

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 378 838

FL 022 781

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 TITLE The PASS Program: Preparation for American Secondary Schools.
 INSTITUTION Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC. Refugee Service Center.
 SPONS AGENCY Department of State, Washington, DC. Bureau of Refugee Programs.
 PUB DATE 85
 NOTE 23p.
 PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS *Acculturation; *Adolescents; Counseling Services; Cultural Awareness; Curriculum Design; *English (Second Language); Extracurricular Activities; Foreign Countries; Mathematics Education; Parent Participation; Program Design; Records (Forms); *Refugees; *School Readiness; Secondary Education; Second Language Instruction; Social Studies; Student Characteristics; Teacher Evaluation; *Transitional Programs

ABSTRACT

A program to prepare refugee adolescents for secondary school experiences in the United States is described. The program, conducted in overseas refugee camps, began in 1985 as a complement to adult transitional programs. The daily program is designed to simulate the schedule and classroom procedures of a typical U.S. secondary school. Classes include three periods of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction (one each for listening/speaking skills, grammar, literacy instruction), one of basic math, and two of American studies. ESL instruction focuses on language for communication and academic purposes, taught thematically. Methodology is eclectic, uses individual and small group instruction, and emphasizes basic school and study skills and literacy. The mathematics curriculum prepares students for formal math courses by teaching computational math and math language. The American studies curriculum contrasts American and Asian cultures, preparing students for culture shock through opportunities to make decisions, solve problems, and resolve conflicts. The need for strong cultural identity is emphasized. Extracurricular activities, parent involvement, guidance counseling, and linkages with U.S. schools are described briefly. Appended materials include lists of ESL topics and language functions, math competencies, American studies teaching points, student handouts and profile forms, and a teacher evaluation checklist. (MSE)

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THE PASS PROGRAM PREPARATION FOR AMERICAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ED 378 838

The Overseas Refugee Training Program

Since 1980 the Bureau for Refugee Programs of the United States Department of State has sponsored English as a second language (ESL) and cultural orientation (CO) programs in refugee camps in Southeast Asia. These programs are now operating in the refugee processing centers in Phanat Nikhom, Thailand and Bataan, the Philippines to prepare adult refugees, ages 16-55, from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam for resettlement and employment in the U.S. The curriculum for the 20-week pre-entry training program focuses on the linguistic, cultural, and employment skills needed by adult refugees upon arrival in the U.S.

Development of the PASS Program

Until 1985, however, adolescents were not included in the overseas training program. They arrived in the U.S. without the formal English language training and the introduction to American culture that adult refugees received. Often with little or no previous schooling, these teenagers arrived in the U.S. unfamiliar with school procedures or appropriate social behavior and were sometimes far behind their American peers in academic achievement.

In January 1985, in response to the growing concern about adolescent refugee students entering U.S. schools, the Department of State launched a new component especially for 12-16 year-olds, Preparation for American Secondary Schools (PASS). To plan for the new program, secondary school educators and representatives from resettlement agencies met in Washington. In general, educators felt that PASS should emphasize the development of the academic and social skills that refugee students need during their first school year in the U.S. They also felt that PASS should resemble an American school as much as possible.

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These educators' recommendations were incorporated into the PASS program design and today PASS resembles an American high school in many ways. There are classrooms, an auditorium, a library, and a sports field. There is also an administration building, a principal, and counselors. PASS students move to different classes for different subjects, get tardy slips if they are late, line up for buses, and take care of their school supplies. They also participate in common school activities such as taking tests, checking out books, doing homework, and choosing electives.

Simulation activities allow students to experience additional facets of a U.S. secondary school environment. For example, once students have learned about American food and money, they may have the chance to go through a cafeteria line and pay for the food items they select. In other simulations, students may visit the school nurse, ride a school bus, participate in a fire drill, or board an "airplane" before flying to the U.S. In addition, they have a graduation ceremony, complete with "diplomas" and a party afterwards.

The PASS Curriculum

PASS currently operates in the refugee camps in Thailand and the Philippines. In the Refugee Processing Center in Phanat Nikhom, Thailand, PASS classes are conducted by the Consortium (made up of The Experiment in International Living, Save the Children Federation, and World Education). In the Refugee Processing Center in Bataan, the Philippines, PASS classes are conducted by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC). Although PASS is operated in different countries by different implementing agencies and for the most part serves different ethnic populations, the program specifications, goals, and curriculum objectives are consistent with one another.

In keeping with the notion that PASS should simulate an American secondary school as much as possible, the day is divided into six 40-minute class periods. Students move from class to class and follow customary American classroom procedures. The class subjects include three periods of ESL, one of basic math, and two of American studies. PASS also includes extracurricular activities such as poetry, cooking, math club, board games, and outdoor sports.

The ESL Curriculum

Learning English is the most critical factor for newly-arrived refugee students' successful cultural adjustment and academic achievement in school. The PASS curriculum, therefore, devotes three periods per day to ESL: one period to listening and speaking skills, a second period to grammar, and a third period to reading and writing.

PASS ESL classes are designed to help students gain confidence in using language for communication and academic purposes. Students are placed in one of three levels of ESL according to their abilities. Beginning level students speak little or no English. They are not literate in English, and some are not literate in their own language. Intermediate level students can understand simple commands and questions. They can write their own names and read and write some of the words they can say. Advanced level students understand and respond to commands and questions with greater clarity and completeness than intermediate level students. They can also read and write simple sentences based on their active vocabulary.

Although approximately 80% of the students enter PASS with little or no English proficiency, their first language skills vary considerably. Beginning ESL students are placed in homogeneous groups based on the development of their native language skills, therefore, instruction is tailored to students' total language development needs. Students can progress at their own pace. In this way, it is possible for students with little or no previous education to achieve basic oral competence, as well as pre-reading and beginning reading skills. At the same time, students with higher educational backgrounds achieve mastery of the same skills at a more complex level.

The ESL curriculum is designed to promote growth in the four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. ESL classes include topics, language functions, and activities appropriate for beginning levels of English (See Attachment 1). Students at each of the three ESL proficiency levels study English through topics such as Sports and Leisure, Home and Family Life, and Handling Problems. Different language functions such as expressing feelings, asking for and giving reasons, and describing events are taught within the various topic areas. Certain topics lend themselves to specific language functions. Therefore, under the topic of Sports and Leisure, students may practice making, accepting and refusing invitations. Under the topic of Friends,

Teens and Social Language, they may practice those functions again. During Home and Family Life, students may express differences and similarities and describe events in the present. Later during Countries of Origin, students may describe events in the past.

The ESL methodology used in PASS is eclectic; however, TPR, the Natural Approach, and Language Experience activities are used widely in the beginning levels. In all classes, students are given opportunities to work independently, in pairs, and in small groups. Basic school skills such as using a dictionary, taking tests, and completing homework assignments are emphasized.

Literacy is a main focus in PASS. Because many students come from low literacy backgrounds and have little previous education, PASS teachers rely heavily on the Language Experience Approach to help beginning students understand the relationship between speech and print. After completing an activity in English, students may write about the activity and then use their writing as reading material. Dialogue journals, in which students and the teacher write back and forth in an on-going conversation, are also used in PASS. Teachers find that not only do their students show tremendous improvement in their writing over the 20-week period, but they also express some very serious and sensitive feelings about their transition and adjustment that can later be addressed in the American studies classes.

The Math Curriculum

The PASS math curriculum prepares students for formal math courses in the American secondary school by teaching computational skills and math language. The curriculum also provides opportunities for students to practice the skills daily and to apply them in realistic situations. Since English is the medium of instruction, students gain the language skills needed in the math classroom. Topics include numeration, whole number operations, measurement, and money. More advanced students may study topics such as fractions, decimals, percents, geometry, graphs, averaging, word problems, and the use of a calculator (See Attachment 2).

As in ESL, students are grouped in math classes according to their abilities. Students with little or no previous education study the basic mathematical operations and those with higher

educational backgrounds study more advanced concepts. The focus of instruction for both groups, however, is on the terminology and language related to working and applying the computational skills.

The American Studies Curriculum

The school experience can be a source of stress for young people coming to the U.S. The school organization, language and non-verbal behavior, teaching and learning styles, differences in ways of perceiving, relating and doing, and, above all, peer pressure are powerful sources of stress for limited-English speaking students in the process of cultural adjustment. Several studies on the assimilation and acculturation of Indochinese students into U.S. schools cite 'confusion about the educational system' and 'differences in learning styles' as major problems among newly-arrived students (Ellis, 1980; Wehrly and Nelson, 1986).

The PASS American studies curriculum helps students with their cultural adjustment by contrasting U.S. and Southeast Asian cultures. American studies classes prepare students for the stress of culture shock by giving them opportunities to make decisions, solve problems, and resolve conflicts. Situations are provided for the students to practice these skills both in and out of the classroom. Some of the topics addressed in the American studies classes include the diversity of American families, changing male and female roles, multi-ethnic America, and U.S. law.

American studies classes emphasize the need for a strong cultural identity. Since many students have had little previous education in their native countries or have lived many years in refugee camps of first asylum, the American studies classes include units of study on Indochinese history and culture. In addition, American studies classes are conducted partly in the students' native language through use of bilingual aides. By accepting students' native language and culture, PASS creates a multi-cultural environment for students who are in the process of cultural adjustment (See Attachment 3).

In addition, PASS students develop academic and study skills which are vital for successful school adjustment and which promote continued learning in American secondary schools. These

include note-taking; working independently, in small groups, and in pairs; participating in classroom activities; following a class schedule; taking appropriate materials to class; completing homework assignments; taking quizzes and tests; and using a dictionary.

Extracurricular Activities

'Difficulties with social relationships' has also been reported as a significant problem in studies on assimilation and acculturation of refugee youth. Social interaction and social support systems have been reported as relevant interpersonal factors of cross-cultural adjustment. Acceptance in new groups, membership in clubs, participation in recreational and cultural activities are considered important factors for successful cultural adjustment.

The PASS extracurricular component provides students with the opportunity to choose school activities that interest them and to interact with others outside the context of the regular classroom. Students select from activities such as sports, art, music, and dance. Students also participate in club activities outside regular school hours such as Art Club, Music Club, Cooking Club, and Drama Club. The extracurricular activities expose students to different kinds of language, concepts, and learning styles and require students to work both independently and together. In addition, students study in ethnically mixed classrooms where they develop interpersonal relationships with students from different backgrounds and with their American, Filipino, and Thai teachers.

Parent Involvement

Secondary schools in the U.S. have encountered difficulty in involving refugee parents in school. The parents often do not know what is expected of them and may feel intimidated by phone calls and notes from teachers or school administrators. The PASS program prepares students' parents for the American educational system by involving them in their children's school. During the 20-week program, parents of PASS students are expected to attend a school orientation, a parent-teacher conference, and any special events that may be sponsored by the school. Students are also given report cards and other home-school communications which require

parents' signatures. In addition, parents are asked to see a counselor or the principal if a student misbehaves repeatedly.

PASS Guidance Counseling

The guidance counseling department was founded on the principle that all the refugee students, regardless of background and family strength, are experiencing extraordinary stress. The students have both the general concerns of high school youth as well as the unique needs of refugees. The goal of the department is to facilitate the adjustment of PASS students through counseling, crisis intervention, dealing with inter-ethnic conflict and by making referrals to other agencies.

Counselors also try to establish positive relationships with parents by holding orientation meetings, visiting families when appropriate, encouraging and assisting in parent/teacher conferences, and communicating neighborhood concerns.

Linkage with the U.S.

The Overseas Refugee Training Program hopes to enable educators in the U.S. to help students build on the training they have received in PASS. Unfortunately, many refugee students do not learn where they will be resettled in the U.S. until the final weeks of the program. As a result, there are limitations on how closely PASS can coordinate with school districts in the U.S.

Despite these constraints, teachers in U.S. schools can easily learn about their Indochinese students' experiences in PASS through the "PASS Student Profile" (see Attachment 4). This document, issued to every student completing the program, includes accurate biographical information about the individual, and his or her family members. In addition, the teachers in the overseas program rate each students' general skills, and school and study skills, as well as their achievements in the areas of math, reading and writing, and listening and speaking. Students' special skills or disabilities may also be noted.

Information about PASS and other aspects of the Overseas Refugee Training Program is available from the Refugee Service Center at the Center for Applied Linguistics; 1118 22nd St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037; telephone (202) 429-9292.

Attachment 1

ESL Topics and Language Functions

ESL Topics

PASS Orientation: Students, Classroom and School

Health, Hygiene and Safety

Sports and Leisure

Home and Family Life

Countries of Origin

Friends, Teens and Social Language

Handling Problems

Transportation

Community

The American High School

Language functions taught within the topic areas

Communicating basic information

Giving personal history

Expressing feelings

Describing people and things

Expressing differences/similarities

Expressing likes, dislikes, preferences

Asking for clarification

Conversing on everyday topics

Describing events

Expressing future plans

Giving/responding to commands

Asking for/giving reasons

Giving/responding to compliments/criticism

Expressing/responding to apologies

Requesting/giving permission

Interrupting appropriately

Making/accepting/refusing invitations

Agreeing and disagreeing

Attachment 2

Math Competencies

Numeration

Reading and Writing

Computing

Speaking and Listening

Students will be able to:

- Read and write whole numbers.
- Identify the place-value of a digit in a whole number.
- Compare and sequence whole numbers.
- Understand and use whole numbers.

Whole Numbers Operations

Reading and Writing

Computing

Listening and Speaking

Students will be able to:

- Understand and use symbols for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- Add, subtract, multiply and divide.
- Add, subtract and multiply with and without regrouping.
- Divide with and without remainders in the quotients.
- Apply basic principles of addition and multiplication, i.e., commutative, associative, distributive and identity properties.
- Describe the process involved in solving a problem.

Time

Reading and Writing

Computing

Listening and Speaking

Students will be able to:

- Read, interpret and record time from clocks, calendars, and schedules.
- Determine time intervals.
- Make conversions between units of time.
- Report the date, time of day, and time intervals.

Measurement

Reading and Writing

Computing

Listening and Speaking

Students will be able to:

- Read and record measurements including units, abbreviations, and symbols.
- Identify and use appropriate tools to measure length, volume, weight and temperature in American Standard Units.
- Report linear, volume and weight measurements.

Money

Reading and Writing

Computing

Listening and Speaking

Students will be able to:

- Read and record symbols used with American money.
- Read and record amounts of coins and bills.
- Make simple, accurate transactions with money.
- Give and check for correct change.
- Compare value of different amounts of denominations.
- Identify coins, bills and amounts alone and in combination.

In addition, students who have completed the above competencies may have received instruction in the following topics:

- Fractions
- Decimals
- Percents
- Geometry
- Graphs
- Use of calculator
- Averaging
- Word problems

Attachment 3

American Studies Teaching Points

Personal

Students will be able to:

- Describe the role of counselors and social workers.
- Make, keep and cancel appointments.
- Locate and appropriately use toilet facilities.
- Recognize and respond appropriately to warning labels and signs.
- Describe consequences of substance abuse.
- Describe the diversity of American families.
- Make choices and state reasons for doing so.
- Use a telephone to make local calls and to report emergencies.
- Practice acceptable health, safety and hygiene habits.
- Choose appropriate dress for various situations.
- Identify major ethnic groups and common attitudes toward them.

Society

Students will be able to:

- State commonly accepted rules and customs in public places.
- Identify major categories of U.S. laws and state likely consequences of disobeying the laws.
- Describe the differences between systems of health care in Southeast Asia and the U.S.
- State the major rights and duties of American citizens.
- Describe male and female roles in American society.

Schools

Students will be able to:

Follow commonly accepted rules and customs in school.

Behave according to teacher's expectations in the classroom.

Describe the means and implications of evaluations.

Use common school forms such as hall passes, class schedules, admission slips, library and ID cards.

Differentiate between required and elective classes.

State school expectations of student and family.

Use Western concept of time to plan activities.

Name and describe the functions of common school facilities.

Communicate needs to appropriate school personnel.

Relationships

Students will be able to:

Describe culturally acceptable male and female adolescent relationships in America.

Compare and contrast activities of teens in America with teens in Southeast Asia.

Describe possible conflicts within the family.

Describe possible conflicts with peers.

Describe ways of resolving conflicts.

State appropriate ways in which teens earn and save money.

IMPORTANT

STUDENT DOCUMENTS ENCLOSED

DELIVER TO SCHOOL

Administrators: The enclosed information is intended for the student's classroom teachers. Please provide a copy to all appropriate teachers.

Parents: This envelope contains important information about your child's education in the refugee processing center. Give this envelope to school officials when you register your child for school.

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ព័ត៌មានសំខាន់អំពីការ
សិក្សារបស់កូនអ្នកនៅ
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bao thđ này cho nhà
trường khi ghi tên
nhập học.



PASS STUDENT PROFILE

TO SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS:

This information is intended for the student's classroom teachers. Please provide a copy to all appropriate teachers.

PURPOSE

This profile is sent with each student who completes the Preparation for American Secondary School (PASS) Program in Southeast Asia. Its purpose is to provide school personnel with information useful in assessing and placing the new student in an appropriate educational program. The profile includes three sections: a description of the PASS program, biographic information about the student and the student's family, and a subjective teacher evaluation of the student.

PASS PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Preparation for American Secondary School (PASS) program is part of the Overseas Refugee Program funded by the U.S. Department of State. PASS is conducted in two refugee processing centers, one in Phanat Nikhom, Thailand and the other in Bataan, Philippines. The program prepares 12 to 16 year-old refugees for transition to U.S. secondary schools. In order to accomplish this within a 20-week program, PASS emphasizes the development of the academic and social skills needed during the refugee's first year in the U.S. Although the program does not replicate an American secondary school in all aspects, it does incorporate several features of a junior or senior high school in the U.S. The school day is divided into six class periods, students move from class to class and are expected to follow customary American classroom procedures. Parents are encouraged to participate in the program through activities such as open houses and parent-teacher conferences.

The class subjects in PASS are English, math and American studies. PASS also includes extracurricular activities, ranging from poetry, math club and board games to outdoor sports. The program design consists of 400 instructional hours. Approximately half of these hours are devoted to ESL, one-third to American studies, and the remaining time is spent on math. At entry, students are placed in the program primarily by their English language proficiency: beginning, intermediate or advanced. The ESL curriculum is designed to promote growth in the four skill areas: listening, speaking, reading, writing. ESL classes include topics, language functions, and activities appropriate for beginning levels of English. In addition, students are encouraged to develop their own learning strategies and study skills which will promote continued learning in American secondary schools. Supplementing the curriculum are textbooks, readers, and teacher-made materials.

The PASS American studies curriculum supports and encourages students to seek useful information and to develop skills such as choice-making, problem-solving and conflict resolution. Situations are provided for the student to practice these skills both in and out of the classroom. Emphasis is also placed on building self-confidence. American studies classes are conducted partly in the student's native language through use of bilingual aides.

The PASS math curriculum prepares students for formal math courses in an American secondary school by teaching computational skills and providing opportunities to apply these skills in realistic situations. Since English is the medium of instruction, students gain the language skills needed in the math classroom.

PASS STUDENT PROFILE

PROGRAM ATTENDED

_____ has participated in 20 weeks of formal classroom instruction.

Program attended/location: _____ Bataan, Philippines _____ Phanat Nikhom, Thailand

Total hours of instruction: _____

_____ ESL _____ American Studies _____ Math _____ PE

Other (specify subjects) _____

NATIVE LANGUAGE INFORMATION

Student's native language is _____ Other languages spoken _____

Based on a brief test given at the beginning of the program, the student was classified as:

_____ non-literate in the native language

_____ at least minimally literate in the native language

Student attended native language literacy classes in camp: Yes No Number of hours: _____

OTHER COMMENTS

List Special Skills, Special Talents, Referrals Needed

ENGLISH WRITING SAMPLE ENCLOSED

Yes _____ No _____



TEACHER EVALUATION

This profile represents the student's English proficiency upon exit from the PASS program. The student was assessed according to the key shown below:

0 = NOT AT ALL
 1 = WITH DIFFICULTY
 2 = WITH SOME EFFORT
 3 = WITH EASE
 DK = DON'T KNOW

GENERAL SKILLS

- The student is able to:
- locate streets, intersections and directions on a simple street map
 - locate times, places and route numbers on a simple bus schedule
 - identify appropriate sources of help in an emergency, including fire, police, ambulance
 - use a telephone to report an emergency

LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

- The student is able to:
- name about 20 familiar objects
 - use short phrases for communication
 - carry on a two-way conversation
 - speak about self, family, school, country
 - respond to simple requests and commands
 - respond to yes/no questions
 - respond to simple WH-questions
 - express like/dislikes
 - give reasons for being late or absent
 - perform significantly beyond these skills

SCHOOL AND STUDY SKILLS

- The student is able to:
- locate buildings and rooms on a simple map of the school
 - communicate needs to appropriate school personnel
 - ask for clarification when needed
 - use a bilingual dictionary
 - take tests independently
 - complete homework assignments
 - follow directions and instructions
 - plan and follow a daily schedule
 - work cooperatively with peers
 - follow classroom rules and routines
 - identify the function of the principal's office, nurse's office, gym, auditorium, cafeteria, locker room, hallway, restroom

MATH SKILLS

- The student is able to:
- recognize and name basic shapes
 - read and write numerals 0-100 in figures and words
 - count and sequence numerals 0-100
 - read and write ordinal numbers 1st - 31st in figures and words
 - identify place value of a given digit in a number
 - compare whole numbers using symbols and word clues
 - recognize value of U.S. coins and bills
 - add and subtract numbers without regrouping
 - add and subtract numbers with regrouping
 - estimate sums and differences
 - use multiplication and division facts up to 10 x 10
 - multiply numbers horizontally and vertically without regrouping
 - multiply numbers horizontally and vertically with regrouping
 - divide a group of objects into equal parts
 - divide numbers without remainder
 - understand and use language for basic operations
 - solve simple word problems
 - identify even and odd numbers
 - recognize part of a whole or group
 - write the fraction for part of a whole or a group
 - perform significantly beyond these skills

READING AND WRITING SKILLS

- The student is able to:
- recognize common environmental and safety signs
 - recognize own and parents' names
 - read words/phrases that he/she comprehends
 - answer yes/no questions about a story the student has read
 - answer WH-question about a story he/she has read
 - use context clues to find meaning of words
 - find the main idea and details
 - write legibly in manuscript or cursive
 - fill out a simple bio-data form
 - write simple words from dictation with fairly accurate spelling
 - write a simple sentence
 - write a short paragraph describing a picture
 - write a personal narrative
 - perform significantly beyond these skills

