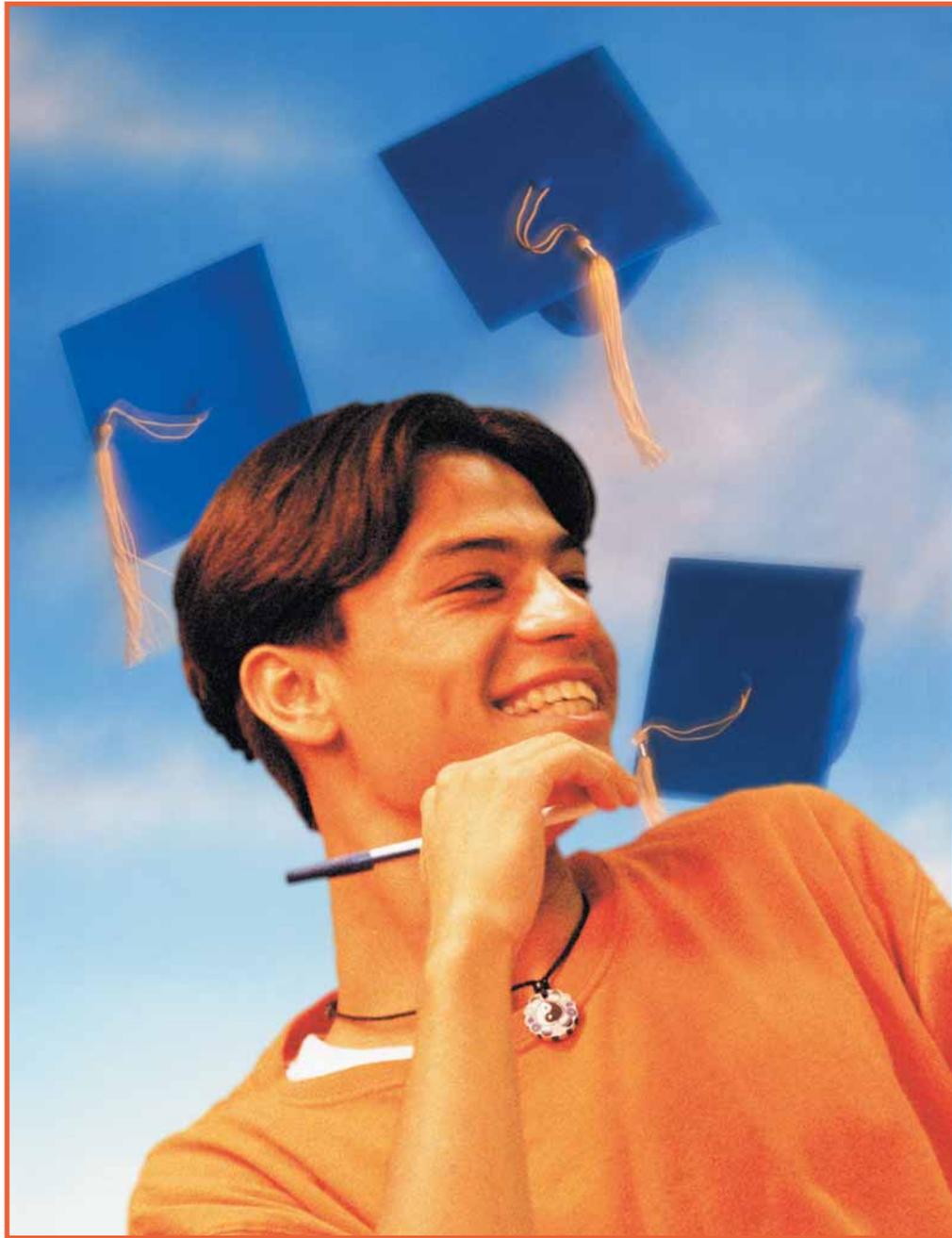


The Help! Kit

A Resource Guide for Secondary Teachers
of Migrant English Language Learners



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ESCORT, formerly the Eastern Stream Center on Resources and Training, located at the State University of New York at Oneonta, is a national resource center dedicated to improving the educational opportunities for migrant children. Based on funding from a variety of sources, ESCORT maintains the National Migrant Education Hotline and also conducts professional and program development activities for SEAs, LEAs, and schools to help improve services to migrant children and other English Language Learners. ESCORT also provides technical and logistical support to the U.S. Office of Migrant Education on a wide variety of interstate coordination activities.

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Acknowledgments

There are many people who dedicated their time and creative energy to making the secondary *Help! Kit* a reality. It was a team effort and labor of love on many fronts. This resource guide is the sequel to the popular *Help! They Don't Speak English Starter Kit* for primary teachers that was first produced by a group of migrant educators in Virginia in 1989. Pamela Wrigley, a Senior Education Specialist with ESCORT, made significant contributions to the production of the primary *Help! Kit* and has been the principal author of the secondary version. Pamela has developed a great deal of expertise over the past 15 years that she has worked—in a variety of capacities—with migrant education and ESL programs. This guide came about because so many educators were requesting a *Help! Kit* for middle and high school teachers who have the challenge of teaching demanding content area courses to migrant students with limited English proficiency.

The secondary *Help! Kit* is a compendium of the latest research about best practices in teaching English language learners in content area courses. Special thanks are owed to Kris Anstrom, who is the principal author of a series of subject-specific papers (*Preparing Secondary Education Teachers to Work with English Language Learners*) for the Office of Bilingual and Minority Language Affairs. This series of four papers, in modified form, is the basis for the subject-specific chapters.

Another principal contributor was Bridget McGilvra, who is an Education Specialist with ESCORT and works most of the time in Florida with the Region XIV Comprehensive Center. Because of Bridget's extensive background in working with migrant secondary students in Florida, she contributed her expertise to the sections addressing the unique needs of the students and, more importantly, shared practical strategies that can contribute to increasing their graduation rate.

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Beatriz Ceja, Education Program Specialist with the Office of Migrant Education, made a number of strategic contributions to the content and organization of the *Help! Kit* in the spirit of ensuring that it is the best possible resource for secondary educators of migrant students. OME stands firmly by its primary goal which is: “to ensure that all migrant students reach challenging academic standards AND graduate with a high school diploma that prepares them for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.”

Bob Levy, the Director of ESCORT, has been fully committed to the *Help! Kit* and has allotted considerable staff time to its creation. He has seen over the years how useful the primary kit is for teachers of migrant, limited English proficient students, and he put a great deal of energy into finding a way to produce a secondary version.

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Additional copies of the *Help! Kit: A Resource Guide for Secondary Teachers of Migrant English Language Learners* can be obtained by contacting:

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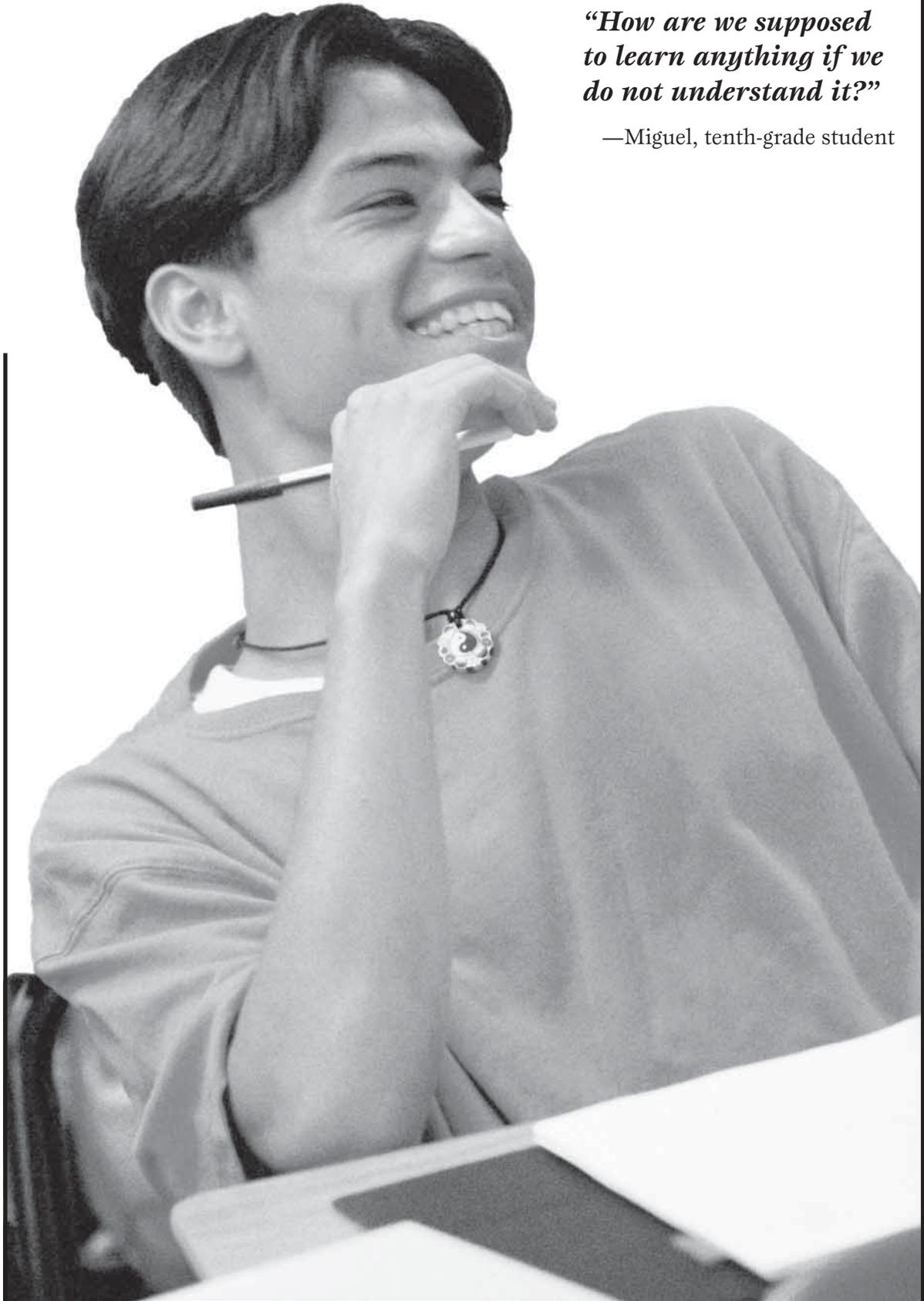
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*“How are we supposed
to learn anything if we
do not understand it?”*

—Miguel, tenth-grade student



CHAPTER 1:

What is the *Help! Kit*?

Welcome to the *Help! Kit* for teachers of middle and high school migrant students. The *Help! Kit* for elementary school teachers was produced in 1989 by a task force of Virginia migrant educators who were getting an increasing number of requests for information about and assistance with their English language learners (ELLs). This secondary version of the *Help! Kit* provides helpful information to busy mainstream teachers who are seeking practical, research-based advice on how they can more effectively teach, evaluate, and nurture their limited English proficient (LEP) migrant students. It is important to emphasize that most of the strategies promoted are ones that are characteristic of good teaching and will benefit all students, not just English language learners.

In addition to the goal of providing teachers with a resource that helps them to boost the achievement of their LEP students, the secondary *Help! Kit* includes sections that address issues that are particularly relevant to the needs of migrant secondary students. These issues include the following:

- Focusing on credit accrual
- Meeting graduation requirements in an era of rising standards
- Promoting continuing education options
- Suggesting ways of using technology to enhance continuity of instruction

Students who change schools frequently will take longer to master English and content-area material. Every state is in the process of implementing rigorous standards for teaching and learning. Whether thousands of miles away from home during the apple-picking season, or a few streets away from their most recent residence, children ought to have the same access to good teaching and high expectations wherever they are educated.

The Secondary *Help! Kit* is designed to do the following:

1. Provide mainstream teachers with instructional strategies and resources that

will benefit all LEP migrant students, but can also assist them with other students who have varying levels of English proficiency and learning styles

2. Introduce research-based teaching strategies that focus on the key content areas of language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science
3. Provide cultural information to help teachers better understand and appreciate migrant students and their families
4. Offer suggestions on how to encourage migrant parents, extended family members, peers, mentors, and other significant individuals to play an active role in promoting educational excellence
5. Identify fundamental as well as alternative methods to evaluate and monitor the progress of migrant LEP students
6. Provide a wealth of current resources and references teachers can use to pursue more fully areas of interest covered in the *Help! Kit*
7. Highlight approaches and types of programming that have proven successful in helping migrant students to graduate
8. Feature creative uses of technology that help maintain instructional and curricular continuity
9. Suggest options such as scholarships and financial aid that help to make continuing education beyond high school a possibility

Migrant students are overwhelmingly of Mexican or Mexican American origin, which is why you will find most of the examples in this kit focusing on this population. The June 2000 report released by the Council of Economic Advisers projects that in 20 years about one in six U.S. residents will be of Hispanic origin. Because of the increasingly large numbers of Mexicans living in the U.S., there are

also a proportionately large number of resources being developed to meet the needs of educators of students who speak Spanish at home and to benefit Spanish-speaking parents and students. Migrant students come from a wide variety of backgrounds, such as Haitian, Guatemalan, and Vietnamese, and the strategies recommended in the **Help! Kit** are applicable to all language-minority students. If you wish to find information related to a particular country or language, the World Wide Web and your school and/or local libraries are rich resources to explore.

Remember that many of your language-minority students were born in the U.S.—even though they may speak a language other than English at home, they may have had little to no exposure to the country of their parents or grandparents.

Also, it is important to note that not all of your migrant students will be limited English proficient. Assessing their level of English proficiency will help you to determine the level of support they will require.

The **Help! Kit** is divided into 12 chapters. Resources related to the topics covered in a chapter can be found at the end of the chapter. The terms English Language Learner (ELL) and Limited English Proficient (LEP) are used interchangeably throughout the **Help! Kit** to refer to the same population of learners. As you make your way through the kit, keep reminding yourself that “limited English proficient” does not mean “limited thinking proficient.”

Migrant Student Profile

- 84.9 % Hispanic
- 9.2 % White
- 2.2 % Asian
- 2.4 % Black
- 1.2 % Other
- 170,000 Grades 7–12
- 15 % Migrant students receiving LEP/ESL services
- High Mobility: 2–3 times each school year
- Almost half of the nation’s migrant farm workers have less than a ninth-grade education.
- The average annual migrant farm worker family income is substantially lower than the national poverty threshold.

(Source: Office of Migrant Education)

National Student Profile

1 in 5 of our nation’s children are immigrants or American-born children of immigrants.

2.0–3.3 million are English language learners.

73 % of ELLs are native Spanish-speakers.

2 in 5 Latino students aged 15–17 were enrolled below grade level.

(Source: U.S. Department of Education)



Glossary of Terms for Navigating the *Help! Kit*

Additive bilingualism—Occurs in an environment in which the addition of a second language and culture does not replace the first language and culture; rather, the first language/culture are promoted and developed (Lambert, 1982).

BICS—Basic interpersonal communications skills; the language ability required for face-to-face communication where linguistic interactions are embedded in a situational context. For example, children acquire BICS from their classmates, the media, and day-to-day experiences. Research has shown that it takes between one and three years to attain this basic level of oral proficiency (Cummins, 1984).

CALP—Cognitive academic language proficiency; a mastery of academic language believed to be necessary for students to succeed in context-reduced and cognitively-demanding areas such as reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. Examples of context-reduced environments include classroom lectures and textbook reading assignments (Cummins, 1984). Research has shown that it takes between five and ten years to gain the academic English required for a second-language student to perform at grade level (Collier, Thomas, 1997).

Bilingualism—Defining bilingualism is problematic since individuals with varying bilingual characteristics may be classified as bilingual. One approach is to recognize various categories of bilingualism such as: 1) bilingual ability—individuals who are fluent in two languages but rarely use both, and 2) bilingual usage—individuals who may be less fluent but who use both languages regularly. In addition, determination of bilingual proficiency should include consideration of the four language dimensions—listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Baker, 1993).

Comprehensible input—Ensuring that a concept is understood by a second language learner through adapting the level of difficulty of the language to the student's level of proficiency.

Content-based English as a second language—This approach makes use of instructional materials, learning tasks, and classroom techniques from academic content areas as the vehicle for developing language, content, cognitive and study skills. English is used as the medium of instruction (Crandall, 1992).

Dominant language—The language with which the speaker has greater proficiency and/or uses more often (Baker, 1993).

Dual language (immersion) program—Also known as two-way or developmental, these bilingual programs allow students to develop language proficiency in two languages by receiving instruction in English and another language in a classroom that is usually comprised of half native English speakers and half native speakers of the other language (Christian, D., 1994).

ELL—English language learners (ELLs) are students whose first language is not English and who are in the process of learning English. Unlike other terminology, such as limited English proficient, ELL highlights what these students are accomplishing rather than focusing on their temporary deficits (Lacelle-Peterson, M.W. and Rivera, C., 1994).

English dominant—A student whose language of communication is predominantly English.

ESL—English as a second language is an educational approach in which limited English proficient students are instructed in the use of the English language. Their instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language and is taught during specific school periods. For the rest of the school day, students may be placed in mainstream classrooms (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1994).

ESOL—English for speakers of other languages (same as ESL).

ESP—English for specific purposes refers to situations where technical English is taught for use in the professions, science, or for vocational needs (Strevens, 1977).

English only—An umbrella term that is used to refer to different federal and state legislative initiatives and various national, state, and local organizations, all of which involve the effort to make English the official language of the U.S. The initiatives and organizations vary in the degree to which they promote the suppression of non-English languages (Lewelling, 1992).

English plus—A movement based on the belief that all U.S. residents should have the opportunity to become proficient in English plus one or more other languages (Lewelling, 1992).

Home language—The first language learned by a child, usually the language of his or her home.

Immersion—Programs in which ESL students are taught a second language through content area instruction. These programs generally emphasize contextual clues and adjust grammar and vocabulary to the student’s proficiency level.

L1—The first language learned by a child, also called the “native” or “home” language.

L2—Refers to a person’s second language, not the language learned from birth.

Language maintenance—The protection and promotion of the first or native language in an individual or within a speech community (Lambert, 1982).

Language minority—In the U.S., individuals living in households in which a language other than English is spoken.

LEP—Limited English proficient is the term used by the federal government, most states, and local school districts to identify those students who have insufficient English to succeed in English-only classrooms (Lessow-Hurley, 1991).

Migrant—A child whose parents have crossed school district boundaries within the last three years for reasons of employment in agriculture or agri-related businesses (e.g., poultry processing).

Native language—Refers to the first language learned in the home (home language), which often continues to be the stronger language in terms of competence and function (Baker, 1993).

Primary language—The first language learned by a child, usually the language of his or her home and most often used to express ideas and concepts.

Sheltered English—An instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to limited English proficient students. Students in these classes are “sheltered” in that they do not compete academically with native English speakers in the mainstream. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in math, science, social studies, and other subjects (National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 1987).

Subtractive bilingualism—Occurs in an environment in which the second language and culture are intended to replace the first language/culture (Lambert, 1982).

Transitional bilingual education—TBE, also known as early-exit bilingual education, is an instructional program in which subjects are taught in two languages—English and the native language of the limited English proficient students. The primary purpose of these programs is to facilitate the LEP student’s transition to an all-English instructional environment while receiving academic subject instruction in the native language to the extent necessary. TBE programs vary in the amount of native language instruction provided and the duration of the program (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1994).