



## TLC STRATEGY

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### Tableau

**Purpose:** When teaching English learners, it is important to have a variety of ways for readers to respond to literature. Journal writing, readers’ workshop, retelling, and illustration are all ways of responding to literature.

**Activity description:** For English learners, the tableau is particularly effective as it requires students to communicate and problem solve with others to represent the text, to use their whole body in communication, and to articulate part of the story to the entire class. In this strategy, a group of students who have read a story or heard it read aloud work out how to represent the story through progressive scenes, each of which is represented by one student who has chosen a pose. Thus, at the start, students are in a line, each “frozen” in a particular position to represent a scene from the story. From the beginning of the story the first child “unfreezes” and describes what happens in the scene he or she is demonstrating through his or her body.

#### Materials

- ❑ Suggested picture book for this activity: *Little Bear’s Vision Quest* by Diane Silvey,
- ❑ Suggested collection: *A magical encounter: Latino children’s literature in the classroom*. The book includes numerous examples of both books in English and books in Spanish, making it useful to the widest possible number of teachers and children. It also provides an extensive bibliography of books for children and adolescents by Latino and Latina authors, organized by genre, language, and some significant themes. (Ada, Alma Flor. Allyn & Bacon, 2002).

#### Steps

1. Read the chosen text(s) to the whole class. Or, if more adults are available, or if students can read the text(s) themselves, then divide the class into small groups and assign each group a text.
2. After reading the story, group members work together to define the main scenes from the book. Each participant represents one scene with his or her body (holding as still as possible).
3. In front of the whole class, one group at a time enacts the tableau, beginning with all participants in a still pose representing their scene of the book. In order of the story’s events, each person unfreezes, and tells the group about the scene they represent.
4. Follow up the activity with a writing exercise in which students write about the story they have enacted.