The Cloak of Invisibility: Using Harry Potter to help Newcomers Cope with Trauma

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Introduction

Calvin R. McCullough Middle School is one of Colonial School District three intermediate schools, serving students in grades 6-8. McCullough, in addition to being Colonial's STEAM magnet school, is also home to a newcomer program for English Language Learners. The Colonial Middle School Newcomer Program (CMSNP) is the only program of its type in the state of Delaware. Students in the Newcomer Program are transported from all three feeder schools in the district based on their language proficiency and parental approval.

Once enrolled, students are immersed in multi-grade level classrooms with other newcomer students where they are provided instruction focused on both language and content acquisition. Students spend half of their core instructional time on math and science, and half on English and social studies with myself. They attend lunch and elective classes with mainstream students.

As a very small, specialized population within our school community, my newcomer students are often the victims of misassumptions where trauma-informed teaching is concerned. However, the reality is that these students have experienced types of trauma that are frequently not visible within the United States education system. For this reason, I have chosen to focus my work on the creation of an English Language Arts curriculum unit that allows newcomer English Learners to identify how traumatic experiences impact characters in literature, as well as how those characters utilize various coping strategies that are applicable to real-life individuals.

Newcomer English Learners are rarely considered through the lens of socioemotional health. They seldom exhibit many of the signs of trauma that educators have been taught to identify. In general, they are characterized as introverted, respectful, and agreeable, especially in comparison to native English-speaking students. As a result, their experiences and needs from a trauma perspective are sometimes overlooked in favor of

the more apparent needs of their classmates. In some cases, their disposition even generates the conjecture that they have not experienced trauma to the same extent as their English-speaking peers. On the contrary, under their "cloak of invisibility", trauma is just as common among newcomers as the rest of the population. It simply manifests itself differently.

All of my students are new to the United States within two years. The ordeal of immigration is quite obviously still very fresh in their minds when they enter my classroom. Many come to school each day fraught with the same challenges as American-born students. Low socioeconomic background and single parent homes are common, and at first glance they appear to blend in with the general population. However, beneath the surface are a plethora of experiences virtually unknown to a student raised in a developed country; In recent years, I have taught students who have experienced civil war, natural disaster, international adoption, prolonged lack of medical care, limited or nonexistent formal education, familial separation, political violence, deportation, and genocide. Moreover, these adverse experiences coexist with the general difficulties of being a young person adapting to a new country, culture, and education system.

With this in mind, it is clear that this population necessitates opportunities to address and explore the concept of trauma and how their personal experiences affect their socioemotional well being. I have spent the past three years designing curriculum units to meet the academic needs of my students. My goal in writing this curriculum unit is to intertwine English Language Arts standards with socio-emotional learning (SEL) in order to simultaneously meet the language, content, and mental health needs of my students.

My unit will focus on excerpts conveying the theme of trauma in the *Harry Potter*[1] novel series by J.K. Rowling. Although cultural relevance can be difficult to provide in classes with multiple different first languages and cultures, the *Harry Potter* series is unique in that it has a presence all over the world. Having been translated into 60+ languages (and made into a movie series which has been likewise dubbed) almost all students have at least some familiarity with the character and premise of the series. In addition, *Harry Potter* lends itself to being a culturally relevant text in that, being about wizards and witches, it is foreign to everyone. There are no assumptions or biases getting lost in translation because no matter where you come from or what language you speak, fantasy and magic are understood.

Students will begin the unit with an introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)[2] and their prevalence among the general population. Students will study ACEs in the context of Harry's character and discuss how they think his ACE score may have impacted him/what difficulties a person with these ACEs may have. They will form discussion groups to analyze excerpts pulled from throughout the series, written in both English and their native language (L1) where possible, and identify traumatic experiences of different characters and the repercussions of that trauma on the development of that character throughout the series.

In addition, the unit will focus on the ways in which Harry and other characters continually persevere despite their traumatic experiences. Students will work in pairs to examine how Harry utilizes other characters as resources for working through his experiences. For example, Dumbledore functions as something of a counselor and confidant for Harry, enabling him to cope with the situations and feelings he encounters. Having gained a solid understanding of trauma and its impact on behavior and socioemotional health, students will create a toolbox of "potions" (SEL resources) that Harry could benefit from if he were a muggle. More specifically, emphasis will be placed on:

1. Understanding the definition of trauma as it applies to their age group
2. Recognizing examples of trauma and adverse experiences
3. Identifying the impact of trauma of on mental health and behavior
4. Analyzing metaphors used by the author to represent trauma
5. Summarizing the ways in which a character's adverse experiences influence the plot
6. Locating resources to cope with trauma in a school or community
7. Using coping resources as support oneself

Demographics

All students in the class have been living in the United States for two years or less. They are predominantly emigrants from countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean with a few students from the Middle East and Africa.

Home languages spoken include Spanish, French, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Kurdish, and Ga, as well as some local dialects and pigeons that exist in their native countries. Only about 75% of the students were educated in their native language. Of that number, very few are considered "on grade level" within the Common Core State Standards due to

the differences in rigor and expectations that exist between the educational systems of different countries. The remaining group has little to no education in their first language, and in some cases they are not literate at all.

In addition to the language barrier, about 5% of the students are dual identified as Special Education. Their needs range from ADHD, to dyslexia (diagnosed in the home country), to learning disabilities, to behavior issues stemming from mental health disorders.

All of the factors influencing this context further necessitate that opportunities be offered for students to use and engage with language in a meaningful way. That is, all activities within the unit will be created to resemble as closely as possible the types of realistic language use applicable to transactions conducted on a daily basis. For example, describing a set of events in the past to a friend is a much more realistic use of language than simply memorizing past tense verb conjugations. While meaningful use will be discussed further in the research section of this unit, it is important to note that the emphasis that is placed on building literacy skills as a means of accessing and acquiring grade-level content area concepts often supersedes the importance that newcomer students learn to communicate using oral language as well as the written word.

Research

The students to whom I am teaching this unit have been placed in the newcomer program at Calvin R. McCullough Middle School in New Castle, Delaware[3]. McCullough is a Title I school where 60% of the students come from low-income homes and about 8% are identified as English Language Learners.

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Once enrolled, students are immersed in multi-grade level classrooms with other newcomer students where they are provided instruction focused on both language and

content acquisition. Students spend half of their core instructional time on math and science with my co-teacher, and half on English and social studies with me. They attend lunch and elective classes with mainstream students.

The Newcomer Program teaches all four core content areas in the same manner as the general education program. Students are divided into two groups and spend half the day with me for ELA and Social Studies and the other half with my colleague for Math and Science. The curriculum utilizes textbooks created for ELLs by Pearson and Longman[4], but in large part the materials used were adapted by me over several years and have been created specifically for use in this program.

All materials are differentiated for students according to their language proficiency level, ranging from entering (no English) to high beginner. Some students are just starting to acquire language and others are nearly ready to exit the program, or have already exited in other content areas and are only taking Social Studies and ELA. Some are educated and literate in their home language, while others are not. With such varying proficiency levels, it can be challenging to find texts that provide accessible content for all students. For this reason, visual supports are imperative to my teaching and picture books are frequently chosen to convey more abstract concepts.

While this curriculum has been very successful in transitioning students academically to general education classes, there has been little focus on social and emotional health built into the program. Many of our students are coming to us from situations of prolonged trauma, but are often hesitant to discuss how these experiences have and continue to impact them and their mental health. In addition to the language barrier, it is common for discussing one's feelings to be a rather taboo subject in immigrant households. Parents are typically pleased to be providing their child a lifestyle that was not possible in their country of origin, and many still adhere to the belief that individuals lack control of their own fate[5]. A fear of "rocking the boat" is palpable and can inhibit students from identifying their own mental health needs. As one of my students so eloquently put it, "If you need to talk to someone about feeling sad, they'll call you a *coco loco*". This unit aims to challenge such preconceptions and help students see the value of analyzing and digesting their own emotions.

I chose to participate in the DTI seminar ***Identity and Trauma in Literature*** because I was finding myself repeatedly confronted with the misconception that my students were the "easy" ones to work with. On the contrary, I knew that my students were just as

affected by trauma as their native English-speaking peers and were likewise in need of resources and assistance related to socio-emotional wellness. Moreover, my students presented with unique challenges related to their trauma that were not being addressed in the education system. My hope was to use the seminar as an opportunity to develop a curriculum unit tailored to the needs of this population.

The vast majority of my students represent areas of the world in which the notion of trauma and its effect on human development is not quite the "buzzword" that it has recently become in the US education system. One reason for this is that any type of self-analysis is by nature a feature of individualist culture. Individualist culture[6] "emphasizes personal freedom and achievement. Individualist culture therefore awards social status to personal accomplishments such as important discoveries, innovations, great artistic or humanitarian achievements and all actions that make an individual stand out". Collectivist culture, conversely, values the needs of the group over one of its members.[7] Collectivist culture "stresses the importance of the community, while individualism is focused on the rights and concerns of each person". This becomes a challenge with respect to unpacking traumatic experiences, as students are often conditioned to thinking about their feelings in terms of the family unit, rather than as their own observations and reactions. My newcomers are so accustomed to thinking of themselves in the context of a group, they are often concerned as to how their expression of any sentiment, particularly a negative one, may impact or affect another member of their family. Thus, they refrain from alluding to their own stresses to prevent any unwanted ramifications.

Curriculum Content

Given the unusual relationship that my students have with mental health (or lack thereof), I began to consider more accessible ways to help students identify and examine the concept of trauma. "Every student's migration story is different, but it is important to note that a subgroup of these students may be experiencing the effects of trauma"[8]. I am highly aware of the repercussions that trauma can and does have on the success of my students, both academically and personally. One aspect that always factors into my considerations for writing instruction is that, "trauma can affect every aspect of their lives including pleasure, engagements, control, and trust"[9]. A safe space for students to learn about trauma and the necessity of seeking help for oneself is paramount to students' ability to unpack and recover from adverse experiences that impede their education.

Further supporting my rationale for this unit is the extensive research on trauma through a cultural lens. It has been observed that "Culture plays a key role in how individuals cope with potentially traumatizing experiences by providing a context in which social support and other positive and uplifting events can be experienced"[10]. Upon reviewing several studies about the impact of culture on one's recovery from post-traumatic stress, it became evident that my students' strong ties to their home cultures was a significant factor in making their trauma appear less apparent than that of their American-born peers.

Having essentially been born with a network of support and other resources in place to combat adverse experiences, it is easy for an outsider to assume that any issues are immediately resolved. However, another layer to this question lies in the fact that my students, despite having some elements of a cultural support system still in place, have been largely removed from their customary means of dealing with trauma when they immigrated to the United States. This results in a somewhat inception-like scenario where the components of their lives that were once a support are now in and of themselves sources of trauma. In short, "culture provides protection at a cost. Strong attachments to persons and lifestyles leads to a deeper sense of loss when the life of the culture is disrupted".[11] Ergo, my students find themselves in between the rock and the hard place of needing the safety net of their culture, only to find it rife with holes beneath them.

Fortunately, research dictates that while the loss of culture can be traumatic, it is also a rather supple construct. If my students are given the tools to mold the pieces that they retain from their native culture into something new, something that combines the mental health resources they encounter in this unit with the structure provided by our Newcomer Program, they will have in essence created a new buffer that can help them cope with life's adverse experiences for years to come.

With all of this in mind, I wanted to incorporate a text that would be as approachable and relevant as possible for my students. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* was chosen as the text at the center of this unit for its clear and relatable main character of Harry, who in many ways parallels the situations in which my English Language Learner students find themselves. As the story's protagonist, Harry is transported into an environment previously unknown to him. He encounters an entire culture and language that he has never been exposed to, and throughout the course of the novel must assimilate while he "deals with loss, danger, escape and consolation"[12]. Furthermore, Harry's story is relevant in that it exemplifies that traumatic experiences are conquerable. This moral

reassures students that no matter their circumstances, anything can be overcome with the right support.

Throughout the unit, students will examine the Adverse Childhood Experiences[13] mentioned in the first two chapters of the book. An understanding of ACEs is crucial to being able to evaluate one's own upbringing and what types of factors and events actually constitute trauma. Harry, like my students, begins the novel in complete ignorance that the details of his life are actually traumatic events. After identifying Harry's ACEs, students will be asked to consider which boxes on the ACE questionnaire they themselves might check. The overall goal of this component of the unit is to encourage self-reflection and comparison between the students and Harry in order to normalize the process of acknowledging and addressing trauma.

As the culminating project of the unit, students will synthesize what they have learned about trauma and Harry's specific needs to design a Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for the character. A Cognitive Behavioral Intervention integrates various resources available in the education system to support a student's mental and emotional health. "Students dealing with the effects of trauma may benefit from the Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBIT) program"[14]. The purpose of this final project is for students to demonstrate that they can seek resources and supports to assist Harry, and by extension, themselves.

Essential Questions:
1. What is trauma? What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?
2. Why is trauma such a common theme in literature?
3. How does trauma impact a person's socioemotional health and behavior in the long term?
4. How do authors use metaphors and other types of figurative language to represent trauma in their writing?
5. What strategies and resources exist in our schools and communities for coping with trauma?
6. How can using these strategies and resources be beneficial to a person's socioemotional health?

Content Objectives

The English Language Arts standards for literary analysis skills are quite lengthy and detailed. In particular, this unit will focus on the concepts of identifying and discussing both theme and figurative language within a text. These standards are taught as two separate units at the middle school level. The content in this paper will address the anchor standards for English Language Arts[15] as follows: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Although my students are not using the same texts as their peers in general education classes, they are still focusing on differentiated lessons aligned to the grade level Common Core and Delaware State Standards for grades 6, 7, and 8, respectively. Since this unit is unique in that it is intended for a classroom with multiple grade levels represented, it will allow students to place emphasis on the standards included in the grades 6-8 band as connections to the WIDA[16] English Language Development Standards, rather than the typical practice of focusing more intently on content standards with the language component as a secondary priority. For the purpose of the very specific population represented by the newcomer program, it is necessary to note that from a linguistic perspective students are producing work more consistent with the grades 2-4 common core standards rather than its counterpart at their own grade level.

The WIDA performance indicators provide expectations for what students should be doing with language in order to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in each of the four domains (Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing) at their given proficiency and specifies the connection that each performance description has to a grade level content standards. Using the WIDA rubrics for *Standard 1: Language of Social Interaction Content Objectives* and *Standard 2: English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Art*, I have chosen the following Common Core State Standards for each grade. In order to ensure that the learning outcomes were appropriate for each grade represented in the class, I selected standards for each grade level, which are nearly identical to one another. For simplicity's sake, I have listed those from only one grade level in the appendix below.

My overall goal with this unit is for students to demonstrate their growth in mastering the grade level standards for theme and figurative language through multimodal instruction.

Learning Objectives

The need for trauma-informed Newcomer English Learner classrooms is extremely apparent to those in this very specific sub-field of K-12 education. "Although further investigations are needed, English language teachers can play a role in trauma healing for learners because artful acts of instruction are therapeutic, promoting both wholeness and effective instruction for all learners."[17] To facilitate this, students will be empowered to identify and cope with their own trauma will unfold in 3 phases over the course of this unit. As a curriculum intended for the English Language Arts classroom, each phase will also incorporate standards-based content area skills that simultaneously develop literacy, language, and a sense of awareness of mental health in students.

Phase 1: Boggart[18]: Trauma

Students will begin the unit with direct instruction on the definition of the terms *trauma*, *mental health*, and *mindful*. This introductory lesson will serve not only to explain the meaning of these new vocabulary words, but also to establish a foundation of understanding about how specific events have a cause and effect relationship on one's well-being. By normalizing the experience of trauma as common, students will be better able to approach the later concepts related to coping resources in a safer, more comfortable environment.

Once students have a rudimentary understanding of the above vocabulary, we will move into a discussion of contextualized examples of trauma in the form of recent news articles. By providing specific, yet not personal, examples, students can "dip their toes in the water" of these ideas while still maintaining a fairly detached, third person perspective of these types of events.

Following the above, the students will be introduced to the text *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by drawing a picture of the biggest life change they feel they have ever experienced. Students will voluntarily share their pictures with the class, and then segue into making predictions about Harry's biggest life change, ultimately revealing the obvious: he is a wizard.

At this point, the students will begin reading the first six chapters of the novel. They will analyze the major events in this section, as well as study the element of characterization. At the conclusion of chapter six, students will be able to detail the main characters of the novel using descriptive adjectives. This skill will become necessary for activities and lessons later in the unit. After their character analysis, the class will shift to examining Harry and his friends through a trauma-informed perspective. At this point, the teacher will introduce the Adverse Childhood Experiences conducted by Kaiser Permanente from 1995-97. Students will then work in groups to identify example of Harry's ACEs that they find in the first few chapters of the text. Students will conclude this portion of the unit by presenting the ACEs that they have identified in *Sorcerer's Stone* to the class.

Phase 2: The Dementors[19] of Mental Health

Students will begin the unit with direct instruction on the definition of the terms *Adverse, Impact, Effect* and *Characteristics*.

Armed with their newly-gained understanding of trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences, students will begin the second part of the unit by exploring how ACEs impact Harry and other characters in the story. After reading chapters seven through twelve of the novel, students will complete a cause and effect graphic organizer that demonstrates how the previously-identified ACEs experienced by Harry have impacted their actions and behaviors thus far in the plot. For example, if one of Harry's identified ACEs is "losing parents at a young age", students would fill in the corresponding "effect" box of the graphic organizer with "feels alone" "always wishes for a family". After discussing the specific effects of Harry's ACEs as a group, students will complete a short argumentative paragraph explaining whether Harry's ACEs have had a positive or negative overall impact on his behavior and well-being, supporting their claim with at least 2 examples written in their cause and effect graphic organizer.

Subsequently, the teacher will ask students to consider how real-life examples of ACEs could affect a person in the long term. Using the speaking platform Lingt[20], students will record a response about an Adverse Childhood Experience of their choice. For example, "If some has parents that are mean to them all the time, they will probably feel like know one loves them when they grow up, etc." It is important to note that

students should not be required to discuss a personal ACE for this activity or any other described in this unit.

In the final stage of this phase, the teacher will directly instruct a mini-lesson on metaphors. Students will then apply their knowledge to analyzing example metaphors that J.K. Rowling uses to represent trauma in the text. For example, a boggart as a representation of one's most traumatic memory, or Harry's scar as a physical reminder of the losses he has suffered.

Phase 3: The Magic of Coping Resources

Students will begin the unit with direct instruction on the definition of the terms *cope*, *intervention*, and *resource*.

The final segment of the unit will focus on ways in which one can cope with traumatic experiences and prevent their repercussions on mental health. Students will begin by reading the remaining third of *Sorcerer's Stone*, chapters thirteen through seventeen.

The teacher will begin with a mini lesson on mental health support resources, with special emphasis on those that exist in our school and community. These will include guidance counselors, school psychologists and behavioral health specialists, members of the clergy, parents, as well as mindfulness techniques. Students will participate in a "scavenger hunt"[21], where they move around the building and find each resource, snapping a "Selfie" and recording the individual's name along the way. This will not only serve to help students become more comfortable and familiar with the supports available to them, but also act as an opportunity for them to practice their speaking and listening skills in a meaningful way.

Students will use their knowledge of community trauma resources to examine the components of a specific type of school-based program which student can use to support their mental health needs after experiencing trauma. The program, known as a Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS)[22], includes the following parts:

- relaxation training
- combating negative thoughts
- reducing avoidance
- developing a trauma narrative

- building social problem solving skills

According to the program website, a CBITS "is designed to reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and behavioral problems, and to improve functioning, grades and attendance, peer and parent support, and coping skills". As in all parts of this unit, the goal of exposing students to this type of intervention is to normalize the idea of utilizing support when it is necessary, and increase students' level of comfort with seeking help.

This section of the unit will then introduce the culminating project: the creation of a Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Harry or one of his friends; To accomplish this, students will split into groups of three (although this number can easily be adjusted based on one's class size). They will decide with character they would like to create an intervention for, and then begin the process of outlining resources that exist in both real life and/or the world of witchcraft and wizardry.

Each group will begin with a graphic organizer that lists the components of a CBITS in student-friendly language. Students will then identify a specific resource that the character could use for each component of their intervention. An example is below:

Character: Harry

CBITS Component	Character's Resource:
Who can this character talk to about their feelings?	Dumbledore, Ron, or Hermione
What techniques can this character use to help them relax?	Deep breathing or meditating
Summarize this character's ACE. When did/does this character experience a traumatic event? (ie, is it every time someone notices their appearance? Did they lose someone they love?)	His parents died when he was young
What is one professional resource the character could use if they were a muggle?	Ms. Bailey, the school counselor
What can this character do when they are in a	Harry can talk to his friends when he feels sad

stressful situation?	about losing his parents. He can use the mirror of erised to see them.

Students will then turn their graphic organizer into a class Google Slides presentation explaining the character's Cognitive Behavioral Intervention "potions" and why they should use them. This project will function as both a test of content knowledge and an English speaking task. As students work to create their CBITS, their final project will be evaluated using a rubric including the following rubric criteria:

1. The presentation includes each of the four sections of the graphic organizer.
2. The presentation includes use of some or all of the unit's targeted vocabulary words *trauma*, *mental health*, *cope*, *intervention*, and *mindful*
3. The CBITS includes at least three mental health resources studied in the unit
4. The resources provided in the presentation make sense for the chosen character (ie, Harry is not going to talk to Voldermort about his feelings)
5. Presentation is given in English and is comprehensible to a sympathetic native speaker

At the conclusion of this three-phase unit, the objective is that students will have not only compiled a list of "potions" to help Harry, but also amassed a collection of assets to magically transform their own mental health for the better.

Strategies

Along with my considerations regarding the theory of language acquisition and textual content, I knew I wanted to create something that utilized the basic methodologies of teaching ESL. While many programs rely heavily on the use of translation and computers to convey meaning of grade-level texts to students, I see them as a tool which can often become a crutch if overused. If students never learn to negotiate meaning in the second language, they will have a difficult time increasing proficiency.

Visual Supports

The literature incorporated in the unit will appear in English and include a strategy vital to any teacher of English Language Learners: visual support. While the picture books, by Common Core Standards, are not considered middle school level texts, the students will

have the opportunity for exposure in this unit in the form of the unabridged version of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. However, as previously mentioned, Krashen[23] states that students require comprehensible input in order to increase their language proficiency. This means that information presented in a lesson needs to be *i + 1*, or just slightly above their ability to comprehend at their present proficiency level. Thus, the text will ultimately accessible through the use of accompanying visual aids, video clips, audio, etc. The images will be hand-selected by the teacher using Google to support student comprehension of the main ideas of the text at various points.

Chunking

Given the length and rigor of the *Sorcerer's Stone* text, it will be presented in manageable chunks rather than as a whole. Separating reading materials into smaller sections is a proven method to increasing comprehension, especially for students who are still mastering fluency or lack the vocabulary necessary for comprehension[24]. In some cases, the text will be limited to certain excerpts which have been selected to focus on key vocabulary words and main ideas which will help students to more easily access the learning objectives. In addition to presenting students with chunked text, they will also utilize pre-reading strategies of identifying and defining unfamiliar words, using graphic organizers, and creating pictures to demonstrate comprehension.

Reading Apprenticeship

The Reading Apprenticeship program is an instructional method created by non-profit organization WestEd[25] that supports the socio-emotional and cognitive needs of students as a means of helping the students to build background and use prior knowledge in order to engage with and think critically about texts across content areas. Reading Apprenticeship is comprised of several different instructional routines that allow students to interact with text using metacognitive skills.

   One of the routines that will be applied throughout this curriculum unit is "Talking to the Text". "Talking to the Text" is a version of annotation in which students first notice and record their own "inner conversation" as annotations in the margins while reading the text for the first time. Then, the students share their metacognitive process by discussing their annotations in groups. Finally, the class discusses their annotations as a whole group while the teacher acts as a resource rather than the center of instruction. Using the "Talking to the Text" routine is a way of simultaneously activating English Learner

Students' higher order thinking skills while also involving use of their language skills to comprehend the text.

Lingt

There are three questions to evaluate whether the use of technology is effective for vocabulary instruction with English Language Learners: "Are we increasing their motivation and engagement?", "Are we allowing them to practise and produce language in useful ways in class?" and lastly, "Are we giving them the opportunity to take their language learning out of the classroom and have extra exposure to English?" My content will meet all three of these criteria by providing students with a way to interact meaningfully with language in a way that closely mirrors the ways in which they use it in real life through the use of Lingt. Lingt is a speaking practice platform that allows students to make short recordings of themselves speaking, which are then posted to a forum within the application that only the students and myself can access. This tool is perfect for English Language Learners because it has a very simple and user-friendly interface for recording, and includes a feature that allows the teacher to post specific prompts, images, or videos for the students to respond to. Completed responses and privatized. This lowers the affective filter by keeping students' expressions to short bursts, as well as removing the anxiety of asking students to present their ideas in the traditional whole group presentation.

Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR)[26] is a pedagogical methodology developed specifically for language learners. This strategy teaches new vocabulary by requiring students to respond physically with gestures, props, etc. to input that they hear in the second language. Asher purports that students are more likely to process and internalize language when they involve a simultaneous response from the central nervous system. Total Physical Response can be as simple as one gesture to indicate the meaning of a verb, or a whole series of commands students must follow to pantomime the actions of characters in a text.

Storybird

Storybird.com is a website that offers free and pre-created illustrations that students can use in conjunction with their own writing. The types of illustrations offered range from

templates for storybooks, comic strips, and more extensive chapter-length writing. The styles of the images vary, including options that feature realistic-looking people, as well as animals and other nondescript creatures that evoke an almost *Maus*[27]-like sentiment when displayed with student writing. The use of Storybird[28] will not only add an engaging, creative aspect to the unit's culminating project, but also remove the frequent complaint of students in regards to writing that they "don't know how to draw that". Framing their final project of creating a CBI in terms of a comic strip also helps to provide differentiation of the assignment for various levels of ELs as well as prevents the project from becoming too overwhelming.

Mindfulness

One of the coping strategies focused upon throughout the unit will be Mindfulness. Mindfulness[29] will be integrated in various ways within the curriculum, and frequently referred to as a method that students can use both in the classroom and in their personal life to deal with traumatic experiences. Mindfulness is described as "a state of active, open attention to the present. This state is described as observing one's thoughts and feelings without judging them as good or bad" according to Psychology Today.[30] While mindfulness is already studied as part of the annual health curriculum, the techniques will be specifically employed in this unit as part of a routine students can implement in the context of their real-world challenges. Students will start each class meeting with a brief time allotment for mindfulness meditation, and learn how to tailor its tenants to their individual needs and situations.

Activities

Since the main goal of my classroom is to facilitate the acquisition of language through a communicative approach, students will spend a minimal amount of time as "receptacle" of information and instead use language to examine concepts in a meaningful way and engage their critical thinking skills to process ideas being presented in the second language (L2). In some cases, differentiated versions of materials will be provided to ensure language does not hinder comprehension of the content. Scaffolded materials may or may not include simplified English versions of worksheets or versions including first language support. The activities will incorporate all four domains of language (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) to ensure that students develop all aspects of their language proficiency throughout the unit.

Information Gap

Following their reading of the first five chapters of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, students will be asked to identify the ACEs detailed in the book's exposition. In this activity, students will receive a graphic organizer packet with boxes for each of ACEs experienced by Harry. Each student's packet will have a different one of the boxes completed for them, detailing one of the ACEs covered in the unit. Students will be given time to read their completed organizer and to ask the teacher any questions about it. Then, students will move about the room and find a student who has a different completed box from them. They will first make note of that student's name on the corresponding page of their packet, to ensure they do not speak with the same person twice. Next, they will explain the information on the completed space of their organizer to the other student, allowing time for the student to copy the notes onto their own blank. Once they have done so, they will have an opportunity to ask any clarifying questions before moving on to find a different student with a different completed space that they lack. They will repeat this process until their entire organizer is completed and they have reinforced the new concepts by explaining and discussing them multiple times with other students.

Plot Element Rollercoaster

In addition to the direct instruction that students will receive on trauma and its affect on Harry, students will also learn the elements of a plot. This mini-lesson will ensure that they comprehend the main points of the text, which will enable them to better grasp and analyze the novel from a mental health perspective. To introduce this concept, students will be provided with a pre-filled plot element graphic organizer presented as a rollercoaster, created by Gay Miller for the teaching materials website Teachers Pay Teachers (pictured below)[31]. Students will then have a five minute mini-lesson on each of the plot elements as follows: *(1) exposition (the beginning, introduces the narrator), (2) complication (something changes in the life of the narrator), (3) rising action (events after the complication) (4) climax (the most problematic event) (5) falling action (events after the climax) (6) conclusion (resolution of the plot)*

    After the mini-lesson, students will work in pairs to read a condensed version of *Little Red Riding Hood*. After reading, partners will work to complete an assigned part of the "roller coaster ride" by filling in the graphic organizer using the correct part of the text. Students will then come back together to review their organizers as a class. If a group's

element of the plot is not correctly identified, students must return to their partners and work together to revisit the text. Following their adjustment, they will repeat the process of reviewing with the whole group. No group's work is complete until all parts of the "rollercoaster ride" are correct on each student's paper.

Role Play

The students will be divided into groups to role play a scenario one of a select group of excerpts from *Sorcerer's Stone*. First, two of the students will use a provided script to perform their group's scenario. Then, they will work with their group to analyze it by creating a written summary of the ACE that is represented by the scene exemplified in their role play. Students will focus on a different character in each group and infer how the ACE may have affected the character's actions in the excerpt.

Scavenger Hunt

Students will participate in a "scavenger hunt" during Phase 3 of the unit, where they move around the building and find each resource, snapping a "Selfie" and recording the individual's name along the way. This will not only serve to help students become more comfortable and familiar with the supports available to them, but also act as an opportunity for them to practice their speaking and listening skills in a meaningful way. This activity is adapted from one created for university level EL students[32]. The purpose of the activity was "to introduce students to all facets of the college community helping them become familiar with the physical layout of the campus and the many resources available". As part of this unit, the scavenger hunt allows middle school newcomer students to explore the SEL resources available in the school building in a low-risk, structured environment by establishing relationships and participating in a fun, motivating task. Students will share out to the class following the scavenger hunt, reporting on the people and resources they have discovered.

Student Resources

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A complete list of the WIDA English Language Development Standards used by the state

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of research.

Appendix A

Implementing District Standards

I have selected the following Common Core State Standards for each grade. In order to ensure that the learning outcomes were appropriate for each grade represented in the class, I have selected standards which resemble one another as closely as possible, including:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. This standard will be addressed through analysis of trauma as a theme in Sorcerer's Stone; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. This standard will be addressed through students' examination of various metaphors for trauma in the test. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. This standard will be addressed through students' evaluation of how trauma has influenced the behavior of the characters, as well as the events in the story.

The unit will primarily focus on Common Core ELA Anchor Standards Two: *"Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas."* and Standard Four: "*Interpret words and phrases*

as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone". It will be divided into three general sections focusing on the following **Essential Questions**: (1) What is trauma? (2) What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)? (3) Why is trauma such a common theme in literature? (4) How does trauma impact a person's socioemotional health and behavior in the long term? (5) How do authors use metaphors and other types of figurative language to represent trauma in their writing? (6) What strategies and resources exist in our schools and communities for coping with trauma? (7) How can using these strategies and resources be beneficial to a person's socioemotional health?

Students will complete the unit with an understanding of the characteristics and forms of narrative writing, the varying approaches to narrative writing, and how to use these concepts to present their own life experiences to an audience, both as a means of self-expression and of drawing comparison between the human experience through written and oral presentation.

The **Enduring Understandings** for this unit are based off of the Common Core standards for students in grades 6-8 as they relates to the concepts of reading, writing and textual analysis. Following this unit, students will recognize that *trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) exist in every culture and country*. They will know that *trauma is frequently a theme used by authors to depict universally understood feelings and life experiences.* They will understand that *trauma can have a significant impact on a person's behavior and mental health* but that *individuals can empower themselves to recognize their own traumatic experiences and develop healthy coping methods.* They will be able to identify that *resources are available in schools and communities to help individuals cope with trauma.*

Students will work simultaneously throughout the unit to develop their written English. They will be able to use their oral and written language to identify the characteristic and experiences of trauma, analyze figurative language used by authors to depict trauma, and to describe how trauma can and does have a lasting impact on many. Ultimately, they will be empowered through this unit to seek support for their own mental and behavioral health and that of others.

Appendix B

Adaptations for Virtual Learning

The beauty of this unit is that it can easily be modified for use in an online learning environment. To facilitate this, the teacher should be sure that students still utilize paper copies of *Sorcerer's Stone* where possible. In contexts where students are newcomer English learners, paper texts are more[33] accessible to students who may have limited access or experience with technology. Furthermore, tracking text in another language is easier when working with multi-chapter novels when students are able to manipulate a physical copy of the book. In the event that students must use a digital copy of Sorcerer's Stone, suitable versions can be found using Google Books or Amazon's Kindle feature.

SEL resources that allow students to practice mindfulness through the computer screen are also available online. In particular, The Mindfulness Teacher, a free YouTube channel focusing on mindfulness and meditation practices, offers videos that teach various strategies for relaxation, self-awareness, and coping with stress.

The scavenger hunt activity can also be shifted to a virtual format, where students work on a video conferencing platform such as Zoom to follow prompts listed in a GoogleDoc. Students can also "visit" individuals, such as a guidance counselor or other professional, in their own Zoom rooms to discuss the SEL resources they provide. Students can replace the in-person "selfie" with a screenshot depicting the person they have spoken with. More information on creating a virtual scavenger hunt is available using a quick Google search.

All other activities mentioned in the unit can be executed using Google Drive in conjunction with your district's learning management website. Some other resources helpful for teaching vocabulary and ELA concepts to newcomer ELs include Quizlet, EdPuzzle, and Quizziz.

Notes

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[24] Further reading on chunking the text: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.2190/EBNP-6Q4W-1BJW-G5HM

[25] Reading Apprenticeship resources for teachers: https://readingapprenticeship.org/publications/downloadable-resources/

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[27] *Maus* graphic novel https://www.amazon.com/Complete-Maus-Art-Spiegelman/dp/0679406417

[28] https://storybird.com/

[29] Mindfulness resources: https://www.edutopia.org/stw-student-stress-meditation-resources-downloads.

[30] Introductory information on mindfulness: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/mindfulness#:~:text=Mindfulness%20is%20a%20state%20of,them%20as%20good%20or%20bad.

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[32] Hollingsworth's full article on scavenger hunts for EL students: http://iteslj.org/Lessons/Hollandsworth-Scavanger.html