

# The Two-Way Immersion Toolkit

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## INTRODUCTION

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This Toolkit is meant to be a resource for teachers, parents, and administrators involved with two-way immersion (TWI) programs, particularly those at the elementary level. Two-way immersion is a form of dual language instruction that brings together students from two native language groups for language, literacy, and academic content instruction through two languages. While all forms of dual language instruction share the goals of promoting bilingualism and biliteracy development, grade-level academic achievement, and positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors in all students, only TWI programs have relatively equal numbers of native speakers of both languages of instruction. In the United States, these two groups are native English language speakers and native speakers of another language, usually Spanish. Because of the integrated nature of the programs and the fact that instruction is provided to all students through both languages, TWI programs allow students to be both language learners and language models for their peers. For a more indepth discussion of the critical features of TWI programs, see *Two-Way Immersion 101: Designing and Implementing a Two-Way Immersion Program at the Elementary Level* (Howard & Christian, 2003) (<http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/edpractice/EPR9.htm>).

The success of two-way immersion education (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002), coupled with the increasing awareness that the United States needs linguistically competent and cross-culturally savvy citizens (Peyton, Ranard, & McGinninis, 2001) has led to the growing popularity of the programs. Over the last 20 years, the number of TWI programs has increased dramatically, from only 30 documented programs in 1987 (Lindholm, 1987) to more than 300 programs in more than 25 states by 2005 (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2005).

However, as the need for teachers who are specialized in teaching in TWI programs has grown, only a handful of teacher preparation programs address the special conditions that TWI teachers face. (For a list of these teacher preparation programs, see [http://www.cal.org/twi/FAQ.htm#pd\\_inst](http://www.cal.org/twi/FAQ.htm#pd_inst)). Two-way immersion presents additional pedagogical and logistical challenges for teachers, as TWI teachers must help two groups of students with varying degrees of proficiency in the two languages of instruction achieve grade-level academic competence as well as language and literacy skills in both languages. Teachers must also help students develop cross-cultural skills,

and the teachers themselves must be able to deal effectively and sensitively with culturally and linguistically diverse families. Furthermore, the logistical demands of TWI are often very challenging, as teachers frequently work in teams, with one member providing instruction in English and the other member providing instruction in the other language. This teaming approach requires a high level of coordination across teacher partners, and also places additional administrative demands on the teachers (e.g. report cards, parent conferences, etc.), as they are frequently responsible for a greater number of students in total than the typical elementary classroom teacher. The increased pedagogical and logistical demands on TWI teachers likewise present new challenges for administrators, who must not only work to support individual teachers in their roles and to elicit parental involvement from a frequently diverse group of parents, but also to provide leadership as to the necessary systems and supports at the program level that will enable the program to function cohesively.

This Toolkit is designed to meet the growing demand from teachers, administrators, and parents for guidance related to the effective implementation of TWI programs. Although the Toolkit is primarily intended to support teachers, administrators, and parents who are new to two-way immersion, those with experience in TWI may also find the Toolkit useful. The Toolkit is composed of three segments that address program design and planning, classroom instruction, and parental involvement, respectively. Because a lot of work has already been done in the area of program design, the program design and implementation segment does not include original material, but rather, summarizes useful resources that are already available to the public. The classroom instruction segment is the largest of the three segments, as this is an area where less attention has been focused up to this point. This segment includes a Question & Answer (Q&A) document on teaching in TWI programs; model lesson plans that show how best practices are implemented in the TWI classroom; a study guide to facilitate the use of the Q&A document and model lessons for professional development; and additional resources on effective instructional practices in TWI programs. The parental involvement segment is designed to be used by teachers and administrators in order to help promote stronger home-school connections, but of course parents are welcome to access the materials directly as well. Dual language parents were involved in the development of the materials in this section in an effort to make them parent-friendly, but teachers and administrators may choose to tailor the materials further to meet the specific needs of the parent

population in their particular program. This segment includes an overview of two-way immersion, a Q&A document that addresses questions and concerns that parents frequently have, a home-school communication template designed to help classroom teachers facilitate strong home-school connections, and additional resources that include suggested readings on parent involvement in two-way immersion programs and links to resources that parents may find useful. All of the parent materials are available in Spanish as well as English, as Spanish is the predominant partner language in most TWI programs in the United States.

Within and across the three segments, there is repetition of key ideas. This repetition is intentional, as the Toolkit is designed so that each component is accessible and comprehensible independent of other components. That is, because this is a web-based product, we assume that many readers will choose to access only those components that are of greatest interest to them. As a result, we have made the decision to repeat information at times in order to ensure that each component is self-explanatory. In addition, throughout the Toolkit, certain terms that may not be familiar to all readers are highlighted, and an explanation of the term can be found by simply clicking on it.

We hope that the materials included in this toolkit will be a useful resource to teachers, administrators, and parents, and that they will help to promote stronger program design and implementation, better instructional practices, and improved home-school connections in TWI programs across the country.

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