

Graham Hill School

K-1 Teacher Survey about Chinese Language Program

Interviewed 5/25/2007 by Michele Anciaux Aoki

Teachers: Patsy Yamada (K); Constance Thomas (1st)

Mandarin Teacher: Pollyanna Wang

<p>1. What do you like best about the opportunity for students at your school to learn Chinese?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good. Great opportunity. • Many bilingual kids are picking it up faster than the monolingual English speakers. They feel very proud of themselves and like the opportunity to shine. • In general, it's seems harder for the monolingual speakers. • In K, most of the kids count to 100+ better in Mandarin right now than they do in English.
<p>2. What are your concerns?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been some conflicts. Fortunately, Ms. Wang is very flexible. Communicating by email with her works well (to let her know about changes in schedules, such as field trips). She is very responsive. • Connie has some concern about the amount of time it takes out of the regular schedule (impact on academics). Originally, she had understood that the Mandarin teacher would be teaching part of the TERC Math. However, the teacher had a different understanding, that she would be supplementing the regular Math curriculum. Now Connie gives her a copy of the lesson she has planned. They try to coordinate a bit. • There's a lot to fit in because the school also has Powerful Writers, and other programs. • Connie felt she got behind in TERC this year because of losing time to Chinese, but she thought it was worth it.
<p>3. How well did the Chinese program go this spring?</p>	<p><u> X </u> Very well <u> X </u> Well <u> </u> Not well <u> </u> No opinion Patsy says Very well; Connie says Well. Patsy notes that the kids are very excited about Chinese. If they don't have it, they ask how come?</p> <p>In terms of use of Mandarin, Ms. Wang speaks in Mandarin most of the time in K. In 1st grade, she usually explains in Mandarin, then translates into English the directions for activities. For songs (with motions) she just uses Mandarin. The kids seem to understand what she's saying. (But sometimes she worries that they might not, so then she translates.)</p> <p>While Ms. Wang is focused on teaching the language (through the content area of Math), Patsy and Connie have taken the initiative to bring in Chinese culture, for example, reading Chinese stories or going to see plays. They feel this is important, but it's more than can be fit into the 30 minutes/day of Ms. Wang's time.</p>

4. What are your **suggestions** for next year?

- More hands-on lessons that introduce the activity to everyone.
- Ms. Wang is great about accepting feedback and suggestions. That's been a big help.
- Model what to do if you don't remember a word. (Connie modeled this with Ms. Wang so the kids could see the strategies they can use.)
- Behavior problems are an issue (esp. in 1st grade). The teachers explain to the kids that they are trying to learn too.
- Ms. Wang is working on classroom management – how to be consistent and follow through on expectations. She is making progress and is open to feedback from the classroom teachers.

Desires for Next Year:

- Time to coordinate Math curriculum and lesson planning (hopefully with Kristin and other Chinese and K-1 teachers). Every other week meeting would be helpful.
- Time for developing materials to make the lessons more hands-on.