

Interactive Workshop (approx 75 minutes)

Aiming for Cognitive Challenge in Second Language Literacy Education

This workshop will explore a range of classroom-ready ideas for teaching literacy in a way that promotes higher-level thinking. Drawing from Pauline Gibbons' (2009) notion of "high challenge, high support", the workshop will include a look at some activities that provide a cognitive challenge while still being suitable for English language learners with limited proficiency. The activities will use a task-based approach that is consistent with the Canadian Language Benchmarks. Workshop participants will have the opportunity to appraise the activities through interactive involvement.

Closing Plenary (approx 30 minutes)

Literacy for Imaginative Thinking and Creative Expression

Much more than just a functional language skill, literacy offers rich opportunities for imaginative thinking and creative expression. How can we as second language educators ensure that these opportunities are fully realized? In this presentation, I will begin by examining the functional view of literacy that is emphasized in documents such as the Canadian Language Benchmarks and the Common European Framework of Reference. I will then argue that imagination and creativity should play a more prominent role in second language literacy instruction. This argument will be discussed within the context of recent educational trends such as 21st Century Learning.

Bio Statement

Dr. William Dunn is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. He works primarily in the areas of second language education, task-based language teaching, and addressing language, literacy, and culture across the curriculum. He received his PhD from Cornell University in 2002, and worked at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, NB before taking his current position at the University of Alberta in 2003. His research explores intercultural inquiry in second language teacher education, creativity in language teaching, preparing future teachers to work in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms, and connections between language learning and social inclusiveness.