LEARNING DESIGN PLAN

The Word Bridge

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Grade 2–3 English learners | June 2026

The Word Bridge: A Story-Based Grammar Recognition Plan for Grade 2–3 English Learners

Project Overview and Rationale

The Word Bridge: A Story-Based Grammar Recognition Plan for Grade 2–3 English Learners is a supplemental learning design for beginning English learners who need low-stakes opportunities to practice recognizing people, places, things, and actions after direct instruction in nouns and verbs. The plan is designed for a small Grade 2–3 English learner group of approximately 5–10 students in a blended, teacher-facilitated, low-bandwidth setting. It is not intended to replace classroom ESL instruction, to expand into a full grammar curriculum, or to require learners to produce extended written explanations. Instead, it provides a short, visual, story-based practice sequence that helps learners connect basic grammar functions to visible story elements in a developmentally appropriate way.

The instructional problem is a recognition-and-transfer gap. Students may be introduced to nouns and verbs through direct instruction, examples, and teacher-led practice, yet still struggle to recognize them in meaningful contexts. For beginning English learners, the challenge is not simply remembering the labels noun and verb; it is noticing who or what appears in a scene, where the action takes place, which object is involved, and what action is occurring. This distinction matters because early grammar recognition supports later sentence comprehension, oral expression, and writing readiness, but the practice must be concrete enough for young learners who are still developing English vocabulary and confidence.

The Mei and Abby story world provides a simple narrative context for this practice. Students experience the activity as helping Mei and Abby move through a story scene, while the teacher understands the instructional purpose behind the story choices. A helper or character

represents a person noun; a path or bridge represents a place noun; a rope or tool represents a thing/object noun; and a visible movement, such as pulling, walking, carrying, or opening, represents an action/verb. The learner-facing activity remains playful and low-stakes, while the teacher-facing design remains aligned with the grammar-recognition objective.

Design Thinking is the primary instructional design model for this plan because the project begins with learner needs, classroom constraints, and access limitations, and emphasizes iterative improvement. The Stanford d.school design thinking process places empathy at the center of human-centered design. It uses prototyping and testing to refine solutions for users and context (Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford, 2010). That orientation fits this project because the design must work for young learners who may need visuals, gestures, simple prompts, repeated practice, and teacher encouragement. It must also work in settings where devices may be shared, and internet access may be inconsistent.

Backward Design serves as a secondary alignment tool. The final learning outcome is not general enjoyment of a story or broad English fluency; rather, learners are expected to recognize people, places, things, and actions in simple story scenes. From that outcome, the plan identifies acceptable evidence through teacher observation, visual sorting, pointing, gesturing, single-word responses, and short phrases. This approach reflects Wiggins and McTighe's (2005) emphasis on designing from desired results, acceptable evidence, and learning experiences rather than beginning with activities alone. Instructional activities are then organized around the evidence needed to demonstrate recognition.

Universal Design for Learning and Cognitive Load Theory serve as design principles rather than competing instructional design models. CAST (2024) frames the UDL Guidelines as a tool to support access to and participation in meaningful learning opportunities. In this plan,

learners can respond by pointing, gesturing, sorting, saying one word, or using a short phrase. Cognitive Load Theory and multimedia learning principles also support the use of simple visuals, limited text, teacher pacing, and clear visual contrast to prevent learners from being overloaded by unnecessary details (Mayer, 2020; Sweller et al., 1998). These principles are especially important because the learners are young, beginning-level English learners who may understand more than they can express verbally.

The design logic is intentionally narrow: students view short story scenes featuring Mei and Abby, identify or classify visible people, places, things, and actions, and receive supportive teacher feedback. Microsoft Sway may organize the guided visual story path, while Canva may provide visual cards, category mats, icons, and printable backups. However, the teacher remains central to instruction, observation, feedback, and debriefing. Appendix A presents the alignment map, which shows how the instructional gap, objectives, learning activities, learner responses, tools, and assessment evidence connect across the plan.

Contextual Analysis and Learner Analysis

The instructional setting for The Word Bridge is a blended, teacher-facilitated ESL classroom or tutoring environment that can function under low-bandwidth conditions. The design assumes the teacher may use a classroom display, shared devices, a Microsoft Sway story path, or printed materials. This flexibility matters because the learning experience should not depend on every child having an individual device or reliable home internet access. The core activity must remain teachable through digital or print materials, and the teacher must be able to observe learner responses in real time.

The target learners are Grade 2–3 beginning English learners in a small group of about 5–10 students. They may know some basic English vocabulary and have encountered nouns and

verbs through direct instruction, but they are still developing confidence, listening comprehension, oral production, and grammar awareness. They may recognize familiar words more easily than they can explain grammatical categories. For this reason, the design avoids asking learners to produce full grammar explanations or complete written sentences during the main activity.

Dirksen (2016) highlights that effective learning design starts with identifying the specific gap between learners' current knowledge and their learning goals. In this case, the gap isn't a general lack of exposure to English but the learner's difficulty in linking grammar categories to clear, relatable examples in real contexts. For instance, a child might say the word "noun" during a lesson but still struggle to recognize that Mei, Abby, bridge, rope, and pull fulfill different roles in a story. Therefore, the learning plan offers concrete practice to make these abstract grammar concepts more tangible and understandable.

Young beginning English learners often benefit from visuals, repetition, short tasks, gestures, oral modeling, and supportive feedback. Willingham (2009) argues that story structure can support memory and meaning during learning; however, the cognitive demands must be manageable for learners to benefit. The Mei and Abby story world is therefore intentionally simple. It gives learners a meaningful reason to notice story elements without requiring them to follow a complex plot or manage excessive vocabulary.

Access and support considerations shape the design. Learners may use shared devices, classroom screens, printed cards, or teacher-led demonstrations. Some may respond confidently with a single English word, while others may demonstrate understanding through pointing or sorting before speaking. UDL principles support this range of response modes by reducing the likelihood that limited English production will mask actual recognition (CAST, 2024). The

teacher observes the mode of response, the level of prompting, and the accuracy of recognition rather than relying solely on written output.

The small group size also facilitates teacher observation. Teachers can easily see if students identify the correct object, select the right card, perform a visible action, or self-correct after prompting. Such observations are challenging in large classes but manageable with 5–10 students. Therefore, the design suits the setting: it is brief, teacher-led, visual, reusable, and adaptable for digital or printed formats.

Gap Analysis and Objectives

Currently, Grade 2–3 beginning English learners may receive direct instruction on nouns and verbs but still need structured, repeated, low-pressure opportunities to recognize those concepts in context. Learners may be able to repeat a grammar label during instruction, but that does not necessarily mean they can identify a person, place, thing, or action when the concept appears in a story scene. This is especially important for beginning English learners because grammar labels can remain abstract unless they are connected to visible examples, oral prompts, gestures, and meaningful classroom practice.

The goal is for learners to identify and classify visible story elements as people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions using developmentally appropriate response modes. Students do not need to write full sentences or explain grammar rules to demonstrate early recognition. They may show understanding by pointing to a character, placing a card on a category mat, gesturing an action, saying a single word such as rope or pull, or using a short phrase such as Abby pulls. These response options allow the teacher to see evidence of recognition without imposing excessive demands on English production.

The instructional gap is therefore a recognition-and-transfer gap, not a broad grammar-instruction gap. Learners need help moving from direct instruction to meaningful practice where they can recognize grammatical functions in simple contexts. This gap can be addressed through short story scenes, teacher modeling, visual card sorting, repeated practice, and formative observation. The plan does not attempt to teach all parts of speech, sentence writing, or a full ESL grammar unit. Its purpose is to reinforce early recognition of people, places, things, and actions after learners have already received direct instruction on nouns and verbs.

The objectives are designed to be observable, measurable, and appropriate for beginning English learners. They use verbs such as identify, sort, classify, point to, gesture, match, and briefly explain. These actions allow the teacher to document whether recognition is emerging, whether prompting is needed, and whether learners can transfer recognition across scenes. Dick et al. (2015) emphasize the importance of aligning objectives, learner performance, conditions, and assessment evidence; this plan applies that principle by linking each objective to a visible learner action and teacher observation evidence.

The learning objectives for The Word Bridge are:

1. Given a simple Mei and Abby story scene, learners will identify visible people/helpers, places, objects, and actions with at least 80% accuracy during teacher-guided practice.
2. Given a set of visual cards, learners will sort or classify people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions into the correct category with no more than minor prompting.
3. Given a new story scene, learners will demonstrate recognition by identifying at least one person/place/thing and one action using an acceptable response mode.
4. During a brief teacher-led debrief, learners will match story choices to simple word functions at a developmentally appropriate level.

These objectives preserve the project's narrow scope. The first objective focuses on recognition within a story scene. The second focuses on classification through visual sorting. The third checks transfer to a new scene. The fourth allows the teacher to connect the implicit story activity to simple grammar, using only language, when learners show readiness. Together, the objectives support a progression from teacher-guided recognition to light transfer, without requiring formal grammar explanation or extended written production.

The alignment map in Appendix A illustrates how each objective links to a particular learning activity, tool or material, acceptable learner response, and teacher observation evidence. This alignment ensures that the story, visuals, and tools stay connected to the instructional goal. Every element in the plan aims to achieve the same outcome: helping learners practice identifying people, places, things, and actions through a low-stakes, teacher-guided story experience.

Instructional Strategies and Learning Sequence

The instructional strategy for The Word Bridge uses a short, story-based recognition sequence in which Grade 2–3 beginning English learners interact with visible people, places, things, and actions within a Mei and Abby story scene. The story world provides a meaningful practice context, but the instructional goal remains narrow: learners practice recognizing people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions after direct instruction on nouns and verbs. This design choice prevents the activity from becoming a full ESL curriculum, a sentence-writing unit, or a broad grammar intervention. The story supports the grammar-recognition task; it does not replace or overshadow it.

The learning sequence follows a three-session mini-structure: teacher modeling, guided practice, and light transfer demonstration. This sequence is appropriate for beginning English

learners because it provides repeated exposure to the same recognition categories without relying on extended writing or abstract grammar explanations. Brown et al. (2014) emphasize the value of repeated retrieval and spaced practice for durable learning. In this plan, repeated recognition across short sessions gives learners multiple opportunities to retrieve and apply the categories in context.

Session 1 introduces the Mei and Abby story context and models the recognition task. The teacher presents a simple story scene via Microsoft Sway, a classroom display, or a printed scene. Learners are not asked to define nouns and verbs. Instead, the teacher uses concrete oral prompts such as Who is here? Where are they? What do they see? and What is happening? Learners may respond by pointing, gesturing, sorting a card, saying a single word, or repeating a modeled phrase. The teacher records early evidence of recognition on the observation checklist but treats the session primarily as modeling and guided entry into the task.

Session 2 offers guided visual sorting and story-scene practice. Learners use Canva-created visual cards, symbolic story-game objects, and category mats to engage with examples of helpers/persons, places, things/objects, and actions. In the student-facing activity, learners may select or place objects such as the blue helper gem, green path stone, silver treasure key, or gold motion ring; in the teacher-facing layer, those choices serve as evidence of recognition. The teacher provides support through simple modeling, repeated prompts, and narrative feedback. Clark and Mayer (2012) describe scenario-based learning as a way to create learner-centered environments that use guidance, feedback, and reflection. In this plan, the scenario remains simple and closed enough for young learners, yet it still gives the recognition task a meaningful context.

Session 3 includes a review and a light transfer demonstration. Learners view a new scene from the Mei and Abby story, identify at least one person, place, or thing and one action, and use an acceptable response mode. They may also complete a simple card sort using the same category structure from Session 2. This final demonstration serves as light summative evidence because it asks learners to apply recognition to a new scene, but it remains low-stakes and teacher-facilitated. The teacher continues to observe accuracy, prompting level, and response mode rather than requiring a written grammar explanation.

Appendix D strengthens the instructional sequence by demonstrating the implicit, narrative-driven, game-based learning logic. In the sample activity, learners do not see grammar labels. Instead, Mei and Abby reach a glowing Word Bridge with symbolic bridge slots. The learner interacts with story-game objects, such as a blue helper gem, a green path stone, a silver treasure key, and a gold motion ring. The teacher-facing notes identify the hidden grammar function behind each symbol: helper/person, place, thing/object, and action/verb. This keeps the activity implicit for students while still giving the teacher a clear instructional purpose.

The bridge-slot mechanic introduces sequence in a limited, deliberate way. Learners place symbolic objects into the bridge slots to reveal the bridge path, but the assessment target remains recognition of people, places, things, and actions. The sequence prepares learners for possible later sentence-order work without expanding this plan into syntax instruction. That distinction is important because the final Learning Design Plan must preserve the approved instructional scope.

Feedback remains narrative, brief, and supportive throughout the sequence. The teacher avoids language that makes the learner feel tested, such as labeling an answer as grammatically wrong. Instead, feedback is framed through the story: That did not help the bridge yet. Try another glowing piece, or show me what Abby can do. This keeps the activity aligned with implicit practice while still allowing the teacher to guide learners toward accurate recognition. Horton (2011) emphasizes that e-learning activities should be selected to accomplish learning objectives, not merely to add interactivity; this plan applies that principle by using the story-game interaction only where it helps learners recognize the target categories.

The visual and interaction design is intentionally designed to reduce cognitive load. Story scenes should be short, uncluttered, and focused on the current recognition task. Student-facing

materials should use minimal text and avoid advanced grammar labels during the activity. Teacher-facing materials may include the hidden grammar function, prompts, and observation criteria, but these supports should not appear as heavy instructional text for learners. This balance keeps the story engaging while keeping attention on the recognition target.

Assessment Plan

The assessment plan combines formative observation with a brief, developmentally appropriate final demonstration. Because the learners are Grade 2–3 beginning English learners, the plan does not rely on a formal written grammar test. Instead, the primary evidence comes from teacher observation of story-scene identification, visual card sorting, gestures, pointing, single-word responses, and short oral phrases. This approach keeps the assessment aligned with the recognition objective rather than shifting the task toward extended language production.

The primary assessment tool is the teacher observation checklist in Appendix C. During each session, the teacher records three types of evidence: accuracy, prompting level, and response mode. Accuracy indicates that the learner correctly identifies or classifies the visible story element. Prompting level indicates how much teacher support was needed. Response mode indicates how the learner demonstrates understanding, such as by pointing, placing a card, gesturing, saying a single word, or using a short phrase.

The checklist uses three prompting levels: Independent, Prompted, and Modeled. Independent means the learner correctly identifies or sorts the visible story element without teacher assistance. Prompted means the learner responds correctly after a visual cue, verbal cue, or guiding question. Modeled means the learner responds only after the teacher first demonstrates the identification or sorting action. This structure provides the teacher with usable evidence without turning the activity into a formal test.

Successful recognition means the learner correctly identifies or classifies the visible story element, requires less teacher support over time, and demonstrates understanding with an age-appropriate response. For example, a learner may show recognition by pointing to Abby, placing a key card on the object mat, gesturing an action, saying key, or using a short phrase such as Abby pulls. The response does not need to be a full grammatical explanation because the objective is recognition and basic classification, not extended written production.

Formative assessment occurs throughout Sessions 1 and 2. In Session 1, the teacher introduces a scene from a Mei and Abby story and models how to notice who, where, what, and what is happening. Learners may respond by pointing to a helper, touching a place card, naming a visible object, or acting out an action. The teacher records early evidence but uses it primarily to guide support rather than to judge mastery. In Session 2, learners complete guided sorting using Canva visual cards and category mats. The teacher observes whether learners classify the cards independently, with minor prompting, or with substantial support.

The light summative demonstration occurs in Session 3. Learners view a new scene from the Mei and Abby story and identify at least one person, place, or thing and one action. They also complete a simple visual card sort. This demonstration provides evidence of transfer because learners are asked to apply recognition to a new scene rather than simply repeat the examples used during modeling. However, the activity remains low-stakes. Students are not told that they are taking a formal test, and the teacher continues to allow multiple response modes.

The checklist uses a 0–3 scoring scale. A score of 3 indicates accurate, independent recognition. A score of 2 indicates accurate recognition with minor prompting, such as a repeated question or a visual cue. A score of 1 indicates inconsistent recognition or recognition that requires substantial prompting, modeling, or repeated support. A score of 0 indicates that

recognition is not yet evident or that the learner's response is unclear even with support. This scoring structure provides the teacher with more useful evidence than a simple yes/no mark because it shows both accuracy and the level of independence.

The assessment plan also documents the response mode, which is crucial because beginning English learners might recognize the visual category before they can articulate it in a full English phrase. For example, a learner who correctly points to Abby, puts a rope card on the object mat, or acts out pulling may be showing valid understanding, even if they can't explain the grammar rule. Tracking the response mode helps teachers differentiate between limited English output and limited grammatical recognition.

The major assessment tradeoff is that implicit grammar recognition must be measured without making the activity too formal, text-heavy, or test-like. A more traditional grammar test might yield cleaner numerical data, but it would not align with learners' age, English level, or the design purpose. Teacher observation is more authentic in this setting because the target skill is evident in learners' actions and choices during the story activity. The teacher can gather evidence while learners remain engaged in the task.

Assessment results inform instructional decisions. If learners score mostly 2 or 3 on the recognition targets, the teacher may proceed to a brief debrief and help students connect the story choices to simple grammar functions. If learners score mostly 0s or 1s, the teacher should provide additional modeling, reduce the number of visual choices, simplify the story scene, or repeat the practice with clearer examples. In this way, assessment supports revision and responsive teaching rather than merely documenting performance at the end.

The scoring scale used in Appendix C is summarized below:

Score	Recognition Evidence
3 - Independent	Learner identifies or classifies the item accurately without teacher prompting.

Score	Recognition Evidence
2 - Minor Prompting	Learner identifies or classifies the item accurately after a visual cue, repeated question, or minor verbal prompt.
1 - Substantial Prompting	Learner identifies or classifies the item with modeling, strong verbal support, or repeated guidance; response may be inconsistent.
0 - Not Yet Evident	Learner does not yet identify or classify the item accurately, or the response is unclear even with support.

Delivery Modality

The delivery modality for The Word Bridge is blended, teacher-facilitated, and low-bandwidth adaptable. This modality fits the learner group because Grade 2–3 beginning English learners need adult guidance, repeated modeling, encouragement, and immediate support. A fully independent online module would place too much responsibility on young learners who may still be developing English vocabulary, digital navigation skills, and confidence. The teacher-facilitated format keeps the experience developmentally appropriate and allows the teacher to observe learning as it happens.

The blended structure allows the same instructional sequence to be delivered in several practical formats. If internet access and classroom display tools are available, the teacher may present the Mei and Abby story scenes in Microsoft Sway. If devices are shared, the teacher may lead the activity from one screen while learners respond orally, physically, or with printed cards. If bandwidth is limited or unavailable, the same activity can be delivered using printed story scenes, Canva sorting cards, and category mats. This flexibility is important because the design should not depend on every learner having an individual device or reliable home internet access.

The face-to-face component remains central to the design. The teacher introduces the story, models the recognition task, provides oral prompts, observes learner responses, adjusts support, and records observational evidence. This is especially important because the assessment plan depends on noticing how learners respond, not simply whether they select a correct digital

answer. A learner's gesture, hesitation, self-correction, or need for prompting may provide the teacher with important evidence that would not be captured by a basic digital score.

The low-bandwidth design also prevents the project from becoming overly tool-focused. While Microsoft Sway and Canva are helpful aids, the learning experience can continue effectively with printable materials. The core activity isn't the software itself, but the teacher-led process of guiding learners to identify visible people, places, objects, and actions. Thus, the modality emphasizes access, observation, and feedback, rather than allowing technology to dominate the plan.

A blended, teacher-facilitated format also supports classroom pacing. The teacher can slow down, repeat a prompt, reduce the number of visual choices, model a gesture, or pause for a brief debrief when learners show readiness. This is especially important for beginning English learners because a fixed digital pace may move too quickly or provide too much information at once. Teacher pacing keeps the activity simple, responsive, and low-stakes.

The modality connects directly to the implementation plan in Appendix E. Before delivery, the teacher or instructional designer prepares the Sway path, Canva visual cards, printed backups, observation checklist, and oral prompts. During delivery, the teacher uses the materials flexibly based on the setting and learner needs. After delivery, checklist evidence and teacher notes guide revision. In this way, the modality supports the full design cycle from preparation to pilot implementation and improvement.

Technology, Media, and Tools

Technology in this plan serves the instructional purpose; it does not define the learning experience. The central design goal is for learners to recognize people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions in simple story scenes. Microsoft Sway and Canva are selected

because they support that goal in practical ways. Sway can organize the guided visual story path, while Canva can support visual cards, icons, category mats, scene supports, and printable materials. The official Sway and Canva references are used only as tool documentation; the instructional rationale is grounded in the scholarly design and learning-science sources cited throughout the plan. Both tools are useful only insofar as they make the teacher-facilitated recognition task clearer, more accessible, and easier to implement.

Microsoft Sway serves as the primary digital story-path tool. Microsoft describes Sway as an easy-to-use digital storytelling app for creating and sharing interactive reports, presentations, personal stories, and other visual content (Microsoft, n.d.-a). In this project, Sway presents the Mei and Abby scenes in a simple sequence that the teacher controls during instruction. This matters because learners should not have to navigate a complex platform independently. The teacher can move through the story at a deliberate pace, pose recognition prompts, pause for responses, and return to earlier scenes if learners need more support. Sway is therefore best understood as a guided visual pathway rather than an independent e-learning course.

Canva is the primary tool for creating visual materials. Canva describes its platform as a free online graphic design tool for creating presentations, posters, and other visual materials (Canva, n.d.-a). Canva for Education is also positioned to support classroom creation and collaboration by K–12 teachers and students (Canva, n.d.-b). In this plan, the teacher or instructional designer can create helper/person cards, place cards, thing/object cards, action cards, category mats, simple icons, and printable story-scene supports. Canva materials can be used digitally or printed for low-bandwidth delivery.

The revised Appendix D concept clarifies how the media should look and function. Student-facing materials should use symbolic story-game objects rather than explicit grammar labels. For example, the learner may see a blue helper gem, a green path stone, a silver treasure key, and a gold motion ring. The teacher-facing layer explains the hidden grammar functions, while the student experiences the task as placing glowing objects into the Word Bridge slots. This media choice supports implicit recognition by having learners interact with concrete story symbols rather than abstract terminology.

The visual design should remain simple, consistent, and uncluttered. Mei and Abby's scenes should use warm, child-friendly storybook visuals with minimal visual noise. The bridge, path, helper, object, and action should be easy to distinguish. Text should be minimal, especially on student-facing materials. When words are used, they should support recognition rather than distract from the visual task. This is important because the learners are young beginning English learners, and excessive text or decoration could increase cognitive load.

Accessibility and usability considerations should guide all media decisions. Microsoft's Sway accessibility guidance includes the Accessibility Checker, built-in heading styles, alt text, accessible links, captions, and Immersive Reader testing (Microsoft, n.d.-b). These features do not automatically make instructional design effective, but they support the plan's accessibility expectations. Visual cards should be large enough to see clearly, category mats should be easy to distinguish, and printed materials should remain usable without relying on color alone, when possible. The teacher should also have access to clear prompts and observation criteria, so the hidden grammar function remains visible in the instructional design, even when it is not shown to students.

Cost and sustainability also support pairing Sway and Canva. Both tools are familiar, practical, and well-suited to teacher-created instructional materials. The design does not require advanced programming, expensive software, or a complex learning management system. After reviewing pilot data, a teacher or instructional designer can revise the Sway path, adjust visual cards, simplify a scene, or print new materials. This makes the design more sustainable than a highly technical game prototype.

Training needs should remain modest. A teacher would need a brief preparation guide that explains the activity's purpose, the hidden grammar functions, the story prompts, the checklist scoring scale, and the response mode codes. The teacher does not need to become a software developer or game designer. The tools should reduce implementation barriers, not create new ones.

Privacy and data considerations are also limited because the primary assessment evidence is collected through the teacher observation checklist. The plan does not require learners to create individual accounts, upload personal information, or store student performance data within the digital tools. Any checklist data should be handled in accordance with the classroom or school expectations for student information. This keeps tool use proportionate to the project's small-group, supplemental nature.

Implementation Plan

The Word Bridge plan starts with a small pilot instead of immediate large-scale adoption. It is designed for a single group of Grade 2–3 beginner English learners, about 5–10 students. This limited implementation is suitable because the project relies on teacher observations, learner response patterns, and the revision of visual materials based on feedback. A small pilot helps the teacher and instructional designer evaluate whether the story scenes, symbolic objects, prompts,

and sorting materials effectively support grammar recognition without causing confusion or excessive cognitive load.

Before implementation, the teacher or instructional designer prepares the core materials: the Microsoft Sway story path, Canva visual cards, printable category mats, printed backup scenes, teacher prompts, and the observation checklist. The preparation process should prioritize simplicity. Each visual card should have a single clear purpose, and each story scene should include only the people, places, things, and actions needed for the recognition task. This step is important because the design's effectiveness depends less on visual decoration and more on whether learners can distinguish the relevant story elements.

Teacher preparation should occur before Session 1. The teacher reviews the learning objectives, hidden grammar functions, the 0–3 observation scale, and acceptable response modes. The teacher should also review the difference between the student-facing story activity and the teacher-facing instructional purpose. Students experience the task as helping Mei and Abby solve a bridge challenge, while the teacher observes whether learners recognize people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions. This distinction preserves the implicit design while maintaining instructional accountability.

The pilot follows the three-session sequence detailed in Appendix B. Session 1 introduces the story and demonstrates recognition. Session 2 includes guided sorting and repeated practice with story scenes. Session 3 features a final scene demonstration and a card sort activity. After each session, the teacher reviews observation notes to spot patterns. If several learners are confused about objects and actions, the teacher might simplify those cards or provide clearer modeling before the next session. If learners require significant prompting, the teacher could reduce the number of choices or revisit a previous scene.

Several implementation risks should be anticipated. Learners may confuse thing/object cards with action cards, especially when an object is strongly associated with an action, such as a rope and pulling. Story scenes may also become too visually busy if decorative details compete with the instructional target. Technology may pose another risk if the classroom has inconsistent internet access or shared-device limitations. Finally, observation evidence may become inconsistent if the teacher does not apply the scoring scale consistently across sessions.

The implementation plan addresses these risks with practical safeguards. Object and action cards should be visually distinct. Story scenes should remain uncluttered. Printed backups should be available before instruction begins. The teacher should use the same scoring guide, response mode codes, and prompts throughout the pilot. The activity should also remain low-stakes for learners; the observation checklist is a teacher tool, not a student-facing test. Appendix E provides the full implementation checklist and risk-response table.

After the pilot, the teacher and instructional designer review the checklist scores, response modes, prompting patterns, and teacher notes. Revisions should focus on the parts of the activity that interfered with recognition. For example, a confusing image may be replaced, an overloaded scene may be simplified, a prompt may be rewritten, or a sorting mat may be reorganized. The goal is not to expand the module but to improve the existing recognition sequence so learners can demonstrate understanding more clearly. This approach aligns with systematic instructional design processes that use formative evaluation and revision to improve materials before broader use (Dick et al., 2015).

Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan assesses whether The Word Bridge supports the intended grammar-recognition outcome in a practical classroom setting. The evaluation is formative and

improvement-oriented. It does not aim to prove the effectiveness of large-scale ESL. Instead, it asks whether this specific story-based, teacher-facilitated design helps Grade 2–3 beginning English learners recognize people, places, things, and actions through low-stakes visual practice.

The main evidence for the evaluation is derived from the teacher observation checklist. This checklist records whether learners correctly identify or classify target categories, the amount of prompting needed, and their response modes. Such data are valuable because they reveal more than just right-or-wrong answers. For instance, a learner who correctly points to a helper with minimal prompting shows different progress than one who requires complete modeling, even if both select the same card in the end. The level of prompting thus helps the teacher assess the learner's emerging independence.

Evaluation also includes teacher notes and observations of learner engagement. The teacher should note which visuals appear confusing, which prompts work well, which response modes learners prefer, and whether the story context supports or distracts from the recognition task. These notes are especially important because young learners may show confusion through hesitation, repeated guessing, avoidance, or reliance on peers' responses. The teacher's qualitative observations help explain the checklist scores.

Evaluation takes place at three stages. Following Session 1, the teacher reviews evidence of early recognition and modifies modeling or prompts as needed. After Session 2, the teacher assesses sorting accuracy and prompting patterns to decide if learners require more guided practice before the final demonstration. After Session 3, the teacher reviews the final recognition evidence to see if learners have transferred recognition to a new scene. Upon completing the pilot, the teacher and instructional designer collaboratively review all evidence and determine necessary revisions before reusing the activity.

The evaluation questions remain aligned with the project's narrow purpose. Are learners recognizing people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions? Are they becoming less dependent on prompting? Are pointing, gestures, sorting, single words, or short phrases providing learners with enough ways to demonstrate understanding? Does the story-game mechanic support recognition without detracting from it? Are Microsoft Sway and Canva practical tools for this blended, low-bandwidth, adaptable setting? Is the observation checklist usable during actual instruction?

Findings should lead directly to revision. If learners struggle with place recognition, the design may need clearer visuals for paths, bridges, rooms, or gardens. If learners confuse actions with objects, the design may need more movement-based images, gesture modeling, or separate practice before combining categories. If Sway navigation slows the session, printed scenes may become the preferred delivery option. If the checklist feels too long during instruction, it may be shortened or reorganized while preserving accuracy, prompting level, and response mode.

The evaluation plan includes one important limitation. Because the pilot group is small, the results should be interpreted as local design evidence rather than broad research evidence. A group of 5–10 learners can provide useful information on clarity, feasibility, learner response, and teacher usability, but it cannot establish general effectiveness for all Grade 2–3 English learners. Therefore, the purpose of the evaluation is to improve the learning design continuously.

Appendix F presents the evaluation planning table. The table outlines evaluation questions, evidence sources, collection points, reviewers, and how findings will inform revisions. Together, the evaluation plan and appendices form a practical improvement cycle: observe learner responses, identify patterns, revise the materials, and test the revised version with teacher support.

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Appendix A: Alignment Map

The alignment map below condenses the project logic into the essential relationship among the instructional gap, objectives, learner tasks, material supports, and teacher observation evidence. Its purpose is to show that every part of The Word Bridge remains focused on a single narrow outcome: helping beginning English learners recognize people, places, things, and actions following direct instruction in nouns and verbs.

Objective Focus	Learner Action	Teacher Evidence	Primary Supports
Story-scene recognition	Identify people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions in a simple Mei and Abby scene.	Accuracy, prompting level, and response mode.	Sway or printed scene; Canva visual cards; Appendix C.
Visual classification	Sort cards or select symbolic story-game objects that represent the four recognition categories.	Sorting accuracy, self-correction, and support level.	Canva cards and mats; Appendix D sample graphic.
Transfer to a new scene	Apply recognition to a final story scene by showing one person/place/thing and one action.	Transfer evidence and whether prompting decreases across sessions.	Final Sway or printed scene; Appendix B and C.
Teacher-guided debrief	Connect story choices to simple word functions only when learners show readiness.	Readiness for a brief grammar debrief without requiring formal grammar explanation.	Teacher prompts; observation notes; visual cards.

The alignment map keeps the technology in a supporting role. Microsoft Sway organizes the guided visual story path, while Canva supports visual cards, icons, category mats, and printable backups. The teacher remains central by modeling the recognition task, guiding responses, documenting evidence, and deciding whether learners are ready for a brief grammar debrief.

Appendix B: Three-Session Learning Sequence

Learning Experience: The Word Bridge: A Story-Based Grammar Recognition Plan for Grade 2–3 English Learners. Audience: Beginning English learners in Grades 2–3. Group Size: Approximately 5–10 learners. Delivery Format: Blended, teacher-facilitated, and low-bandwidth adaptable.

Session	Instructional Focus	Teacher Actions	Learner Actions	Materials	Assessment Evidence
Session 1: Story Introduction and Modeling	Introduce the Mei and Abby story scene and model how to notice people, places, things, and actions.	Present the opening Sway story scene or printed scene. Model simple questions: Who is here? Where are they? What do they see? What is happening? Demonstrate one or two sorting examples.	Learners point to visible people, places, things, and actions. Learners may respond by pointing, gesturing, sorting cards, using a single word, or repeating a modeled response.	Microsoft Sway story scene; printed backup scene; Canva visual cards; category mats.	Teacher records initial recognition evidence, response mode, and prompting level.
Session 2: Guided Sorting and Story Practice	Provide guided practice with visual sorting cards and a second short story scene.	Review the four recognition categories using simple teacher-facing language. Present cards one at a time. Prompt learners to place cards on the correct category mat. Give narrative feedback and corrective support.	Learners sort helper/person, place, thing/object, and action cards. Learners may work individually, with a partner, or as a small group.	Canva sorting cards; category mats; Sway review scene; printable cards for low-bandwidth use.	Teacher observes sorting accuracy, independence, self-correction, and prompting level.
Session 3: Review and Light Summative Demonstration	Check whether learners can transfer recognition to a new story scene.	Present a final Mei and Abby scene. Ask learners to show one person/place/thing and one action. Use the observation checklist to document evidence. Conduct a brief debrief if learners show readiness.	Learners point to, sort, gesture, name, or briefly explain visible people, places, things, and actions in the final scene.	Final Sway story scene; printed final scene; visual cards; observation checklist.	Teacher records final recognition evidence, prompting level, response mode, and readiness for continued practice or debriefing.

Appendix C: Teacher Observation Checklist

Purpose: This checklist helps the teacher document whether the learner can recognize people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions in the Mei and Abby story scenes. The checklist is designed for brief, low-stakes observation during teacher-guided practice. It should not be presented to learners as a formal test.

Score	Recognition Evidence
3 - Independent	Learner identifies or classifies the item accurately without teacher prompting.
2 - Minor Prompting	Learner identifies or classifies the item accurately after a visual cue, repeated question, or minor verbal prompt.
1 - Substantial Prompting	Learner identifies or classifies the item with modeling, strong verbal support, or repeated guidance; response may be inconsistent.
0 - Not Yet Evident	Learner does not yet identify or classify the item accurately, or the response is unclear even with support.

Code	Response Mode
P	Pointing
G	Gesture or acting out
S	Sorting or placing a card
W	Single word
SP	Short phrase
M	Modeled response only

Recognition Target	Story Prompt	Expected Recognition	Score 0–3	Response Mode	Notes
Helper/person	Who can help Mei?	Learner identifies a visible person/helper or character.	___	___	_____
Place	Where does Abby go?	Learner identifies a visible place, such as bridge, path, garden, or room.	___	___	_____
Thing/object	What does Mei find?	Learner identifies a visible thing/object/tool, such as rope, basket, key, or bell.	___	___	_____
Action	What is Abby doing?	Learner identifies or acts out a visible action, such as pull, jump, walk, carry, open, or run.	___	___	_____
Sorting transfer	Put each card where it belongs.	Learner sorts cards into helper/person, place, thing/object, and action groups.	___	___	_____
Final story scene	Show me one person or thing and one action.	Learner transfers recognition to a new scene.	___	___	_____

Teacher interpretation: Scores of 2 or 3 on most items indicate that the learner is recognizing the target categories with appropriate independence for this stage of instruction. Scores of 0 or 1 indicate that the teacher should provide additional modeling, reduce the number of choices, simplify the visual scene, or repeat the recognition task using more concrete examples.

Appendix D: Sample Mei and Abby Word Bridge Activity

Learners gather symbolic story objects in different environments, then place them in order to reveal the Word Bridge path. If ready, learners may repeat a short magic phrase.









Teacher Observation Note

The teacher observes whether the learner correctly identifies or selects each symbolic story-game object, places the pieces in order with support as needed, and responds by pointing, selecting, gesturing, using a single word, short phrase, or repeating a short magic phrase, if ready.

Assessment Connection

This activity connects to the teacher observation checklist by documenting recognition accuracy, prompting level, response mode, and optional sequence observation.

Tool Connection

Microsoft Sway may present the guided visual story path. Canva may provide the symbolic cards, icons, and printable supports.

Story-Game Object	Student-Facing Action	Hidden Grammar Function	Teacher Observation Evidence
Blue helper gem	Find the blue helper gem.	person/helper	accuracy, prompting, response mode
Green path stone	Take the green path stone.	place	accuracy, prompting, response mode
Silver treasure key	Choose the silver treasure key.	thing/object	accuracy, prompting, response mode
Gold motion ring	Put the pieces in order. Repeat the short magic phrase if ready.	action/verb	accuracy, optional sequence observation, response mode

Appendix E: Implementation Checklist

This checklist supports teacher preparation, pilot delivery, and revision of the three-session learning experience.

Implementation Task	Responsible Person	Completed?	Notes
Confirm learner group size of approximately 5–10 Grade 2–3 beginning English learners.	Teacher / instructional designer	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Confirm that learners have already received direct instruction on nouns and verbs.	Teacher	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Prepare Microsoft Sway story path with simple Mei and Abby scenes.	Teacher / instructional designer	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Create Canva visual cards for helper/person, place, thing/object, and action.	Teacher / instructional designer	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Print backup story scenes, sorting cards, and category mats.	Teacher / instructional designer	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Review the teacher observation checklist before Session 1.	Teacher	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Prepare simple oral prompts for each recognition target.	Teacher	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Conduct Sessions 1–3 and record observation evidence.	Teacher	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Review checklist results and revise confusing visuals, prompts, or pacing.	Teacher / instructional designer	☐ Yes ☐ No	

Risk	Likely Effect	Response
Learners confuse things/objects with actions.	Sorting may become inconsistent.	Use clearer visual contrast between object cards and action cards; model one example before independent sorting.
Story scene becomes too visually busy.	Learners may focus on decoration instead of the recognition task.	Simplify the scene and limit visible choices.
Internet or device access is inconsistent.	Sway may not be available during instruction.	Use printed scenes, printed sorting cards, and teacher-led oral prompts.
Teacher observation becomes inconsistent.	Checklist data may be difficult to interpret.	Use the 0–3 scoring guide and response mode codes consistently across sessions.
Learners become anxious if the activity feels like a test.	Responses may not reflect actual recognition ability.	Keep feedback narrative, low-stakes, and supportive; do not present the checklist to students as a formal assessment.

Appendix F: Evaluation Planning Table

The evaluation process determines whether the story-based recognition activity supports learner practice, teacher observation, accessibility, and practical classroom implementation.

Evaluation Question	Evidence Source	Collection Point	Reviewer	How Findings Inform Revision
Are learners accurately recognizing people/helpers, places, things/objects, and actions?	Teacher observation checklist scores	During Sessions 1, 2, and 3	Teacher / instructional designer	Revise visuals, prompts, or practice opportunities if learners show repeated confusion.
Are learners becoming less dependent on teacher prompting?	Prompting level recorded on the checklist	After each session	Teacher	Add more modeling if learners need substantial prompting; reduce support if learners respond independently.
Which response modes are most accessible for learners?	Response mode codes	During each activity	Teacher	Preserve multiple response options and adjust materials for learners who need nonverbal supports.
Does the story context support the grammar-recognition goal without distracting from it?	Teacher notes and learner engagement observations	After each session	Teacher / instructional designer	Simplify scenes, shorten text, or remove unnecessary story details if the narrative becomes distracting.
Do Sway and Canva materials support low-bandwidth and blended delivery?	Teacher usability notes; completion notes; printed backup use	After pilot implementation	Teacher / instructional designer	Improve printable backups, reduce media load, or revise the Sway path for simpler navigation.
Is the observation checklist practical during real instruction?	Teacher feedback on checklist usability	After Session 3	Teacher / instructional designer	Shorten, clarify, or reorganize checklist items if observation is difficult during instruction.

Evaluation limitation: Because the pilot is designed for a small group of approximately 5–10 Grade 2–3 beginning English learners, the results should be used primarily for local improvement rather than for broad generalization. The evaluation is intended to support practical revision of the module, not to make large-scale claims about ESL grammar learning.

Design Notes

David Townsend

I designed this proposal for beginning English learners in Grades 2–3. The activities give learners practice recognizing people, places, things, and actions after direct instruction on nouns and verbs. I used the Mei and Abby story to provide a context for observation and practice.

I used AI tools for brainstorming, organization, alignment checks, citation review, and revision support. I selected the scope, the Design Thinking and Backward Design frameworks, and the teacher observation approach. I also decided how Microsoft Sway, Canva, and the Appendix D story graphic would support the lesson.

I reviewed the design for scope, assessment clarity, accessibility, and readability. The plan provides a low-stakes learning experience that a teacher can pilot, observe, and revise.