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About CASLT

Our History

Past Award Recipients

Wendy Maxwell



"Gesture Approach" or AIM (Accelerated Integrative Method)

Description of the project:

Wendy's method is innovative because gestures are used to first teach specifically selected vocabulary called Pared Down Language, which is 700 of the most frequently used words in language, in the context of a story. Then drama, music and dance, and creative story writing are combined to reinforce the vocabulary learned. The program is story-based instead of theme-based which leads the students into greater involvement and allows the teacher to introduce many different scaffolded oral and written activities.



Wendy Maxwell

Teachers using her method report immediate results with their students: motivation for learning French increases dramatically because the method appeals to multiple intelligences. Sylvia Duckworth states that "My Core French classroom is now a unilingual (French only) environment. Pas d'anglais is a rule that is

never broken by my students or me. Their enjoyment of French has skyrocketed and after 20 years of teaching, I feel rejuvenated! Teachers, consultants and administrators from across the province come to my classroom to watch the method in action. A visiting teacher recently told me that my Grade 4 Core French students (in the 2nd year of AIM) speak French better than her Grade 4 French Immersion students (1st year French immersion).

Autobiography of Wendy Maxwell:

Wendy Maxwell has been teaching French immersion and core French in the public and private Canadian school systems for 20 years. She has developed an innovative technique of teaching French with hand gestures, drama, creative story-writing, puppetry, music and dance and completed her Master's thesis on this approach and its effectiveness in the FSL classroom. Wendy conducts workshops across the country on her method, which is called the "Gesture Approach" or AIM (Accelerated Integrative Method). She won the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Teaching (1999).