An innovative after school program that targets second language learners struggling with reading.

Curriculum/State Standards
The students learned a variety of reading strategies such as learning and practicing reasoning through the text, making connections through different experiences, and building background knowledge based on personal connections. These strategies improved their comprehension and fluency. The students also had the opportunity to expand their vocabulary by learning a wide range of strategies including identifying unfamiliar words through the meaning of sentences or the general story and confirming it with illustrations.

Overview
The Reading Detectives after school program, conducted two times a week, taught students a range of reading strategies. They discussed these readings during literature circles, used the readings to conduct presentations and also acted out the readings in front of their peers. The Reading Detectives program concluded with a final presentation that involved the students’ parents and guardians; they were invited to celebrate the students’ progress and achievements.

Objectives
The student will read a variety of fiction and nonfiction books.
The student will meet with a group of students to discuss readings using literature circles.
The student will use a journal to respond to readings.
The student will conduct a book presentation once a month and end the program with a final presentation to family and friends at a Parents’ Night event.

Materials
books sets, fiction and nonfiction books on tape chapter books response journals

Readiness Activity
Students participated in the Reading Detectives after school reading program twice a week. Throughout the program, students participated in a whole class reading aloud activity where reading strategies were modeled by the teacher. Students were also introduced to literature circles at the beginning of the program. Each student read the same book and later met to discuss the reading. They were grouped according to their reading levels. Each student had a role within their group. For example, students had the role of literacy director, summarizer, vocabulary enricher and travel chaser. Each group was supervised by the teacher.

Strategies/Activities
1. The program was launched in September. At the beginning of the year students in second and third grade classes were assessed to determinate their reading levels. After the assessment, letters were sent to parents/guardians of the students whose scores demonstrated that they were struggling with reading. These students were invited to participate in the Reading Detectives after school program, conducted twice a week. Letters were returned signed by the parents.
2. Throughout the program, students participated in whole class reading aloud activities.

3. The program began by introducing students to weekly journals. Students took books home weekly and responded in weekly journals.

4. Gradually students were introduced to oral presentations using film from the overhead transparencies that were cut into strips. Students read books of their selection independently and drew the characters and settings of the stories. Students conducted weekly presentations using dioramas and quilts from parts of the stories.

5. Students were introduced to literature circles. Students were divided according to their reading levels and books selected. Students read independently and later participated in literature circles where each student had a specific role within the literature circle. For example, students had the role of literacy director, summarizer, vocabulary enricher and travel chaser.

Culminating Activity
The Reading Detectives program ended in May. The parents received invitations to attend the Children’s Book Presentation event. Each student selected a book and conducted a presentation for their parents/guardians during Parents’ Night. Students were given three choices on how to conduct their presentations.

Option 1: Students selected a book and created a reading quilt about the important parts of the book.
Option 2: Students selected a buddy and together they created a reading quilt about the important parts of their selected books.
Option 3: Students acted out different characters of their books as if in a theater setting.

Evaluation Method
Students were assessed by a DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) which were conducted in December and May. The teacher also evaluated the students’ progress through their reading logs, presentations, and group discussions.