WHAT MIGHT YOU EXPECT TO SEE IN AN ENGLISH LA - IMMERSION CLASS?

**Classroom Climate**
- well-established routines
- high expectations
- problem-solving team spirit
- students motivated on a task
- positive attitudes
- classroom talk
- friendly, relaxing non-threatening atmosphere
- a community of learners

**Groupings**
- independent activities
- whole-class instruction
- teacher-directed groups
- self-directed groups
- learning groups with another class
- small co-operative groups
- peer partners
- centre activities

**Learning Materials**
- books, newspapers, magazines
- organized, accessible storage
- teacher-made and purchased materials
- tapes, CDs, computers
- paper and paints for representing ideas
- letter tiles
- games, puzzles, models
- clay, paper, paints
- found objects
- materials collected by students and their families

**Physical Environment**
- students' stories or essays and art on display
- interactive bulletin boards where students are challenged to solve a problem or ask questions
- computers that students use frequently
- a variety of books, newspapers and magazines
- learning centres
- displays in hallways

**Going Beyond the Classroom**
- writers and speakers who come into the classroom
- field trips to theatres, libraries, galleries, museums

**Special Events**
- drama nights
- poetry reading
- media club
- writers' club
- young authors events
- contests
- storytelling with an Aboriginal Elder
- “I Love to Read” celebration
- festival events
- celebrating learning with parents

**Information Technology**
- writers and speakers who come into the classroom
- field trips to theatres, libraries, galleries, museums
Language learning is a shared responsibility.

1. Take time to read with your child every day. Just 15 minutes a day will make a world of difference to how well your child does in language arts.
2. Make time to talk about what matters to your child. Talk at meal time to share ideas and experiences. Follow up on his/her interests.
3. Show you care about your child’s school success. Praise effort and persistence in homework and projects.
4. Communicate with the school with notes, phone calls and visits. Celebrate successes!
5. Make sure your child has access to pencils, paper, markers and a quiet place. Encourage creativity in drawings, stories, experiments and research.
6. Help your child develop healthy routines and habits. Good nutrition, enough sleep, plenty of fresh air and exercise help your child develop a healthy body and an alert mind.
7. Explore language learning in your community. Use your library card to access books and videos. See a play. Visit an art gallery or a museum. Find the treasures in your community.
8. Tame the TV. Shut the TV off for some time every day, so the whole family can have some quiet time to think, read and talk.
9. Help your child learn to manage time and develop time lines. Keep a family calendar for everyone’s big events. Help Middle Years and Senior Years students use their daytimer or agenda book.
10. Have fun with literacy learning. Show how you enjoy using your literacy skills and strategies to explore the world every day. Follow a recipe together. Read a "how to" manual to learn a new craft or skill.

Literacy is lifelong language learning!
As your child’s first teacher of language, you are already experienced in using daily experiences to help your child develop language skills. Talking at meals, reading daily, sharing and discussing favourite books or TV shows, making lists and drawing pictures are all good ways to develop language skills.

As a parent, you make a difference to your child’s development, knowledge and skill in language arts. Everyday activities help develop ability and confidence in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing.

- table and carpool talk
  - about activities and events of the day
  - about books, news, trips and games
  - about information in newspapers, magazines and on the Internet
  - about school excursions

- make a list (together) of the most interesting things seen or done

- make a list of questions needing to be answered

- ask and answer questions calling for more than a "yes" or "no" answer

- express thoughts and feelings

- read aloud from time to time

- substitute talk for radio or TV

You can help your child by letting him know how well you expect him to do in language arts. Be reasonable. Make sure your child knows you believe in him. Be positive. Tell him and others when he does something well or better than before. Also let your child know that mistakes are part of learning, an opportunity to learn and try again.

Language learning involves risk taking. Making errors is a part of the process. Successful learners are not afraid to take risks and sometimes make mistakes.

Mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation are normal in the first drafts of work when your child is beginning to think on paper. Don’t focus on these until the composition has been revised and polished. Help your child learn to edit and revise work.
STORY TIME
listen to stories together
predict what will happen next
retell stories to get a sense of the story
and order of events

PLAYTIME
use detail to describe things (a red plaid shirt, the smallest ball, jumping like a deer, walk quickly)
sing songs (another way to use words)
repeat new words, make up new words, stories, rhymes, riddles and skits
keep old clothes for dress-up time and imaginative play

COOKING
follow a recipe
make a shopping list

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS
read instructions from a manual
use clues for a scavenger hunt
read music
follow a schedule
work through Internet menus

TELEPHONE BOOK
find the name of someone you know
make up names and find where they would fit
develop a family telephone directory

NOTES, LETTERS AND CARDS
write a thank you for a gift
compose a get-well message
draft a letter to a relative or someone who has moved
make a greeting card or invitation

NEWSPAPER
look for pictures of favourite athletes
write captions for favourite photos
find the temperature in the city where a relative lives
search for three words that begin with D
look for a movie or play to see
write new dialogue for a cartoon strip

REFRIGERATOR NEWS
write daily messages to each other
keep track of when school assignments are due
remind the family of upcoming events
list jobs to be done or put entries in a job jar
create riddles and jokes
add shopping reminders
post telephone messages

FAMILY JOURNAL/ALBUM
record interesting family happenings
describe special days, funny events
keep track of visitors
describe holiday trips or weekend excursions
write captions for photographs
read what you have written together

GAMES
I spy
crossword puzzles
magazine puzzles
alphabet game, using billboards
licence plate games
board games

GIFTS
special paper, pencils, crayons, pictures, felt pens, stamps and stamp pads for younger children
interesting stationery, envelopes, diaries, journals, novelty and calligraphy pens for older children
books, magazines addressed specifically to the child, comic books, collector cards

TV
look at new words, ideas, themes
compare a novel adapted for TV to the book
use documentaries, newscasts, wildlife presentations, historic events and science for information
examine commercials; discuss how they make you want to buy

NEWSPAPERS/MAGAZINES
look at print ads for clothes, shoes, cars and foods and discuss how they make you want to buy
read the comics--do they offer more than laughs?

COMPUTER PROGRAMS/INTERNET/VIDEO GAMES
what makes information interesting?
should information be entertaining to be interesting?
how does music affect a presentation?
what difference does animation make?
what effect does colour/movement have?
ask if programs stimulate critical and creative thinking

TRIPS
visit craft and antique shops, museums and art galleries
draw what you find there
create a sculpture that could be found there
visit a fair and draw what you saw there
visit a local library or bookstore

DRAMA
watch a play
act out a scene from a movie or play
draw a picture of a character or a scene
mime a story
recreate a story in dance
play charades