



Using Extensive Reading in EAP University Courses

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Overview

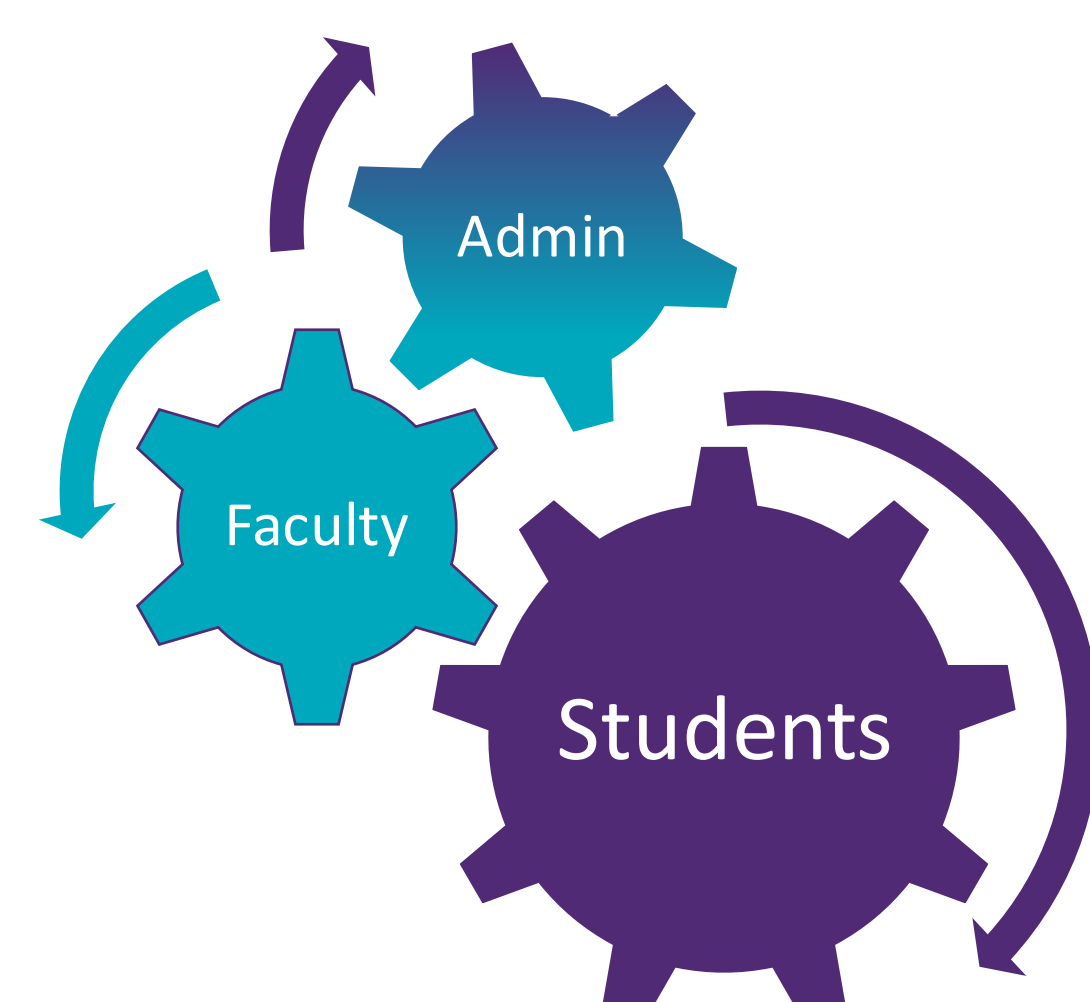
Taylor University is a small, residential liberal arts college in Indiana that offers English language instruction to students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) and whose current language skills would prevent them from succeeding in regular English-medium classes. These students may take up to three semesters of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes before fully matriculating.

The challenge is that although extensive reading (ER) is known to have a positive impact on language acquisition, our undergraduate ELLs do very little reading in English beyond what is required for their courses. How could this be changed?



Teaching Model

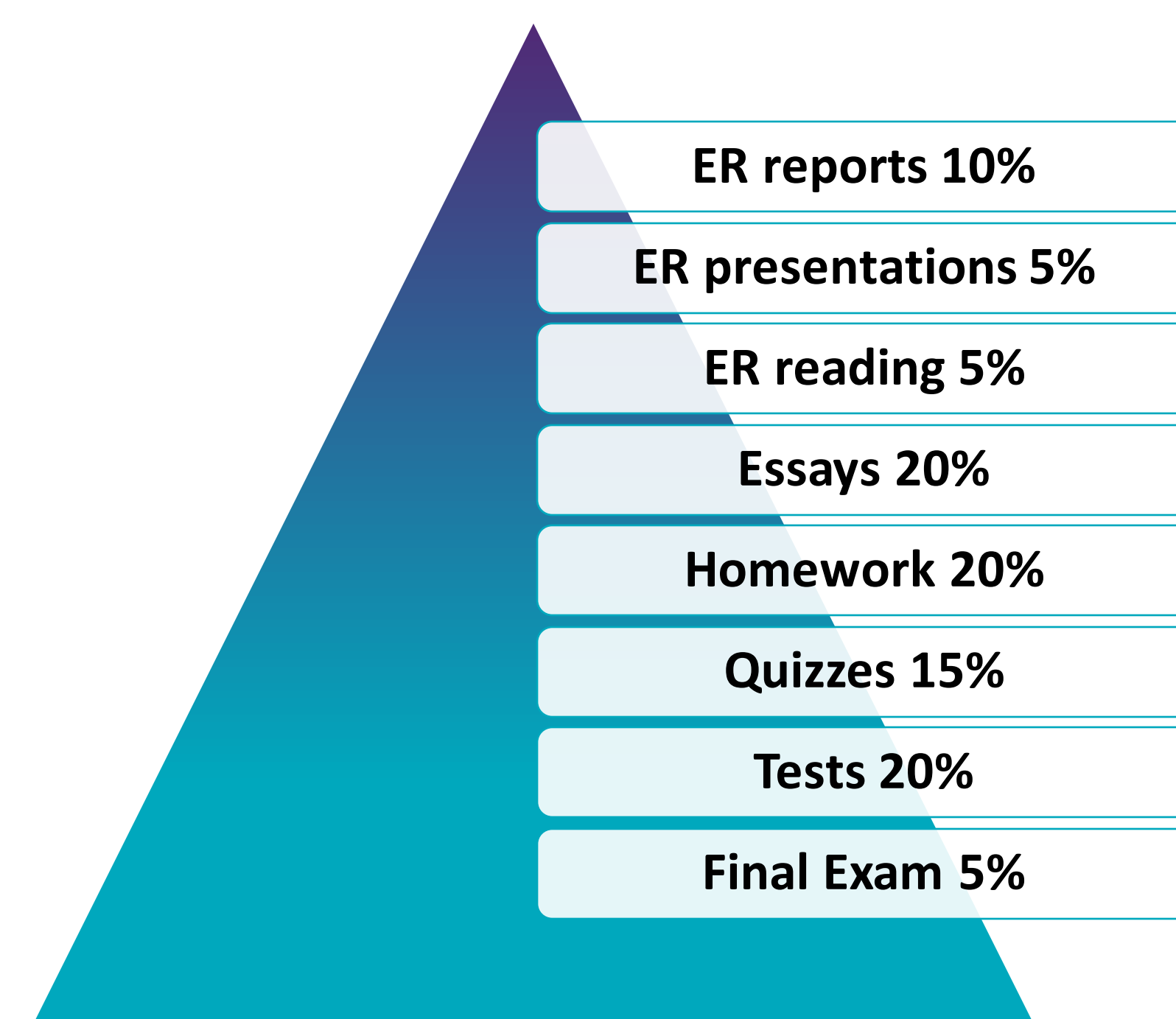
In 2017 I began incorporating ER into every EAP course I teach. My goal is to include ER with all the skills our ELLs need to succeed. I do this by using a focused and purposeful combination approach where ER is given a high priority. I recommend xreading.com to my students for quick and easy access to hundreds of graded readers.



Students reflect on their learning throughout each course and classroom strategies change based on their feedback. It becomes a cyclical action research process which

- provides personal understanding regarding students' attitudes and motivation
- empowers me with ways to address them
- enables me to appropriately share my knowledge with
 - administrators
 - faculty colleagues

Syllabus



- (1) Students read self-selected (with guidance) materials outside of class for at least 30 minutes/day;
- (2) Comprehension of main ideas is the goal, with a top down, big picture approach;
- (3) Reading is its own reward (no graded comprehension tests);
- (4) Due to the academic nature of the course graded follow-up assessments are in the form of weekly reading reports and presentations;
- (5) The role model (teacher) commits to reading at least as much as the students.

Assessments

Weekly reading report assignment:

1. What are the names of the articles, books, magazines that you read last week? Who are the authors?
2. Briefly explain the *ideas* raised in *one* of your readings. Do not simply summarize what you have read, but rather demonstrate your understanding of the text by using references which *cite page numbers* for quotes and paraphrases, while also synthesizing the information with applicable personal experiences. Interact with the text.

Jane Doe
ESL 109 R/W
April 10, 2023
Reading Report #8

This week I read several books from the Xreading site. One was "Somebody Better" by Julian Thomlinson. I read the whole book. I also read all of "The Origin of Fire," a Native American folk tale. Lastly, I read the first chapter in "Ghandi," and I hope to finish this book next week. This week I will report on "Somebody Better."

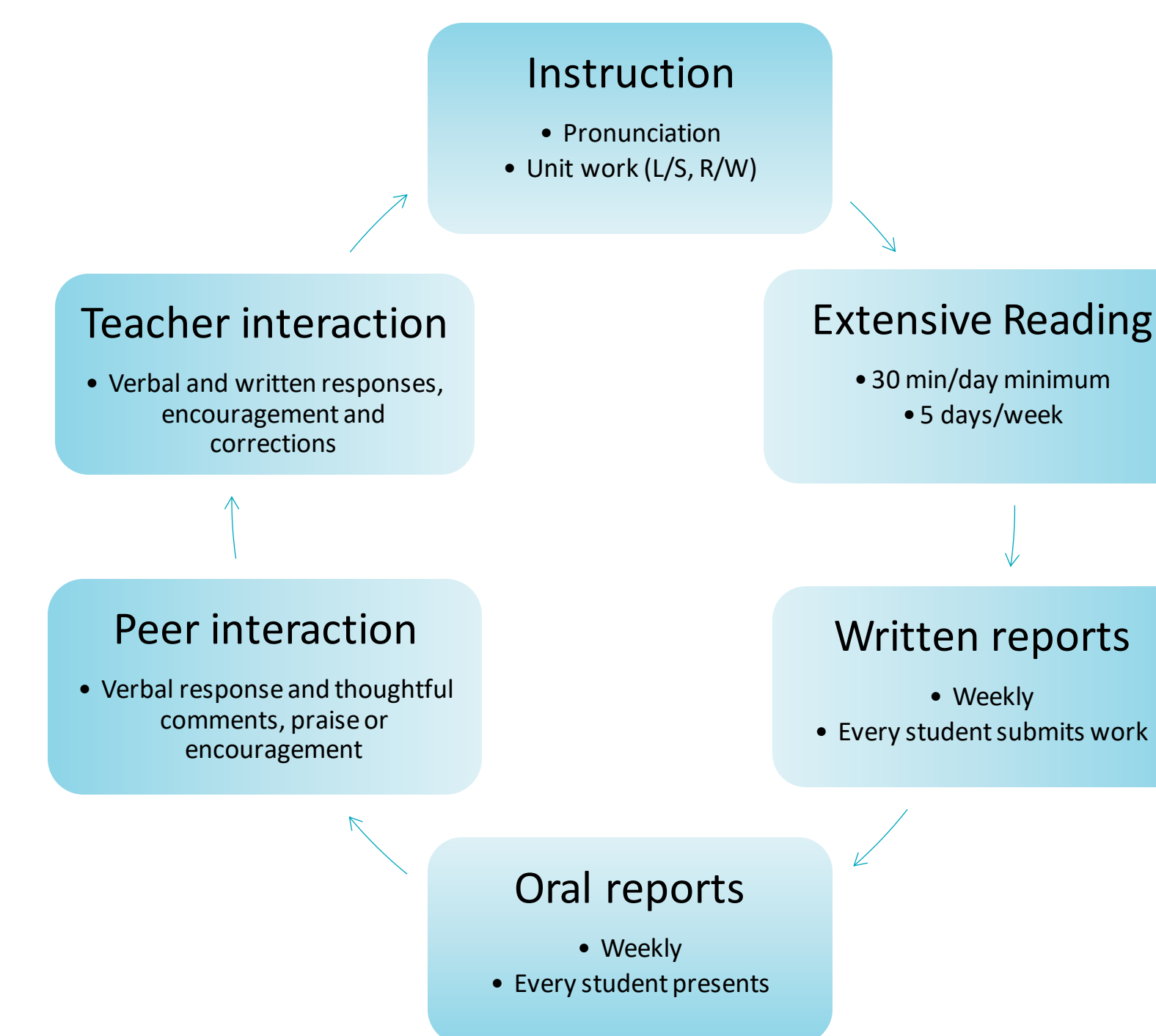
The two main characters in *Somebody Better* are a boyfriend and a girlfriend, whose names are Jenny and Danny. The story is about their breakup, which happens because Danny thinks that he can find someone better for himself. On page 29, the breakup happens when Danny says to Jenny: "I don't like you anymore."

This topic is an interesting one, because in our textbook, we are discussing what makes someone admirable. Danny doesn't think that Jenny is admirable enough, but when he finally looks at himself, he sees that he also has flaws in his character.

When I think about what kind of a person I wish to be, and what kind of a person I want my boyfriend to be, I need to remember the qualities I wish to pursue: kindness, self-control and patience. If I have these things in me, then I will be the right person for my boyfriend, when I have one.

Lesson Overview

For reading/writing courses, the written report is emphasized. For L/S courses the oral reports receive more structured instruction.

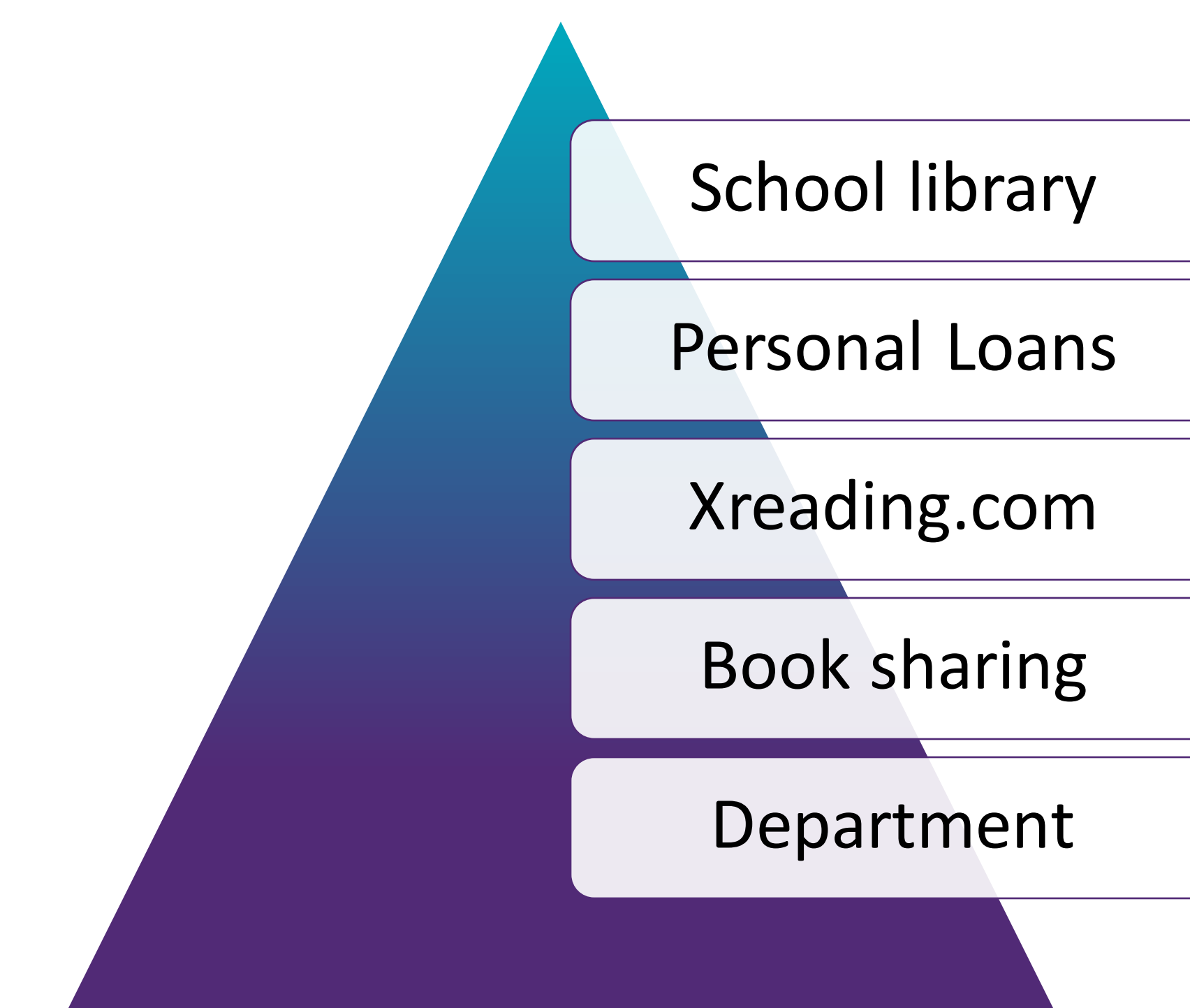


Each class begins with a total physical response "Would you rather?" question.

Example:

- Would you rather have the ability to swim like a fish or fly like a bird? Why?

Reading Library



"We lose ourselves in what we read, only to return to ourselves, transformed and part of a more expansive world."

— Judith Butler

Outcomes

Incorporating extensive reading in EAP classes

- hones my students' critical thinking skills
- expands their background knowledge and understanding of culture
- improves their comprehension skills
- improves their production skills
- builds their vocabulary and grammar knowledge
- promotes their confidence and motivation
- increases their ability to reflect and interact

Acknowledgements

Thanks to my colleagues at Taylor University and Indiana University for encouraging innovative and ongoing creativity in course design and implementation.

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Thanks to Paul Goldberg and his Xreading site that can be accessed worldwide.