable for our daily-posted objectives. And because we always returned assessments either that day or the next, students cared to know how they had done. We also found that students in our co-taught class wanted to check in with me about their grades after class more often since they knew how frequently we were entering different scores, which affected their grades. I feel like this encouraged students by making them feel like they had the power to directly affect their progress in our class. If they did poorly on one assessment, they knew they had many other opportunities to prove what they knew to bring up their grades.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to only one co-taught class within one middle school in a large, rural school district in the upper Midwest. Furthermore, this study was done in a limited amount of time. It was conducted over the course of one seven-week co-taught unit between two co-teachers with a unique relationship and with individual strengths and weaknesses, which cannot readily be recreated. Both the ELs and non-ELs in the class have specific language and learning needs as well as personalities and interests which make the co-taught class on which this study was based, different from other co-taught classes. The very nature of my research having been conducted as a case study makes it less generalizable to other co-teaching situations. Finally, as both the researcher and ESL teacher in the study, I may have had some biases that an outside researcher would not have had.

Implications for Professional Practice

I hope that this study can give ESL teachers an idea of what one co-teaching relationship and co-taught class looks like at the planning, instructing, and assessing levels. It is often the job of the ESL teacher to teach mainstream teachers about what co-teaching is and how it can benefit ELs. I also hope that this study can serve to demystify co-teaching for teachers and administrators who may not know a lot about what an ESL co-taught class looks like and how it works.

I feel that because I focused so much energy on documenting and reflecting on co-teaching The Adventures of Tom Sawyer with Ruby, the unit went really well. I think this speaks to the need for co-teachers to carefully document, reflect, and continuously

collaborate throughout the co-teaching process. Throughout this study, Ruby was open and willing to give me the time and feedback I needed to both research and teach our co-taught class. This reinforces the importance of co-teachers being willing to give one another the time and mutual respect to accomplish the goals each co-teacher has envisioned and set for a lesson, unit, or year teaching together.

It is inevitable that I will begin a new co-teaching relationship in the next year or two and I want to take what I have learned from the research involved in this case study and apply it to other potential co-teaching experiences. While a limitation I mentioned above is that it is hard to make a case study generalizable, I feel that there were overall themes that came out of my study that can guide both my future co-teaching endeavors as well as those of other co-teachers. At this point in my professional career, I have an advantage in beginning a new co-teaching relationship over my potential mainstream co-teachers: I've co-taught before. Therefore, I will be sure to communicate from the beginning the importance of being open and honest about how I view our roles in the classroom as well as the importance of frequent and continuous communication and collaboration, especially in our first year teaching together in order to lessen the frequency of challenges all co-teachers, especially new ones, are bound to experience.

Recommendations for Future Research

There is still quite a bit more research that needs to be done on ESL co-teaching at the secondary level. While every ESL co-taught class looks different depending on the teachers involved and the needs of the students in the class, more descriptive case studies done on ESL co-taught classes would allow patterns to emerge which could prove

beneficial for providing validity to initial findings. More research would also make major findings more generalizable to wider types of ESL co-teaching.

Plan for Communication

This study will be available online for anyone interested in learning more about ESL co-teaching. I will encourage teachers at my school to read it, especially those who currently co-teach or those who are either interested in potentially co-teaching in the future or who want to learn more about it. Personal copies will be given to district leaders, to the administrators in my building, and to Ruby, my English co-teacher.

Conclusion

As the ESL population in the United States continues to grow, it is important for teachers and administrators to find the most effective ways to teach language through content. Co-teaching is an important method by which ELs can receive the language support they need without being separated from other mainstream students at school. Through co-teaching, ELs learn language through content so that they aren’t losing content knowledge as they acquire English. However, for ESL co-teaching to be done so that it is most beneficial for ELs, it is important that ESL and mainstream teachers are willing to take the time to develop good working relationships and to set aside the time needed to effectively co-plan, co-instruct, and co-assess.

APPENDIX A

ESL CO-TEACHING RATING SCALE

The ESL Co-teaching Rating Scale

Teachers:_____ &_____Date:_____

Total # of students:_____# of ELs:_____ EL Overall ACCESS levels:_____

1: Rarely 2: Sometimes 3. Usually

1. Co-teachers are easily reading each other's nonverbal cues _____
2. Both teachers move freely about the space of the classroom _____
3. Both teachers understand the curriculum standards with respect to the content area in the co-taught classroom _____
4. Planning can be spontaneous, with changes occurring during the instructional lesson _____
5. Both teachers alternate presenting parts of the lesson to the co-taught class _____
6. All materials are shared in the classroom _____
7. The content teacher is familiar with the methods and materials with respect to the content area _____
8. Language modifications for ELs are fully incorporated into the lesson _____
9. Both teachers have smooth transitions between activities _____
10. A variety of classroom management techniques are used to enhance learning of all students _____
11. There is fluid positioning of teachers in the classroom _____
12. Student centered objectives are incorporated into the classroom curriculum _____
13. Students accept both teachers as equal partners in the learning process _____
14. Behavior management is the shared responsibility of both teachers _____

APPENDIX B

MEETING AND PLANNING TIMES

Date	Time	Planning
Saturday, 1/18	2:00-5:15	Major third quarter Tom Sawyer unit planning
Monday, 1/21	3:00-4:00	Met to follow up on our plan for third quarter
Friday, 1/25	3:00-5:00	Met to discuss our class and to interview her for my capstone
Monday, 2/4	7:25-7:45	Met to discuss which parts of the Mark Twain documentary to show
Wednesday, 2/6	11:20-11:30	Met during fourth hour to discuss the character and setting sheet I had created. Ruby made changes to it.
Friday, 2/8	3:15-5:00	Planned the following week's reading
Monday, 2/11	10:55-11:10	Touched base about which sections of the *Mark Twain for Kids* book we would read with our students
Tuesday, 2/12	3:35-4:00	Planned a characterization sheet I had created with Ruby's input
Monday, 2/18	3:15-5:15	Planned the week's reading
Tuesday, 2/19	10:45-11:00	Discussed five point assessment results
Wednesday, 2/20	11:15-11:25	Discussed putting together a Venn Diagram for the following day to aid students' comparing and contrasting the video with the book
Thursday, 2/21	10:50-11:00	Met to discuss creating a conflict notes sheet
Monday, 2/25	4:00-4:30	Met during a co-taught students IEP meeting and then met after the meeting to plan the rest of the week's plan
Tuesday, 2/26	10:55-11:05	Shared results of a five point reading assessment
Wednesday, 3/6	11:30-11:45	Discussed changed of plans due to the snow day and reviewed our five point assessment results
Friday, 3/8	3:15-4:30	Planned our following weeks reading as well as initial final summative assessment
Tuesday, 3/12	10:55-11:10	Collaborated on a superstition notes sheet
Wednesday, 3/20	11:15-11:40	A working lunch to discuss the end of the unit and to review final assessment
Friday, 3/22	11:15-11:20	Met about the results of our final assessment

APPENDIX C

MARK TWAIN HISTORICAL NOTES

Mark Twain Historical Notes

Name:_____ Date:_____ Hour:_____

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain) Documentary
Vocabulary:

1. mend: to fix
2. conscience: a "voice" in your mind that tells you right or wrong
3. quarrel: a fight
4. apprentice: a person who works with someone to learn about their job
5. ambition: A strong desire (want) to become successful
6. wages: money that you earn from a job
7. transfer: to move something from one place to another
8. tranquil: peaceful
9. tragedy: An terrible event that causes great suffering
10. vernacular: the language spoken by real people
11. scheme: a plan
12. satire: the use of humor (fun/ jokes) to make fun or criticize something or someone
13. race: The cultural, ethnic, and geographic qualities that define a person or group of people
14. humor: (the quality of being amusing or funny)

Part I. Samuel Clemens' early life (17 minutes)

Write down 5 things you hear about Samuel (Sam) Clemens.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Part II. The Civil War & Mark Twain's Travels (6 minutes)

Mark Twain is a "noticer". What are some things you notice about life in the mid-1800s?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Mark Twain marries Olivia Langdon (Livy) in 1870. They have one son who was born prematurely. Olivia's family is very wealthy.

Part III. Mark Twain's Family and Life in Hartford, Connecticut (23 minutes)

List 3 things you notice about the house that Mark Twain had built for his family.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Mark Twain and his family spent their summers at Quarry Farm in New York. Mary Ann Cord (an ex-slave who was the cook at the farm).

What did Mark Twain learn from Mary Ann (Aunt Rachel)?

_____

_____

Part IV. Tom Sawyer (3 minutes)

Why do you think Mark Twain wrote The Adventures of Tom Sawyer?

_____

_____

What do you predict The Adventures of Tom Sawyer is about?

_____

APPENDIX D

CHARACTER TRAITS NOTES

Character Traits Notes

Character	Descriptions or Actions (cite from text)	What it tells us about the character
Tom Sawyer		
Aunt Polly		
Huckleberry Finn (ch.6)		
Becky Thatcher (ch. 6)		

APPENDIX E

CONFLICT NOTES

Conflict Notes

Name:_____ Date:_____ Hour:_____

CONFLICT (A problem)

Directions: Identify sources of conflict in both *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and in Mark Twain's Life. Then circle whether the conflict is an example of internal conflict or of external conflict.

In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*	In Mark Twain's Life
The conflict is… _____ vs. _____ Internal or external?	The conflict is… _____ vs. _____ Internal or external?
The conflict is… _____ vs. _____ Internal or external?	The conflict is… _____ vs. _____ Internal or external?
The conflict is… _____ vs. _____ Internal or external?	The conflict is… _____ vs. _____ Internal or external?
The conflict is… _____ vs. _____ Internal or external?	The conflict is… _____ vs. _____ Internal or external?

APPENDIX F

SUPERSTITIONS SHEET

Superstitions Sheet

Name:_____ Date:_____ Hour:_____

Tom Sawyer Superstition Notes

Directions: Fill in the chart below with details about the superstitions that Tom and Huck believe in.

The Superstition	What Tom and Huck do as a result of believing in the superstition	The Result

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH RUBY

Interview Questions with Ruby

Interview #1

Questions:

1. How would you define co-teaching in your own words?
2. What went well in our co-taught class last year?
3. How do you perceive my role as the ESL teacher in our co-teaching relationship?
4. What challenges do you and I face as we negotiate the co-teaching process?
5. How has co-teaching improved this year (as compared to our co-taught class last year)?
6. What specific things would you still like to see change?

Interview #2

Questions:

1. How was our Tom Sawyer unit different from last year's unit?
2. What, in your opinion, went better?
3. What in your opinion did not go as well?
4. Describe the co-planned process of Tom Sawyer
5. Describe the co-instructing process of Tom Sawyer
6. Describe the co-assessing process of Tom Sawyer

APPENDIX H

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Student Focus Group Questions

1. Describe as many different ways that being in a co-taught class is different from being in a class with just one teacher.

2. Which do you like better, your co-taught class or your classes with just one teacher? Why?

3.What do you think is going really well in your co-taught English class this year? What are your co-teachers (Mrs. T & Ms. V) doing well?

4. What is challenging about the co-taught class? What could your co-teachers (Mrs. T and Ms. V) do to help make the class better?

5. How are your co-teachers' jobs the same and how are they different? For example, what does Mrs. T do or what is she more responsible for? How is that different from what Ms. V's job is?

6. Do you see your co-teachers as equal teachers or does one teacher seem to have more power or respect? Why do you think that?

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH JAMES

Interview Questions with James

1. How would you define ESL co-teaching?

2. How big do you believe an ESL co-taught class should be and who would you describe the balance of a co-taught class in terms of specific student needs?

3. How do you measure the success of a co-taught class?

4. What specific strengths or positive aspects of our co-taught class did you observe?

5. What areas do we, as co-teachers, do Ruby and I need to improve?

6. What areas of growth or change did you see?

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