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Plott's Tales and Trails: Aventuras con Carolina
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We aligned the book "Plott's Tales and Trails: Aventuras con Carolina" with North Carolina's English Language Arts (ELA) standards for kindergarten to 5th-grade ESL learners and we made an effort to involve them focusing on key language skills such as comprehension, vocabulary, listening, speaking, and writing. The story itself can be a tool to help students understand cultural elements, practice language skills, and connect with different literary forms. Here's how we aligned the book's themes and content with the North Carolina ELA standards for ESL learners:

Kindergarten (K) Standards

1. Reading Comprehension

- Standard K.RL.1: With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

2. Vocabulary Development

- Standard K.L.5: With guidance and support, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

3. Speaking and Listening

- Standard K.SL.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

First Grade (1st) Standards

1. Reading Comprehension

- Standard 1.RL.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

2. Vocabulary Development

- Standard 1.L.5: With guidance and support, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

3. Speaking and Listening

- Standard 1.SL.2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

Second Grade (2nd) Standards

1. Reading Comprehension

- Standard 2.RL.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text and make inferences.

2. Vocabulary Development

- Standard 2.L.5: Identify and understand the meaning of words and phrases, including figurative language, in the context of a text.

3. **Speaking and Listening**

- Standard 3.SL.2: Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented orally.

Fourth Grade (4th) Standards

1. **Reading Comprehension**

- Standard 4.RL.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences.

2. **Vocabulary Development**

- Standard 4.L.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content.

Fifth Grade (5th) Standards

1. **Reading Comprehension**

- Standard 5.RL.1: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences.

2. **Vocabulary Development**

- Standard 5.L.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships.

Here are some additional Considerations we kept in mind for our ESL Learners:

- **Cultural Context:** Since "Tales and Trails: Aventuras con Carolina" may introduce elements of Spanish-speaking cultures, it was helpful to connect the book to students' backgrounds and encourage discussion about multicultural perspectives.

- **Language Practice:** We used Activities like vocabulary matching, sentence building, or creating visual story maps to support both language development and content comprehension.

- **Group Work:** We encouraged collaborative group discussions where students could ask and answer questions, promoting language use in context.

By focusing on comprehension, vocabulary and speaking while making connections to the ESL learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, this book has been a valuable tool for enhancing both language skills and academic growth in alignment with North Carolina's ELA standards.

In preparation for Reading Across America Week, the ML team decided to spotlight the rich nature of North Carolina through the book Plott's tales and trails: Aventuras con Carolina. This engaging book served as the centerpiece for our reading sessions, which were designed with a dual purpose: to recognize the richness of nature treasures surrounding North Carolina in its state parks and to enhance English language skills within the content of the book. Alongside the reading, we incorporated a variety of complementary activities that reinforced English grammar

and vocabulary, making the learning experience both meaningful and enjoyable for all participants.

During the class sessions, students were engaged in a variety of activities prior to the interaction with the book. One of the key activities for 1st to 5th grade students involved interacting with a North Carolina State parks map to identify the location of the nearest park to our school location. Furthermore, the learning focus of this warm-up activity was vocabulary of the different things people can do in a state park. The grammar focus was verbs ending in “-ing” like camping, swimming, riding boats, hiking, walking, playing, picnicking, etc.

After providing context to our students, we continued with the reading of the book. Also, while reading, the class made pauses whenever identifying a new word which then was added to our anchor chart. Next, the same anchor chart helped our class to complete the matching worksheets included in Plott’s books. In addition to that, the illustrations were very detailed. Our classes used them to learn new words in order to describe them orally but also being able to use these new words in simple sentences.

Finally, as we didn’t want to leave out any grade level, the younger students worked on a fine motor tracing activity crafting Carolina but also tracing important words from the book as for the name of our main characters, state parks, North Carolina, lakes, etc. Additionally, they use the same words to count syllables to focus on phonological awareness.

Plott’s Tales and Trails is a great resource for kids becoming bilingual because it combines engaging storytelling with immersive language experiences making learning both fun and effective. It helps children develop language skills while fostering love for nature. This book turns the journey to bilingualism into an exciting exploration for young minds.

Some activities we implemented:

- Students practiced identifying key details in the book, like characters (Carolina), setting (trails, adventures), and events (important parts of the story).
- Students explored Spanish words used in the book, helping them learn new vocabulary and understand word meanings in context (for example, terms like "senderos", "aventuras," etc.).
- Discussing the book as a class, encouraging students to share their opinions on the story and practice speaking in English.
- Students could discuss who the main characters are and what the main idea of the story is.
- Students focused on new vocabulary (both English and Spanish words) to understand the book’s cultural context, learning words related to nature, travel, and adventure.

- After reading aloud, students practiced answering questions about the plot and key details in the book.
- Students could infer motivations behind characters' actions and discuss themes related to friendship, discovery, and culture.
- Understanding words that describe the setting or actions in the story (e.g., nature words, action verbs, etc.).
- Focus on bilingual vocabulary development, especially terms related to geography, adventure, and culture.
- Students could listen to the story as both teachers played the role of Plott and Carolina while reading the story, that way they identified the main ideas, and discussed the characters' journeys in small groups.
- Students explored in the classroom some geographical characteristics of North Carolina.
- Students were able to locate themselves geographically in The United States and in North Carolina using the Compass rose.
- Students identified how many state parks there are in North Carolina, what are the closest ones to their homes and what activities could they do there.
- Students could analyze the book's plot, characters, and setting to make inferences about the story and its message.
- Students used context clues from the book to understand unfamiliar words and phrases, both in English and Spanish.

Links/Canva resources:

- https://www.canva.com/design/DAGg9-1Dis8/w3HG1vnpOAmRmiOWhrNBww/edit?utm_content=DAGg9-1Dis8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton
- https://www.canva.com/design/DAGhibG4ev4/NKc8-BZB6hDEGBZVaK7drw/edit?utm_content=DAGhibG4ev4&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton