



NEWS RELEASE

For more information contact:
Eric A. Schmitz
Dynamic Literacy
888-696-8597
eschmitz@dynamicliteracy.com

For immediate release:
Emily Embury
C. Blohm & Associates, Inc.
608-839-9800
emily@cblohm.com

Spanish-Speaking Students Improve Reading Comprehension with *WordBuild™ Vocabulary Development System*

Instructional Materials Provide ELL Students a Bridge from Spanish to English

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA. (April 21, 2008) – Over the past 20 years, English language learners have formed the fastest growing segment of students in the United States, currently comprising more than 5.5 million individuals or 10 percent of the student population. Consequently, 460 languages are spoken in schools today, with 79 percent of English language learning (ELL) students speaking Spanish. Dynamic Literacy, a developer of vocabulary instructional materials, offers educators a strategy to improve the vocabulary, language and reading skills of their Spanish-speaking students through the *WordBuild Vocabulary Development System*.

Spanish and English are similar languages – 75 percent of ordinary Spanish and 60 percent of academic English share Latin origins. The *WordBuild Vocabulary Development System* takes advantage of this intersection by focusing instruction on these shared Latin roots. The instructional materials teach Spanish-speaking students how English words are constructed by focusing on the meanings of prefixes, roots and suffixes, also known as morphemes. Once ELL students learn the definitions of common morphemes, they gain the skills necessary to decipher thousands of unfamiliar words, and their vocabularies increase exponentially.

“The greatest favor we can do for our Spanish-first-language students is to capitalize on their Latinate first language,” said Dr. David Larrick, Director of Instructional Content for Dynamic Literacy. “Their native language is not a stumbling block; it is a stepping stone to mastering academic English and boosting their classroom performance.”

Robert Dwyer, an ELL teacher at Louis D. Brandeis High School in New York City, understands firsthand the needs of English language learners. Dwyer identified a crucial gap in his teaching – the need for vocabulary instruction. High school students are expected to possess the skills to comprehend the language used to deliver content area instruction. Dwyer views his students’ challenge as mastering new vocabulary through content-based instruction. The *WordBuild Vocabulary Development System* offered the targeted instruction his students required, helping to teach them strategies to derive the meanings of unfamiliar words.

MORE

• Dynamic Literacy, LLC • 908 East Jefferson Street, Suite G1 • Charlottesville, VA • 22902 •
• www.dynamicliteracy.com • 888-696-8597 • Fax 434-293-6994 •

“ELL students aren’t able to use context clues to identify the meanings of unknown words,” said Dwyer. “This slows them down and reduces their ability to grasp complex concepts in subjects such as math or science. Daily practice with the *WordBuild Vocabulary Development System* helps to teach students how words are constructed, and enables them to compare cognates in English to their native language Spanish.”

Dwyer is implementing the *WordBuild Vocabulary Development System* in his classroom using a three-phase approach over 25 weeks. For the first four weeks, he illustrated the relationship between Spanish and academic English to his ELL students. Now in weeks 5-14, Dwyer is focusing his instruction on the English roots that have a direct correlation to Spanish. For example, the root “duc” leads a student to recognize that the Spanish word “educar” is related to the English word “educate.” For the final phase, Dwyer’s students will be able to rejoin the standard track and complete the remaining 10 weeks of vocabulary instruction.

“Students today are marked by their vocabulary skills,” said Dwyer. “This reality has extensive ramifications for English language learners, as many come from backgrounds with limited second language vocabularies.”

The *WordBuild Vocabulary Development System* consists of two series, *Foundations* and *Elements*. Intended for grades 3-5, but available for vocabulary instruction intervention for grades 6 and up, *Foundations* provides two years of morphics-based instruction. *Elements* is intended for grades 5-9, but is available for vocabulary instruction intervention for grades 10 and up, and offers three years of morphics-based instruction. Prices for individual student activity books start at \$9.95, with volume discounts to \$5.95, while the cost per teacher is \$99 for software and instructional materials.

Dynamic Literacy has published a supplemental guide for educators entitled, “Using the *WordBuild Vocabulary Development System to Improve Reading Comprehension of Spanish-Speaking Students*.” To download a copy, visit www.dynamicliteracy.com/resources.php.

For more information on the *WordBuild Vocabulary Development System*, or to speak with a sales representative, visit www.dynamicliteracy.com or email info@dynamicliteracy.com.

About Dynamic Literacy

Dynamic Literacy, LLC is committed to improving vocabulary, language and reading comprehension skills for students through the *WordBuild™ Vocabulary Development System*. Based on frequently used Latin and Greek roots, the program is a series of educational materials designed to teach students how words are built by focusing on the meaning of prefixes, roots and suffixes. Gaining the skills necessary to decipher unfamiliar words helps improve students’ performance in the classroom and on high-stakes assessments. The company was established in 2002 and is headquartered in Charlottesville, Va. For more information, visit www.dynamicliteracy.com or phone 888-696-8597.

###