Introduction for the ALBETAC Bilingual Study Notes

The ALBETAC Resources

The Asian Languages Bilingual/ESL Technical Assistance Center (ALBETAC) strives to improve Asian students’ academic performance, especially for newly arrived immigrants. One of the ways we provide support is through the development and publication of online resources that facilitate content area learning for Asian students, such as translated math, science, and social studies glossaries in various languages. Also, to ensure that the Asian community has access to instructional materials in native language arts, resources in Bengali, Chinese, and Korean (originally developed by the New York City Department of Education), have been collected and published on our website.

The Need for Content Specific Resources in Asian Languages

Unlike Spanish, the market for Asian languages is limited. Books from overseas are very difficult to acquire and are not aligned to the New York State Learning Standards. While word-to-word translated glossaries may prove somewhat sufficient for standardized testing accommodations, they do not provide the access to subject content that our students need. Just imagine our new Asian immigrant students studying American History – the combination of learning a new language and new content at the same time is overwhelming. Understanding this challenge, we brought together a group of dedicated bilingual educators, experienced in various content areas, to develop a resource to help students meet this challenge— the Asian Languages Bilingual Study Notes.

The ALBETAC Bilingual Study Notes

ALBETAC Bilingual Study Notes were created to help new Asian immigrant students acquire curriculum content while learning English. The Study Notes are aligned with the New York State standards and curriculum. However, they are not translations of textbooks and should not be viewed as curriculum units. Instead, these study notes highlight salient points of the content. They can help to build students’ background knowledge and/or provide a preview/review of the intended areas of study in students’ native languages. Teachers should use these study notes as an additional instructional resource as they follow their curriculum and apply effective teaching strategies for English language learners.

Using the ALBETAC Bilingual Study Notes

Study Notes are presented in a bilingual format with English and native language text in side-by-side columns. They are organized to include an overview of the content, definitions of critical content specific vocabulary, and content review questions and answers that address key points
within the curriculum. State standardized exam item banks were used to identify topics for inclusion in the Study Notes. The topics most often found on the State’s content area assessments are those that are included in the Study Notes.

Teachers of bilingual classes should use these concise notes as a scaffold for teaching the content area curriculum. The English translation provides the bridge for language learning. Teachers who are not familiar with Asian languages can give the Study Notes to students and point to the sections of lessons (in English and the corresponding Asian languages) to provide meaningful, comprehensible support. Parents can use the Study Notes to help their children understand the content in their native language at home; students can use them as a self-study guide. Furthermore, both heritage language speakers and non-heritage language learners in dual language classrooms can use this resource to develop their content knowledge, language proficiency, and literacy skills in both English and the target language.

The ALBETAC is proud to provide this resource and is thankful for the funding from New York State Education Department Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies and the guidance from New York City Department of Education Office of English Language Learners.