Project CRISS and English Language Learner Instruction

Based in over 25 years of research in cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and pedagogy, Project CRISS was developed to address the needs of all learners. CRISS is not a canned "program," rather, it is a philosophy and collection of principles meant to provide educators with a solid foundation for instruction and students with the tools they need for self-directed, lifelong learning. There are numerous models for addressing the needs of English Language Learners. This document provides a crosswalk between Project CRISS and two widely-recognized systems for meeting the needs of this particular student group; it is intended to be a guide rather than a comprehensive analysis of the models. As an initiative created by educators for educators, Project CRISS welcomes your feedback. Contact us at info@projectcriss.com, 877.502.7477, or online at www.projectcriss.com.

TESOL ESL Standards and Project CRISS

There is significant overlap in Project CRISS and the TESOL standards. Thus, the goals and subsequent standards are listed and followed by comments about CRISS application to those standards.

TESOL Goal 1, Standard 1: To use English to communicate in social settings: Students will use English to participate in social interactions.
TESOL Goal 1, Standard 2: To use English to communicate in social settings: Students will interact in, through, and with spoken and written English for personal expression and enjoyment.
TESOL Goal 1, Standard 3: To use English to communicate in social settings: Students will use learning strategies to extend their communicative competence.

While Project CRISS was designed to address the needs of ALL learners, it specifically addresses the TESOL goal of using English to communicate in social settings in that proper CRISS implementation requires students communicate with each other and the teacher in a variety of low-risk settings. Some applications allow for general social interaction, others require writing and/or oral communication, and all require the use of learning strategies that are modeled and guided—providing learners with tools to extend their English competency.

TESOL Goal 2, Standard 1: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas: Students will use English to interact in the classroom.
TESOL Goal 2, Standard 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas: Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject matter information in spoken and written form.
TESOL Goal 2, Standard 3: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

TESOL Goal 2 gets at the core of Project CRISS: facilitating student self-directed learning in all content areas. The key principles of the Project CRISS Framework for Learning are:
1. Metacognition (reflective self-awareness throughout the learning process)

a. Background Knowledge
   b. Setting/Having a Purpose (for reading/listening/viewing)
   c. Active Learning
        i. Discussion
        ii. Writing
        iii. Illustration
        iv. Organizing information
        v. Analyzing and using Author's Craft
2. Explanation and Modeling (explicit, using a gradual release of responsibility process)
3. Teaching for Understanding

Thoughtful implementation of Project CRISS means that each of these elements is addressed in the classroom for each new learning activity or key concept. Key elements are explored briefly below:

One of the key principles in the CRISS Framework for Learning is DISCUSSION. Effective implementation of CRISS provides students with a variety of low-risk discussion opportunities that encourage appropriate social interaction with a focus on academic content learning. In structured partner, small group, and class discussions, students share questions, background knowledge, personal perspectives, and general knowledge of content. **Strategies include**: Think-Pair-Share, Mind Streaming, ABC Brainstorming, Three-Minute Pause, Read-and-Say-Something, Sticky-Note Discussions, Carousel Brainstorming, etc.

Another of the key principles in the CRISS Framework for Learning is WRITING. Effective implementation of CRISS provides students with a variety of informal and formal writing opportunities that encourage students to explore written expression for personal and academic purposes. **Strategies include**: Learning Logs (Free-writes, Double-Entry Reflective Journals, Dialogue Journals, Pre- and Post-Reading Entries, etc), Spool Papers, Written Summaries, RAFTs, etc.

Another element of the CRISS Framework that has proven vital in the instruction of English Language Learners is the use of ILLUSTRATION in classroom activities. Changing written or spoken words to visual representations is important for locking concepts into long-term memory—especially when language barriers can otherwise impede comprehensible input. Teacher presentations and student manipulation of concepts using images can include the following **strategies**: Concept Maps, Mental Imagery, Picture Notes, Vocabulary Maps, etc.

ORGANIZING information in new ways facilitates learner ownership of the content, moving beyond regurgitation of author/narrator/instructor language. Organization takes a variety of forms, from note-taking forms to graphic organizers. **Strategies include**: K-W-L[+], Comparison Organizers (Venn Diagrams, Compare and Contrast Charts, Triangle Comparison Diagrams), Sequence Maps, One-Sentence Summaries, Magnet Summaries, Two-Column Notes, Process Notes, Content Frames, Story Plans, Concept of Definition Maps, Semantic Feature Analysis, etc.

AUTHOR'S CRAFT involves the analysis and application of text features and structures to assist a reader in comprehension (or a writer in conventional writing formats for various content areas). Students learn to seek out text features (anecdotes, introductions, summaries, headings and subheadings, questions and prompts, font

styles that indicate key concepts, people, or places, etc.) to guide comprehension. Study of Author's Craft means learning the conventions of different textbooks and content area source materials (e.g. cause and effect structures in history texts or plot sequence in literature).

TESOL Goal 3, Standard 1: To use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways: Students will use the appropriate language variety, register, and genre according to audience, purpose, and setting.

TESOL Goal 3, Standard 2: To use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways: Students will use nonverbal communication appropriate to audience, purpose, and setting.

TESOL Goal 3, Standard 3: To use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to extend their sociolinguistic and socio-cultural competence.

The extensive use of explicit modeling in Project CRISS addresses the appropriate use elements of Goal 3, Standards 1-3. As students are exposed to content, each element is explicitly modeled and explained, students are asked to apply and demonstrate their understanding. Inherent in this (but necessitating explicit instruction) is the modeling and explanation of cultural and nonverbal competence, as well as that of content.

TESOL: ACCESS
   A.   **Access to a Positive Learning Environment**
        Project CRISS, as an initiative to develop self-direct student learners, is one piece of the positive, whole-school learning environment. Effective implementation of CRISS respects and empowers students.
   B.   **Access to Appropriate Curriculum**
        Project CRISS provides teachers with tools to facilitate learning through modeling, guided practice, and a variety of learning strategies appropriate across grades and content areas.
              6. Does the core curriculum designed for all students include those aspects that promote (a) the sharing, valuing, and development of both first and second languages in cultures among all students, and (b) the higher order thinking skills required for learning across the curriculum?
              CRISS provides (b). With thought to the students' first language (L1) and culture, CRISS can address (a).
   C.   **Access to Full Delivery of Services**
              8. Are the teaching strategies and instructional practices used with language minority students developmentally appropriate, attuned to students' language proficiencies and cognitive levels, and culturally supportive and relevant?
              9. Do students have opportunities to develop and use their first language to promote academic and social development?
        Project CRISS provides tools that support English Language Learner instruction appropriate to standards 8 and 9 with thought given to addressing the students' L1 needs.
   D.   **Access to Equitable Assessment**
        Project CRISS provides teachers with tools to conduct formative and summative assessments of students' academic abilities in the content areas that are appropriate to students' developmental level,

age, and level of oral and written language proficiency (in L1 or second language (L2), depending on instructor). The tools (strategies) used are nonbiased and relevant to content area instruction.

Commonalities between Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) & Project CRISS

1. Clear, measurable goals and objectives
2. Explicit linking of new concepts to students' background experiences and past learning
3. Active student engagement including a variety of hands-on activities
4. Meaningful/significant/relevant content that is appropriate to the age and educational background of students
5. Modeling and guided practice
6. Careful pacing and scaffolded instruction with attention to meaningful 'chunks' of content
7. Extensive and flexible use of interaction between partners and collaborative group members
8. Explicit metacognitive instruction with the goal of transfer (What strategies? Why?)
9. Daily exploration and review of key vocabulary and concepts
10. Regular formative assessment and feedback to students
11. Comprehensive review and demonstrations of learning, including reflection on processes and content
12. Opportunities for classroom application of learning
13. Focus on higher order/critical thinking and questioning
14. Attention to effective delivery of instruction/reflection/congruency
15. Regular use of a variety of strategies in different learning modes. Examples of common strategies:
    a. Teacher Think Alouds
    b. Tiered assignments (scaffolded by prior knowledge, ability, interest)
    c. Graphic organizers (simple, clear explanations)
    d. Picture Notes
    e. Power Writing
    f. Think-Pair-Share and other short duration discussion techniques
16. Careful attention to comprehensible input and considerate vs. inconsiderate text; use of high quality materials from a variety of sources in different forms as appropriate to content
17. Specific text structures and author's craft
18. Explicit instruction in academic structures and vocabulary

SIOP requires the addition of:
Opportunities for students to clarify meaning of content, vocabulary, and instructional processes in L1
Learning goals and objectives in both LANGUAGE and CONTENT (can be added to CRISS Strategic Learning Plan goals)
Regular practice and instruction in speech and culturally-specific nonverbal communication between peers and instructor and students

Project CRISS requires the addition of:
Goals and objectives which include CONTENT and METACOGNITION elements
Instruction is focused on the integration of literacy techniques across all content areas