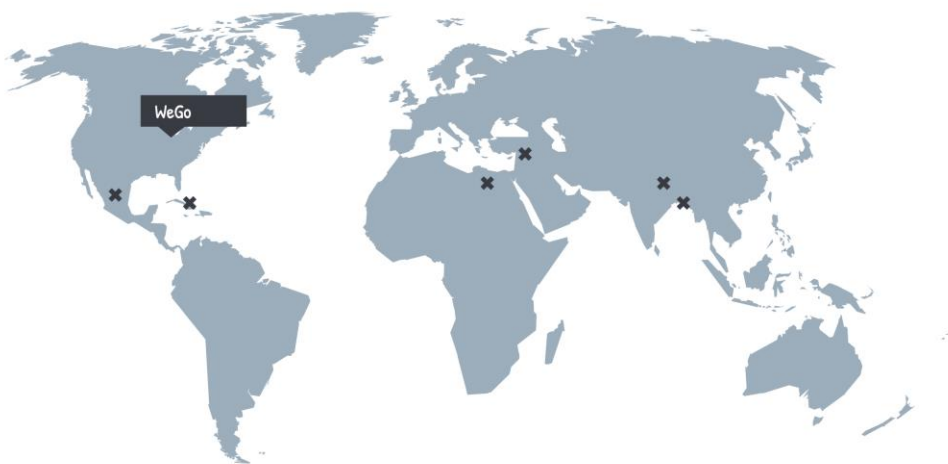


March eNews

Wego English teachers spent this year's Countywide Institute Day at Wheaton North High School "Celebrating Language Arts" by participating in roundtable discussions and breakout sessions on a variety of English language arts topics including debate, research, satire, and Shakespeare. Dave Eggers, author of [*A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*](#), delivered the keynote speech.

Two District 94 faculty members, **Shannon Sanchez** and **Emily Brown** represented Wego; Sanchez and Trowbridge presented two sessions about "Grappling with the Integration of Long-Term Language Learners into Mainstream English" on February 28th at the DuPage institute day.

Effectively teaching English Learners (ELs) ranks as one of the priorities of the English department and the district. Two new "sheltered" courses - sheltered English 1 and sheltered English 2 have been implemented to support students' transition from ESL courses to the English classroom. A review of the course alignment illustrates the investment in and potential for EL student growth.



Wego students represent diverse homelands.

of Education.

Traditionally, EL students are served by an ESL department at the high school level. However, **Veronica Jimenez**, the Wego ESL and bilingual director, collaborated with the English department to provide EL students with an additional opportunity for support and challenge by creating sheltered English classes. Taught by ESL certified teachers in the English department, these sheltered courses use a modified English curriculum that offers EL students equity and opportunity. English teachers **Nicole Osborne**, **Shannon Sanchez**, and **Lauren Stewart**, as well as ESL educator **Emily Brown**, teach the multi-age sheltered English 1 and English 2 classes that parallel English courses taught to freshmen and sophomores in traditional English 1 and English 2 classes.

Sheltered classes enable EL students to move through the ESL course sequence from ESL 1 to ESL 4 as appropriate, and then transition to sheltered English 1, which serves as a bridge and support while students develop greater English proficiency and work toward mainstream English classes. Sanchez explained that **"our division focus is about empowering students to recognize their identities and own their voices, so I am excited that our EL students have the opportunity to engage in universal, schoolwide conversations at an appropriate level."**

The sheltered curriculum has been designed and sequenced to provide equity and access to all students. Freshmen in English 1 and English 1 Honors learn key reading, writing, and speaking skills outlined in the Common Core State Standards. At Wego, this includes instruction in annotating, asking and answering explicit, simple implied, and complex

Diversity ranks as one of the many strengths of WCCHS. The student body of more than two thousand is largely comprised of Latino and white students; the remaining ten percent of students are African American, American Indian, Asian, and biracial. Approximately twenty percent of Wego students are second language learners, and another ten percent have "exited" from ESL by demonstrating proficiency on the ACCESS test, "Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners," which is required by the Illinois State Board

implied inferences using Hillocks Hierarchy of Questions, analyzing author’s craft and rhetoric, and writing arguments, as well as engaging in formal and informal discussions.



*Sheltered English 1 students formally discuss family and gender roles in *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros.*

Sheltered students now engage in this kind of thinking, as well. A freshman in Mrs. Brown’s sheltered English 1 said, **"One thing I've learned in English 1 is how to write a claim. The claim gives you a hint about what is going to happen in the paper. It helped me learn how to write paragraphs, and I did not know a lot about that before. I enjoy being in English 1S because Mrs. Brown gives me support, and I feel confident when I'm in class."**

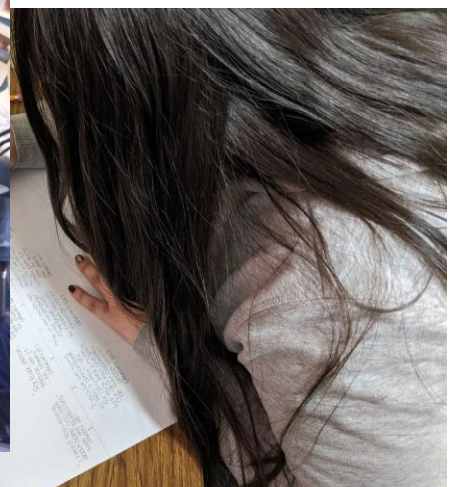
The table below compares select skills in a unit sequence for each of these introductory courses. Note the alignment and differentiation:

| Sheltered English 1 Unit Skills | English 1 Unit Skills | English 1 Honors Unit Skills |
|---|---|---|
| - Answer explicit and simple implied question | - Answer explicit and implied questions | - Answer explicit, simple implied, and complex implied questions |
| - Analyze genre, genre conventions, and archetype | -Analyze the mythic hero archetype and plot structure | - Analyze symbols and archetypes and complete gods and goddesses research |
| - Trace Thomas Foster’s six stage quest cycle in a text | - Trace Joseph Campbell’s monomyth cycle | - Trace Joseph Campbell’s monomyth cycle |
| - Read and analyze modified excerpts of “Perseus,” “Theseus,” “Odysseus,” and <i>La Linea</i> | - Read and analyze “Perseus,” “Theseus,” “Heracles” and <i>La Linea</i> | - Read and analyze “Perseus,” “Theseus,” “Jason,” “Heracles,” <i>La Linea</i> and <i>Antigone</i> |

The skill targets above from the mythic hero unit illustrate the commonalities in the curriculum, as well as the skill progression. The similarities demonstrate the purpose of the sheltered English courses: EL students are exposed to an appropriately rigorous curriculum that



As a 1:1 school, English 1 sheltered students analyze evidence they’ve selected about coming of age on their Chromebooks.



*Students in English 2 sheltered create timelines of Trujillo’s reign and its impact on the Dominican Republic and the protagonist, Anite de la Torre in *Before We Were Free*.*

aligns with the experience of students in regular and honors English classes and enables EL students to achieve success in traditional English courses in the future.

English teacher Lauren Stewart describes the parallels: **“The E2 sheltered curriculum mirrors the work that their English 2 peers are doing. Currently, students have been investigating ‘how are we resilient in the face of adversity?’ We approach answering this question by using the historical fiction text by Julia Alvarez *Before We Were Free*. Students also examine how Trujillo's reign impacted people's lives in the text and in history, as well as its consequences today.”**

Students in English 2 examine the same question about adversity and resilience utilizing another historical novel, *In the Time of the Butterflies*. Alignment of skills, essential questions, and curriculum prepare EL students to take on new challenges like their native English speaking peers. EL students have the ability to continue to enroll in subsequent sheltered English classes or tackle coursework at the regular, enriched, or honors level as they grow.

ESL and English 1 sheltered teacher, Mrs. Brown, echoes the value of the sheltered courses: **“The curriculum we are developing allows students to share their voice in class, as they feel confident and prepared for the tasks we ask of them. I love the way that English 1 Honors students and English 1 sheltered students could all sit down together and have a sophisticated discussion about the monomyth cycle or about the character archetypes in *La Línea* - making student learning equitable is so evident in the curriculum we are creating!”**

Just as Wego and other DuPage English teachers “Celebrate Language Arts” at the Wheaton North workshops last week, the D94 English department attempts to serve students and their diverse needs. Although students may be different races or ethnicities or speak different languages at home, all of them deserve to be literate, engaged readers and writers who see the power and beauty of language.

Articles from division administrators are provided on a regular schedule in our Community eNewsletter to keep parents and community members informed. Questions on this article may be directed to Ms. Mary Howard, language arts division head, at mhoward@d94.org or by phone at (630) 876-6363.